



# SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2023–2030



The cover image for this strategy is *Swamp Orchid* (2021) by Yuwi artist, Dylan Mooney, a Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art student at Griffith's Queensland College of Art. *Swamp Orchid* is part of a series that looks at native plants found on Yuwi Country (Mackay region).

"Bringing together digital illustrations and traditional designs using ochre from my Country in the work creates connection between my culture and the land. Reflecting on the impact of invasive species and colonisation, the plants I choose to draw are either extinct, endangered, or thriving species. The landscapes on which these plants are growing and once grew, are familiar and nostalgic in a way, as I grew up visiting these places as a child."



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## Acknowledgement of Country

Griffith University acknowledges the people who are the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we learn and work and pays respect to the Elders, past and present, and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Griffith University campuses sit on the lands of the Yugarabul, Yuggera, Jagera, Turrbal, Yugambah and Kombumerri peoples. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' unique relationship with and understanding and ongoing stewardship of these lands. Through collaboration with staff, students and community members we are committed to embedding Indigenous cultures and diverse knowledge systems in our learning and teaching, research, operations, and partnerships. Griffith acknowledges Elders past and present who guide the way to a more sustainable future for all. Under the guidance of the Griffith University Elders and First Peoples Knowledge Holders Advisory Board we seek to ensure sustainability actions are aligned with First Peoples' knowledges and cultural practices.

# Vice Chancellor's foreword



Griffith University is a values-based university, committed to reconciliation with First Peoples, environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion, and social justice. We have always sought to have local and global impact, with two of our four foundation schools being the School of Australian Environmental Studies and the School of Modern Asian Studies.

Griffith University 2020–2025 Strategic Plan—*Creating a Future for All* strategy provides the framework for Griffith's role in driving economic, social, environmental, cultural and health benefits for our communities. It is the blueprint for the University's development through to our 50th anniversary in 2025 and beyond. It calls for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be used as the framework for informing and measuring our social justice impacts.

This Sustainability Strategy builds on our Griffith University 2020–2025 Strategic Plan and provides an overview of our future initiatives that will contribute to a future that benefits all. It describes our ambitions to deliver on the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals across academic, operations, engagement, and governance, and contribute to healthier lives, thriving environments and resilient communities for all.

As the global community continues to work to address complex social and ecological challenges, we acknowledge the critical importance of taking ambitious action for a sustainable future.

**Professor Carolyn Evans**  
Vice Chancellor and President



# United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Griffith University is a signatory to the United Nations (UN) Global Compact and, since 2017, to the Sustainable Development Solutions Network University Commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In keeping with the University Strategic Plan to “utilise the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for articulating and measuring our impact,” this Sustainability Strategy adopts the United Nations Brundtland Commission (1987) definition of sustainability that articulates the importance of balancing social, economic, and environmental priorities, so that we can “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

The SDGs are a reflection of our values and are fundamental in fulfilling our University Strategic Plan to transform lives and add to human knowledge and understanding in a way that creates a future that benefits all—now and in the future.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to protect the planet, end poverty, and improve the lives and prospects of all people.

The 17 SDGs provide a framework for achieving economic prosperity, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and good governance for all. The Goals cover the themes of planet, people and prosperity, underpinned by the need for meaningful and effective partnerships to mobilise action.

Universities have a critical role to play in contributing towards the attainment of the SDGs through their research, learning and teaching, community engagement and impact, thought leadership and innovation. However, while universities already address many environmental, economic and social sustainability issues as part of their usual activities, more is required to meet the 2030 deadline. The SDGs provide universities with an interconnected, flexible and unifying framework.

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Prosperity



People



Planet



# Strategic alignment

The importance of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is recognised in Griffith's Strategic Plan, Academic Plan 2021–2025, and Research and Innovation Plan 2021–2025. As per our existing plans, by 2025, we are committed to:

- building awareness and understanding of sustainability, including the SDGs, to ensure our students have knowledge and skills to address global challenges
- using the SDGs as a framework to capture our research impact and to deliver research that aligns with our values
- maintaining our reputation as a sustainability leader and tackling climate action, with the goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2029
- protecting our flora and fauna, recognising that we are the stewards of diverse ecosystems across our campuses.

This strategy outlines the ways in which we will embed the SDGs in learning and teaching, and use the SDGs to measure our research impact. It addresses priority areas: climate action and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, water, and waste. It highlights our actions across procurement and it outlines our governance and reporting plans. It also describes our approaches to ensuring our campuses are healthy and inclusive, that we have strong partnerships internally and externally, and that we provide sustainable commuting options for staff and students. Finally, it guides the iterative process of building broad stakeholder understanding of and engagement with the SDGs as a framework for ongoing improvement as we strive for a better future for all.

This Strategy seeks to further the United Nations 2030 Agenda by using the SDGs as a framework to deliver positive change through the principles of social justice, equity and inclusion, quality education, responsible economic growth and leading environmental management.







