Southern Cross University

Southern Cross Matters



October-November Edition 2026

From the Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues,

Our recent Lismore graduation ceremonies were a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our students and the people who have supported them along the way. I was also particularly pleased that the ceremonies marked the relaunch of our Alumni Benefits Program (Alumni Benefits - Southern Cross University) and a renewed focus on how we engage with our graduates beyond their studies.

Strong alumni engagement creates value in both directions – supporting graduates as their careers develop, opening opportunities for current students, and strengthening the networks and standing of the University.

That idea of connection extends well beyond our alumni. Much of the work represented in this edition has been made possible by partnerships that reach beyond Southern Cross University – with other universities, communities, governments and organisations here and overseas. They allow expertise to travel further, different perspectives to come together and good ideas to achieve greater impact.

And, on a slightly lighter note, last month we asked which Olympic event best described your working style. Half of you chose hurdles. I'm choosing to interpret that as evidence of our collective agility, rather than a commentary on the number of obstacles in front of us.

I also want to congratulate our Chancellor, Ms Sandra McPhee AM, on her appointment as an interim Chancellor Director on the Board of Universities Australia.

The appointment comes at an important point for the sector, as Australia's universities bring Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors together within Universities Australia under a new governance structure. Sandra is one of three interim Chancellor Directors who will serve

ahead of the first full Board election under the new Constitution next year. It is a significant responsibility, and I know her experience, judgement and commitment to higher education will make a valuable contribution to the sector nationally.

Thanks so much for the enormous energy that I see all around as we commence our final term of teaching for 2026 and as the festive season rapidly approaches. I am looking forward to seeing as many colleagues as possible at our final town hall event for the year which will be held in person at Coffs Harbour, Lismore and the Gold Coast.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Warmest wishes,

Tyrone



L to R: Professor Dirk Erler, Dr Nedeljka Rosic and Dr Shane McIntosh

Fish-free omega-3 at half the price. Is it possible?

With support from a Gates Foundation grant, Professor Dirk Erler, Dr Nedeljka Rosic and Dr Shane McIntosh are exploring a new way to produce omega-3 supplements at half the cost, with the aim of improving access for pregnant women and infants in low-income countries.

Find out more



Happy snaps at our Lismore graduation ceremonies.

Lismore graduation celebrates research excellence

Hundreds of students graduated at our Lismore ceremonies, with 40 Indigenous students among the graduating cohort and more than 20 Higher Degree by Research graduates. From medals and ministers to a revamped Alumni Benefits Program, it was a significant and joyful day.

Find out more

Spotlight stories



What's inside the blue and white trailer on our Gold Coast campus? Meet the Blue Water Task Force and find out how you can help monitor our local waterways.

Learn more



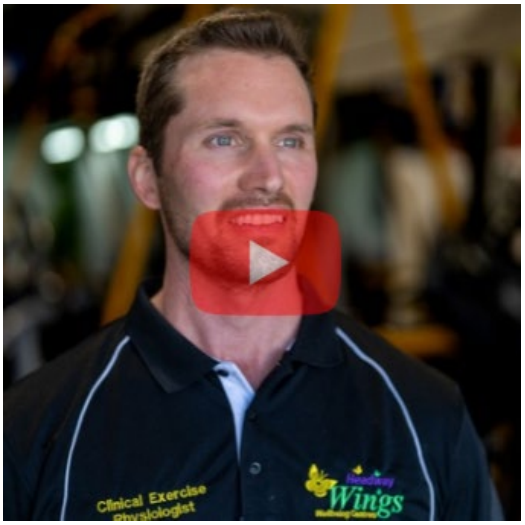
Were you snapped at the fisiocrem GC50 Run Festival? We were the Official Education Partner and proud sponsor of the Community 5km event.

Check the gallery



From 2027, students in Changchun will study Southern Cross University IT and engineering degrees through a new joint institute with Changchun University of Technology.

Read more



Alumnus Scott Painter’s inspiring story, filmed by our own Danny McShane, has been selected for the 2026 Byron Bay International Film Festival.

Watch here

Excellence in action



Bachelor of Psychological Science with Honours students at the annual Psychology Honours Conference.

From AI companions to ocean plunges. Psychology Honours students explored contemporary issues at the annual Honours Conference. *See what they uncovered*.

Ideas across borders. Academic leaders and students came together in Jaipur to explore new opportunities for collaboration, global learning and knowledge exchange. *More here.*

The ‘good guy’ myth. Dr Jessica Schaffer unpacks the stereotypes surrounding domestic violence and the impact they can have in criminal trials. *Read her analysis.*

The century-old cucumber. Researchers have discovered that the endangered black teatfish sea cucumber can live for more than 100 years. *Meet the ocean’s centenarian.*

The PREDICT Study has earned a 2026 Future of Ageing Award for Research. *Well-deserved recognition!*

University updates



Scholarships change lives. From laptops and fuel to study support, donor-funded scholarships are helping students overcome barriers and achieve goals. *Watch the video.*

Traditional medicine goes global. Researchers have helped shape the World Health Organization's roadmap for traditional medicine research. *See the impact.*

Yes, Your Honour. Legal students took their skills to the Brisbane Supreme Court for the 2026 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students' Moot Competition. *Read more about their experience*.

People and culture



Orientation buzz at our Gold Coast campus.

2026 staff highlights. As the end of the year approaches, it's a chance to reflect on the moments that have shaped our university community. We'd love to see 2026 through your eyes. Email a photo of a memorable moment from your year to *content@scu.edu.au* for a chance to win a Southern Cross University-branded kit.

Spotted a change in your latest payslip? You can check the updated salary rates and see which apply to you. *View the updated rates.*

Welcome to those who've recently joined Southern Cross University:

Celeste Richards, Facilites Officer (Safety & Security), Property Services
Dr Osman Kasimu, Lecturer in Education, Faculty of Education
Zeyad Naassan, Solution Architect, Data, Architecture and Integration
Lyndsay Leigh, Student Administration Officer, Student Administration Services
Ahmad Zubair, Technical Officer, Laboratory Operations

Dr Chels Marshall, Senior Lecturer, Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples
Helen Moors, Research Project Officer, Faculty of Health
Alex Morison, Senior Employment Lawyer, Workplace Relations
Olivia McClelland, Technical and Laboratory Officer, Faculty of Health
Libby Cardakaris, Library Technician, Library Services

Question of the month

Did you know that fish don't produce omega-3?

Wait, what?!

Yep, knew that one

My whole fish life has been a lie

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.

Interested in previous editions of Southern Cross Matters? View the archive.