## Learning and teaching

At Griffith University, we are committed to ensuring graduates are socially responsible, engaged in their communities and able to deliver on the broader objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Academic Plan, 2021–2025 articulates our commitment to “support the holistic development of our students”. This will be achieved through curriculum designed to “emphasise integration of Indigenous perspectives and cultural competency, mental health and wellbeing and awareness and understanding of sustainability including the Sustainable Development Goals”.

Environmental sustainability is embedded in over 50 course offerings in environmental science, business and marketing, health, and engineering. Our MBA program has been ranked first place overall in Corporate Knights 2022 Better World MBA for three consecutive years.

We provide inclusive and equitable quality education, supported by a mix of scholarships that not only recognise excellence and achievement, but also promote equity and ensure access to education for students from all backgrounds. Student retention and graduation is supported by deliberate strategies to ensure that all students have access to the materials they need for learning. Since 2022, for example, Griffith Library has been engaged in a partnership<sup>1</sup> to provide open access to educational resources and textbooks, available to all staff and students. To further support students to complete their studies, we will explore ways to embed mental health literacy into learning and teaching where possible, and support student-led societies including those focused on sustainability.

As expressed in a 2023 student survey, many students are concerned about social and environmental sustainability and are eager for hands-on experience, where they work in partnership with industry to develop solutions to real-world problems. In the years to 2030, we will continue to embed the SDGs into and across our undergraduate and postgraduate offerings, professional education, co-curricula initiatives and events, and work-integrated learning programs, providing students with avenues to engage in lifelong learning and opportunities to meaningfully learn about and contribute towards social and environmental sustainability by providing quality, inclusive learning environments, we continue to demonstrate our commitment to all 17 SDGs, including SDG 4 Quality Education, by:

- ensuring students “acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development<sup>2</sup>” (SDG 4.7)
- providing students with the ethical and theoretical foundations to contribute to work and society through values-based behaviour

- highlighting the crucial role partnerships play in addressing contemporary challenges, requiring global citizens who are collaborative, resilient, adaptable, creative and critical problem solvers.

We continue to provide opportunities for students to engage in global mobility programs, ensuring students are effective in culturally diverse and international environments. We ensure that such programs include students who are traditionally underrepresented in such initiatives, and we prioritise programs based on SDG alignment. As articulated in our Internationalisation Action Plan 2023, we will increase the number of students participating in global mobility experiences; we will develop staff capability to ensure a suite of virtual global mobility programs are available to students across the University; and we will embed environmental sustainability into the development and delivery of global mobility programs, among other initiatives.

By 2025, we will:

- co-design a work-integrated learning (WIL) curriculum framework, with internal and external stakeholders, including the development of a set of signature WIL experiences, that will:
  - a. allow purpose-driven engagement with the SDGs and mission and values of the University
  - b. deliver a practicable educational experience for students
  - c. create interdisciplinary opportunities for—and supports students to—collaborate with each other, partner with industry (including those working in sustainability) and engage in global and virtual international mobility programs to tackle global problems
  - d. provide a suite of resources for staff to support student learning and engagement.

From 2024, we will:

- co-create and deliver SDG initiatives<sup>3</sup> with students, alumni and staff<sup>4</sup> to:
  - e. promote social, economic and environmental sustainability literacy, learning and knowledge sharing
  - f. foster interdisciplinary conversations and collaborations that meaningfully contribute to the creation of a better world
  - g. identify opportunities to further integrate sustainability and the SDGs in curriculum and co-curricular activities.

1 with The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) Open Educational Resource (OER) Collective.

2 Including “education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development” UN SDG 4.7.

3 Including an SDG seminar series, seminars/roundtables/conferences undertaken in partnership with the IRU and/or ACTS, Green Bites seminar series, and a Community of Shared Intent for Sustainability Education.

4 Including staff from the Sustainability Office, Learning Futures, Careers and Employment, and various sustainability groups across the University

From 2023, we will:

- promote Open Education Resources (OER) and encourage the development of Open Access Textbooks written by Griffith academics, providing students with resources<sup>5</sup>

#### Measures of success:

- From 2024, evaluation tools embedded in the work-integrated learning curriculum framework—which includes new student career registration information for planning and stakeholder feedback of selected WIL courses—will provide actionable institutional knowledge to improve student career readiness, leadership skills, and commitment to the mission and values of the University, including knowledge of the SDGs with the ability to engage as global citizens.
- Participant feedback, seminar analytics, and impact stories post-seminar series will reflect high participant engagement and positive participant experience, and will include examples of environmental and social sustainability impact in initiatives undertaken by participants post seminar series.
- From 2024, there will be a 10 per cent annual increase in Open Educational Resource use and downloads as measured through data analytics.

## Research

The Research and Innovation Plan 2021–2025 sets the direction for Griffith to be a university of international influence and impact by supporting interdisciplinary researchers world-renowned for their work in leading collaborative research that contributes to sustainable development. In the years to 2030, Griffith will continue to support research that contributes to the attainment of the Agenda 2030 and the 17 SDGs. We will use the SDGs as a framework to capture our research impact and to promote research that aligns with our stated values.

Through an integrated network of research centres, institutes and schools, our researchers are discovering and developing solutions for global challenges, enabled by sizeable investments in research infrastructure, platforms, and resources. Our research Beacons program is also a significant university-funding mechanism, driving SDG translational research in alignment with our university mission and vision.

Griffith's Climate Action Beacon, launched in 2020 with a particular focus on SDG 13, builds upon our history of national and international leadership in climate adaptation research. Experts from the Climate Action Beacon partner with governments and key organisations to help communities, industries and the public sector respond to climate change and support the development of the University's Climate Action Roadmap. Two other Beacons, launched in 2021—the Disrupting Violence Beacon and Inclusive Futures: Reimagining Disability Beacon—take action for and increase understanding of inclusivity, equity and diversity in our communities, homes and workplaces in accordance with the Leave No One Behind principle.

By encouraging interdisciplinary research, supporting both domestic and international research collaborations, and financing a range of research infrastructure platforms and resources, we will continue to contribute towards the attainment of the SDG targets and drive positive social, environmental and economic impact. Further, we will continue to apply our own internal research expertise to university operations and organisational development to ensure that the development of environmental sustainability plans and procedures are evidence-informed.

We will continue to:

- invest in areas of research and research partnerships that deliver positive social, environmental and economic innovations and impacts for local and global communities, align with our strengths, and contribute towards attainments of the SDG
- support staff to articulate their research impact and engagement through the framework of the SDGs, align their work to the SDGs through Griffith Expert webpages, and incentivise engagement with the SDGs through SDG Files.

#### Measures of success:

- By 2026, Griffith University will be ranked Top 50 in the SDG Times Higher Education Impact Rankings in areas of research strength.
- From 2023, there will be a 10 per cent annual increase in submissions to SDG Files and in the proportion of Griffith Expert profile pages that are tagged with SDGs.

<sup>5</sup> that "reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, re-use, repurpose, adaptation, and redistribution by others" (UNESCO, 2019)

# Operations

## Griffith University seeks to protect its biodiversity across campuses, support sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing natural resources and take urgent action on climate change.

### Climate action

Griffith University is committed to acting in line with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which calls for transformative change across all aspects of society, to rapidly decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Griffith University has a role in leading this transformation through our research, learning, engagement and operational activities.

Through the development of a Climate Action Roadmap, Griffith University is delivering a climate positive future through:

- reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2029, based on the defined emissions boundary<sup>6</sup>
- a prioritised approach to organisational climate risks and adaptation
- preparing students of all disciplines to deal with the future impacts of climate change
- ensuring climate change research and engagement has local and global impact.

Several projects are underway to help achieve our net zero ambitions, including:

- the Columboola Solar Farm agreement, which will provide 50 per cent of the university's offsite energy needs from 2023 and support our plan for 100 per cent renewable for purchased offsite energy by 2029
- a \$13.8 million investment in rooftop solar project and onsite renewable measures

- migration to low-carbon transport options, including electrification of university fleet vehicles to reach 50 per cent hybrid, 50 per cent battery by 2025
- establishment of impactful partnerships and research, such as through the work of the Climate Action Beacon and Climate Ready Initiative
- development of an Aviation Emissions Reduction Plan (2022), which will be integrated into the Climate Action Roadmap, reducing our aviation emissions by 25 per cent (based on the 2010 baseline year)
- review of our scope 3 emissions to consider Griffith University's full emission profile.

Griffith is transitioning to a low-carbon future, while also considering the risks and opportunities that climate change brings. We will seek to build climate resilience internally and externally through enhanced climate knowledge, improved governance frameworks and incorporation of climate considerations into campus planning and asset management.

#### Measures of success:

- By 2029, Griffith University will achieve net zero emissions, based on the defined emissions boundary.
- From 2025, Griffith University will progress towards being a climate-resilient university through the implementation of prioritised measures to adapt to climate risks, plan for the climate future and harness emerging opportunities.

<sup>6</sup> Current emissions boundary include scope 1 (direct emissions largely due to our own fleet and fugitive refrigerant emissions), scope 2 (indirect emissions from energy use) and partial scope 3 (indirect emissions due to business travel, waste and supply chain).



## Biodiversity conservation

Our 2022–2025 Biodiversity Conservation Plan sets out the key principles and actions that ensure our campus biodiversity is protected and enhanced even as the University grows and evolves. The Biodiversity Conservation Plan supports Griffith’s work towards Sustainability Development Goal (SDG) 15 (Life on Land) and seeks to protect and enhance the unique forests, flora and fauna across all campuses through three broad pillars:

- **Learn** more about our campus biodiversity including ecosystems and their values, functions and health to ensure knowledge-driven actions.
- **Act** to protect, restore and enhance campus biodiversity including (terrestrial) ecosystems and their diverse values, act to reduce the impacts of introduced (alien) species, and identify, monitor and protect IUCN Red Listed species and threatened species under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.
- **Engage** to promote education and build community awareness, understanding and engagement in conservation and protection of native biodiversity.

Griffith University will continue to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Plan.

### Measures of success:

- Native forests on Griffith University, as measured through bio-condition assessments, will have:
  - a. at least 80 per cent of the native forest rated as high (score 1) by 2025 and sustained reduction in weed cover determined through targeted monitoring of specific areas.
  - b. an overall bio-condition score greater than the baseline year (2023) by 2030.
- By 2030, there will be no loss of remnant vegetation<sup>7</sup> across our campuses, other than that which is unavoidable and required under university plans<sup>8</sup> Where that loss is planned for, it will be offset by new plantings that exceed existing regularity offsetting requirements, acknowledging that replanted vegetation does not hold the same biodiversity functions and values as remnant vegetation.
- From 2025 onwards, there will be an annual increase in the number of students and community members engaging with biodiversity conservation, on and off Griffith University campuses, as measured through student numbers in campus-based fieldwork subjects and number of external participants in biodiversity-specific educational events.

<sup>7</sup> regional ecosystem types and related areas of environmental significance, such as critical wildlife habitat

<sup>8</sup> Bushfire Management Plans and Master Plans

## Integrated water management

Water management is essential to how we live, work, study and thrive within South East Queensland. To align with best practice urban water management principles, as well as state and local government strategic planning, Griffith University adopts a Water Sensitive Urban Design<sup>9</sup> approach to campus operations.

With 10 graduate degrees specifically addressing catchment and water management—and leading research institutes—Griffith continues to be a university of choice for education and research that considers a whole-of-water-cycle approach.

Griffith University is developing an Integrated Water Management Plan to ensure whole of catchment improvements in line with the objectives of SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water). The plan will assist Griffith to manage and enhance the culturally, ecologically and socially significant values of our catchments by identifying practical water efficiency improvements, improving catchment health through monitoring and contamination prevention, embedding water-sensitive urban design across our campuses, and leveraging leading research and partnership activities to improve waterway and marine health.

By 2024, we will develop and commence implementation of an Integrated Water Management Plan that:

- monitors campuses water use and identifies opportunities to reduce potable water consumption
- monitors and manages natural waterways to support healthy catchments
- incorporates water sensitive urban design into campus developments
- fosters research and engagement partnerships across South East Queensland catchments
- supports ongoing delivery of high-quality water management educational offerings.

### Measures of success:

- All new development actively seeks to manage its water cycle impacts in a sustainable way considering water-conscious building standards.<sup>10</sup>
- By 2030, annual potable water consumption (average per full-time equivalent staff and students) will have reduced by 10 per cent based on 2023 consumption.
- By 2030, sensitive natural water bodies on campus will show no loss in ecological value or biodiversity, and sediment erosion monitoring will show no deterioration in levels of waterway and catchment health, based on bi-annual ecological surveys compared with baseline year (2025).



<sup>9</sup> Water Sensitive Urban Design is a set of principles that can be applied to sustainably manage water, providing opportunities to achieve more liveable communities with vibrant and healthy waterways (Water by Design 2020).

<sup>10</sup> Such as Green Star, Water Sensitive Urban Technical Design Guidelines for South East Queensland and the Griffith University Design Guidelines

## Circular economy and waste management

Aligning with the Queensland Government's vision for a zero-waste society, where waste is avoided, reused and recycled to the greatest extent possible, Griffith University will develop a Waste Management Plan to reduce our environmental footprint by incorporating the waste hierarchy and circular economy principles. The Waste Management Plan will identify opportunities with our partners to improve our waste management and promote sustainable consumption and production practices in line with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

By 2026, we will:

- develop improved waste monitoring systems across the generated waste streams on campuses
- analyse waste management performance and, alongside waste contractors, identify opportunities to improve performance in accordance with the waste hierarchy
- develop a Waste Management Plan to provide practical and measurable improvements in waste management that progresses towards a circular economy and low-waste campuses by 2030.

As of 2021, Griffith University moved to zero single-use plastic in food services to align with the Queensland Government single-use plastics initiatives. Further work is planned to reduce and eliminate single use plastics on campus, and at Griffith-hosted events, with the ultimate goal to become a zero single-use plastic university.

### Measures of success:

- By 2030:
  - a. annual waste to landfill (average per full-time equivalent staff and students from all sources) will be less than 30kg
  - b. recycling diversion as a proportion of all waste will be greater than 25 per cent.
  - c. all campuses will have zero single-use plastic across food outlets, catering and non-medical consumables.
- From 2024, organic food waste will be processed to produce compost.



## Responsible procurement, supply and investment

Griffith University is taking actions throughout our supply chain to reduce waste and promote socially and environmentally responsible sourcing and contract management. This includes:

- the new Procurement and Supply Policy and Supplier Code of Conduct
- our commitment to 100 per cent recycled paper, office furniture reuse initiatives on campuses, Repair Café events, and the student-led clothing library project
- partnering with the Australian Universities Procurement Network (AUPN) to progress anti-modern slavery sector wide activities, supported by Griffith's Modern Slavery Statements (2020, 2021, and 2022), Modern Slavery Risk Dashboard and our Modern Slavery Policy
- preferential sourcing<sup>11</sup> to meet environmental, social, and governance (ESG) outcomes.

By 2025, we will have socially and environmentally responsible procurement processes that follow the waste hierarchy, are from local and ethical sources, and are supplied by social enterprises or First Peoples' organisations where available. It also includes ensuring provision of sustainable, healthy and affordable food choices for all on campus.

Griffith University seeks to invest in a sustainable manner, considering the SDGs, including social and environmental considerations, and modern corporate practices in making investment decisions. Compliant with Queensland law, the University invests principally in the Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) Capital Guaranteed Cash Fund,<sup>12</sup> the Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC)<sup>13</sup> Short Term Income Fund and the QIC Long Term Diversified Fund.

The University's Student Investment Fund provides outstanding finance students the opportunity to analyse, evaluate and invest in socially responsible ASX-listed companies that must be a constituent of the Dow Jones Sustainability Australia Index and satisfy the Griffith University Treasury Policy ESG criteria, among other diversification and risk criteria<sup>14</sup>

As of 2023, 68.1 per cent of our combined portfolios at Griffith University had responsible investment credentials with the remainder largely having no direct exposure to fossil fuels. We will take measures to divest investments from carbon-intensive energy industries notably coal and oil by continuing to collaborate with other Queensland universities to work towards fossil free, affordable clean energy investment options to be made available under Queensland Law within the QIC.

### Measures of success:

- From 2026, 3 per cent of suppliers are from First Peoples' organisations or groups, with an annual increase in suppliers or spend from First Peoples' organisations or groups and from social enterprises over baseline year (2023).
- From 2026, university merchandise will be sourced, where possible, from ethical and sustainable manufacturing practices and post-consumer recycled materials.



Clothing Library

<sup>11</sup> Through AUPN's University Procurement Hub

<sup>12</sup> The Fund invests in institutions with no direct exposure to fossil fuels.

<sup>13</sup> QIC is a signatory to the UN-backed Principles for Responsible Investment initiative and has adopted a Responsible Investment Policy. QIC is obligated to integrate responsible and low-carbon initiatives into its investment practices.

<sup>14</sup> Companies involved in any form of adult entertainment, alcohol, armaments and firearms, gambling and tobacco are specifically excluded, as are companies whose primary business relates to fossil fuels.



# Engagement

This strategy supports internal and external partnerships, locally and globally, to contribute to sustainable development and demonstrate our commitment to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

## Partnerships

In 2023, we will launch the Griffith University Engagement Strategy. It is premised on our commitment to engaging to create a brighter future for all. It highlights our commitment to living our values through our partnerships with local and global communities of which we are a part, to engaging in a manner that delivers outstanding learning and teaching experiences for students and communities, and to undertaking research that tackles global problems.

A key example of sustainability in partnerships is Griffith's work in supporting sustainable sporting events that promote health, wellbeing and inclusion. As an official partner of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, Griffith University worked with business and government to strengthen communities and cultivate the knowledge, capabilities and connections through sport to inform and enrich our region's future. Our experiences will inform opportunities arising from the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Sustainability Team engages with staff and students to understand the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) and recognise how their actions contribute towards the attainment of the Goals. They also showcase the sustainability impact of Griffith to our communities and contribute to our ambition to be ranked as a top university globally for our contribution to the SDGs. The team employs the SDG Files and annual reporting methods, to document alignment between our existing partnerships and the SDGs.

As an institution, we will continue to engage both internally and externally to create a better future for all, engaging with purpose and supporting staff and students to collaborate locally and globally to drive sustainable development. We will continue to implement initiatives to promote staff engagement with the SDGs, including—such as the Griffith Green Impact Program, SDG Pledge Wall, and SDG Games—while introducing new initiatives, such as a revamped SDG onboarding module. We will also continue to work with food providers to ensure provision of healthy and affordable food choices—that are sustainably and locally harvested—for all on campus.

From 2023, we will implement the Griffith University Engagement Strategy, and as part of that renew our commitment to partnering with organisations whose values align with Griffith's values and who are committed to meaningfully and collaboratively advancing economic, environmental and social sustainability.

By 2026, we will:

- have one major partnership that is focused on a key sustainability metric—such as climate resilience, biodiversity conservation and improving waterway health—and that delivers measurable environmental and social improvements for the communities adjoining Griffith University campuses.

### Measures of Success:

- By 2027, we will have established a new major partnership focused on the SDGs that delivers tangible community outcomes around social, economic and environmental sustainability, and we will ensure SDG elements are articulated where they exist for each major partnership.





## Healthy and inclusive campuses

Recognising the inextricable connection between environmental, physical and mental health—and with staff and student wellbeing a priority—Griffith is continuing to create safe, healthy and inclusive campuses for all.

In 2023 Griffith was the first Queensland university to receive the Sage Cygnet Award in recognition of our achievements in reducing barriers for people of diverse gender, bodies and sexuality. In 2022, Griffith was also recognised as a Silver employer in the Australian Workplace Equality Index (LGBTIQ+) inclusion awards. In 2018, Griffith was amongst the first cohort of universities to receive an Athena SWAN Bronze award, with the Award valid for seven years.

Griffith's commitment to health and wellbeing is reflected in the range of initiatives the University has embarked upon following the 2023 psychosocial staff safety survey, including:

- Refreshing relevant policies, procedures and codes, and engaging a new Employee Assistance Program provider.
- Ensuring manageable workloads for staff through the Making Space in the Academic Work Week, Course Management System implementation and Reclaiming Academic Admin Time projects.
- Increasing flexible work arrangements, including flexible work locations and leave provisions for parental, family, cultural, domestic and family violence, and other special circumstances.

We also deliver numerous outreach programs across education, environment, health, information services, reading, community engagement, and tutorials for the local community. In addition, we provide on-campus health and wellbeing services, including physical healthcare services, sexual and reproductive healthcare services, and access to mental health support for both staff and students, including information and education services.

As part of our commitment to inclusive campuses and workplaces that are free of discrimination, harassment and bullying (including sexual harassment and assault) Griffith is:

- providing confidential counselling and health services for staff and students experiencing domestic violence, and the introduction of the RISE program aimed at improving respect in the workplace
- addressing gender pay gaps following the 2022 pay gap detailed analysis, examining STEM gender equity data through a plan to eliminate gender bias and promote an inclusive staff culture
- improving LGBTIQ+ inclusion through our action plan to support progress on LGBTIQ+ inclusion and an inclusive environment for a diversity of genders, bodies and sexualities
- developing a new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to ensure we offer an inclusive accessible campus for all
- taking measures to tackle racism in all its forms.

Through our governance, management and leadership practices, Griffith University acknowledges the contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures have made to the Griffith community and in pursuing the University's mission. First Peoples' inclusion on campus is underpinned by our Reconciliation Statement. Griffith has the largest First Peoples student population of any Queensland university and the highest proportion of First Peoples staff of the Brisbane-based universities. Griffith has a strong commitment to increasing First Peoples employment through the First Peoples Employment Action Plan, and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career progression.

### Measures of success:

- We will aim to win at least one Cygnet Award annually until the end of 2025, with submission of our Athena SWAN Silver Award in 2026/27.



## Sustainable commuting for staff and students

Griffith University acknowledges the importance of providing sustainable commuting alternatives to single-occupant vehicles and the value of educating staff and students to encourage behaviour changes when considering transport options.

Through the trial and expansion of sustainable transport offerings under the Getting To and From Campus Program, Griffith University has committed to trialling transport offerings that will reduce inequities and emissions and promote environmental sustainability and social justice. In particular, we are focused on three initiatives including carpooling, micromobility offerings and hybrid vehicle sharing.

Through the implementation of a ride-sharing application, we are seeking to reduce the number of vehicles travelling to and from our campuses, ease cost-of-living concerns for students by offering free parking to those who have arrived at campus via carpooling, and engage in emissions offsetting through an external partnership whereby all ride shares registered in the application contribute towards an offsetting scheme.

As part of our micromobility offerings, we are investigating options to improve path conditions and lighting to encourage active transport, improving end-of-trip facilities by providing secure storage and safe charging opportunities, and partnering with external parties to provide micromobility connectivity to and from our campuses.

We are also offering hybrid car-sharing services at reduced costs to encourage the use of more sustainable vehicles and reduce the instances of vehicles parked on our campuses. This will assist with reducing the cost of living for students who access these cars and remove the need for vehicles to be purchased.

Further, we have flexible work arrangements at Griffith University for staff to reduce employee commuting and support staff wellbeing through a Work Location Policy, that promotes and allows telecommuting and remote working for employees and, at times, a condensed working week.

In the coming years, Griffith will develop a sustainable transport strategy that underpins master planning and explores how we can better monitor, measure and promote walking and other active transport options.

By 2025, we will:

- expand the Getting To and From Campus Program offerings across all Griffith campuses, pending the success of the trials, with suitable pathways to support sustainable commuting.

### Measures of success:

- There will be an annual increase of 5 per cent over baseline year (2024) in the uptake of public transport usage, carpooling (as reported via the preferred carpooling application), and sustainable commuting transport such as e-scooters and (electric) bicycles (as measured through access to end-of-trip facilities and secure storage facilities monitoring).

# Governance and reporting

## Governance

Sustainability intersects with all aspects of the University. Improving sustainability performance will require action from a range of organisational units to ensure embedding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is strategic, prioritised and aligns with global ranking metrics. Our governance, management and operational structures facilitate positive social and environmental action, while building Griffith staff, students and stakeholder capability, opportunity and motivation to contribute to sustainable governance and operations. We will use data-driven targets to drive accelerated ambition to improve the social and environmental footprint of our campuses.

Griffith SDG and sustainability ambitions will be led by the Dean (Sustainable Development Goals Performance) with support from the Sustainability Team. Reporting to the Vice Chancellor, the Dean will collaborate and work with and across relevant teams from academic groups and central portfolios. Implementation of environmental aspects of the strategy will be coordinated by the Environmental Sustainability Committee reporting to the University Executive Group.

By 2027, we will:

- introduce an ISO-14001 aligned environmental management system to ensure compliance with environmental legislation and best practice environmental management.

### Measure of success:

- By 2027, an Environmental Management System is implemented.

## Reporting

In delivering this strategy, Griffith University is committed to ensuring compliance with all relevant sustainability legislation and policies, while also meeting community expectations. This strategy will support new and existing governance systems to better incorporate sustainability through transparent, accountable, and effective decision-making.

To enable effective and informed decision-making that aligns with our values, access to quality data and information is important. Presenting this data in a clear and transparent public manner will not only ensure accountability, but also empower students, researchers, industry and the community to make positive changes through leveraging quality sustainability data.

To ensure Griffith University remains accountable to its commitments, annual reporting will be produced to detail performance against the commitments in this strategy.

We will:

- develop an annual sustainability report to track performance against the University's sustainability goals and commitments from 2024
- investigate developing consolidated sustainability data repositories within existing IT infrastructure to facilitate data-driven decision-making, share information to internal and external parties, and provide evidence basis for sustainability reporting from 2025.

### Measures of success:

- From 2024, an annual sustainability report, aligned with the SDGs, is published detailing performance against this strategy.
- By 2027, sustainability data is accessible through a centralised repository that facilitates open-access data visualisation.



# Next steps

With less than a decade to go to realise the 2030 Agenda, —the most recent Sustainable Development Report—the annual assessment of progress for all UN member states towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calls for urgent, accelerated action. The Report urges all UN member states to take bolder steps, set more ambitious targets and seek ways to implement the SDGs for systemic change: “we call on academia, civil society, and business to develop proposals on how this agenda can be enhanced and enforced in the decades to come.”<sup>15</sup> Reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) over the last decade also consistently call for transformative change across all aspects of society, to rapidly decrease greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in the years to 2030. This is critically important as we witness climate changes and growing inequality across the globe.

Universities have a key role to play in creating this change and achieving positive impact. The mixture of research, learning and engagement activities, combined with large asset portfolios make them uniquely placed to deliver meaningful change. Realising the 2030 Agenda for the SDGs will only occur through deep and meaningful partnerships. Achieving our sustainability objectives requires collaborative action across all elements of the organisation and externally.

As a leader in environmental sustainability and social justice action for nearly 50 years, Griffith University has a legacy in working towards a more just future for all. The SDGs provide a unique opportunity to further guide and measure our impacts as an institution. Through innovative teaching and learning, targeted research, best-practice operations and excellence in external partnerships, Griffith is committed to accelerating our action and achieving positive environmental, social and economic sustainability outcomes.

The ongoing development and implementation of actions to deliver on our priority objectives aligns with Griffith University’s 2020–2025 Strategic Plan—*Creating a Future for All*, while also laying the foundation for the years to come. These actions not only represent a commitment to our own organisational responsibility, they demonstrate our role as part of a global movement for change through the realisation of the SDGs.

This strategy will coordinate implementation to reach the goals and objectives listed within. To align with a new University Strategic Plan from 2025 onwards, and to ensure this strategy remains agile to evolving opportunities and challenges, a review of the strategy will occur in 2025 to align with any new University Strategic Plan.

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<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey D. Sachs, Guillaume Lafortune, Grayson Fuller and Eamon Drumm. (2023). Implementing the SDG Stimulus. Sustainable Development Report. 21.

# Summary of actions and measures of success

FOCUS	PRIORITY	ENABLING FRAMEWORK	
ACADEMIC	Learning and teaching	Academic Plan, 2021–2025 SDG Roadmap	
	Research	Research and Innovation Plan 2021–2025 SDG Roadmap	

<sup>16</sup> Initiatives to include an SDG seminar series, activities undertaken in partnership with the IRU and/or ACTS seminars/roundtables/conference, Green Bites seminar series, and a Community of Shared Intent for Sustainability Education.

<sup>17</sup> Including staff from the Sustainability Office, Learning Futures, Careers and Employment, and various Sustainability Working Parties within groups across the University.

<sup>18</sup> that "reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, re-use, repurpose, adaptation, and redistribution by others" (UNESCO, 2019)

KEY ACTIONS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>Co-design work-integrated learning curriculum framework, with internal and external stakeholders, including the development of a set of signature WIL experiences, which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allow purpose-driven engagement with the SDGs and mission and values of the University</li> <li>deliver a practicable educational experience for students</li> <li>create interdisciplinary opportunities for, and supports students, to collaborate with each other, partner with industry, including those working in sustainability, and engage in global (and virtual) international mobility programs to tackle global problems</li> <li>provide a suite of resources for staff to support student learning and engagement.</li> </ol>	<p>From 2024, evaluation tools embedded in the work-integrated learning curriculum framework—which includes new student career registration information for planning and stakeholder feedback of selected WIL courses—will provide actionable institutional knowledge to improve student career readiness, leadership skills, and commitment to the mission and values of the University, including knowledge of the SDGs.</p>
<p>Co-create and deliver SDG initiatives<sup>16</sup> with students, alumni and staff<sup>17</sup> to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>promote social, economic and environmental sustainability literacy, learning and knowledge sharing</li> <li>foster interdisciplinary conversations and collaborations that meaningfully contribute to the creation of a better world</li> <li>identify opportunities to further integrate sustainability and the SDGs in curriculum and co-curricular activities.</li> </ol>	<p>Participant feedback, seminar analytics and impact stories post-seminar series will reflect high participant engagement and positive participant experience, and will include examples of environmental and social sustainability impact in initiatives undertaken by participants post seminar series.</p>
<p>Promote Open Education Resources (OER) and encourage the development of Open Access Textbooks written by Griffith academics, providing students with resources<sup>18</sup></p>	<p>From 2024, there will be a 10% annual increase in OER use and downloads as measured through data analytics.</p>
<p>Invest in areas of research and research partnerships that deliver positive social, environmental and economic innovations and impacts for local and global communities, align with our strengths, and contribute towards attainments of the SDGs.</p>	<p>By 2026, Griffith University will be ranked Top 50 in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings in areas of research strength.</p>
<p>Support staff to articulate their research impact and engagement through the SDGs framework, align their work to the SDGs through Griffith Expert webpages, and incentivise engagement with the SDGs through SDG Files.</p>	<p>From 2023, there will be a 10% annual increase in submissions to SDG Files and in the proportion of Griffith Expert profile pages that are tagged with SDGs.</p>





FOCUS	PRIORITY	ENABLING FRAMEWORK	
<b>OPERATIONS</b>	<b>Climate action</b>	<b>Climate Action Roadmap</b>	
	<b>Biodiversity conservation</b>	<b>Biodiversity Conservation Plan</b>	
	<b>Integrated water management</b>	<b>Water Management Plan</b>	
	<b>Circular economy and waste management</b>	<b>Waste Management Plan</b>	
	<b>Responsible procurement, supply and investment</b>	<b>Procurement and Supply Policy</b> <b>SDG Roadmap</b> <b>Waste Management Plan</b>	

19 Current emissions boundary include scope 1 (direct emissions largely due to our own fleet and fugitive refrigerant emissions), scope 2 (indirect emissions from energy use) and partial scope 3 (indirect emissions due to business travel, waste and supply chain).

20 regional ecosystem types and related areas of environmental significance, such as critical wildlife habitat

21 Bushfire Management Plans and Master Plans

22 Such as Green Star, Water Sensitive Urban Technical Design Guidelines for Southeast Queensland and the Griffith University Design Guidelines





KEY ACTIONS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>Through the development of a Climate Action Roadmap, Griffith University will deliver a climate positive future by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reaching net zero emissions by 2029, based on the defined emissions boundaries<sup>19</sup></li> <li>implementing a prioritised approach to organisational climate risks and adaptation</li> <li>preparing students of all disciplines to deal with the future impacts of climate change</li> <li>ensuring climate change research and engagement has local and global impact.</li> </ol>	<p>By 2029, Griffith University will achieve net zero emissions, based on the defined emissions boundary.</p> <hr/> <p>From 2025, Griffith University will progress towards a climate-resilient university through the implementation of prioritised measures to adapt to climate risks, plan for the climate future and harness emerging opportunities.</p>
<p>Undertake biodiversity monitoring to learn about campus ecosystems and inform campus planning and management.</p>	<p>Native forests on Griffith University, as measured through bio-condition assessments, will have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at least 80% of the native forest rated as high (score 1) by 2025</li> <li>an overall bio-condition score greater than the baseline year (2023 by 2030.).</li> </ol>
<p>Restore and enhance biodiversity on site through improved management and operational practices.</p>	<p>By 2030, there will be no loss of remnant vegetation<sup>20</sup> across our campuses, other than that which is unavoidable and required under university plans<sup>21</sup> Where that loss is planned for, it will be offset by new plantings that exceed existing regularity offsetting requirements, acknowledging that replanted vegetation does not hold the same biodiversity functions and values as remnant vegetation.</p>
<p>Build community, student and staff awareness of the important role biodiversity conservation has within our campuses as part of broader regional ecosystems.</p>	<p>From 2025 onwards, there will be an annual increase in the number of students and community members engaging with biodiversity conservation on Griffith University campuses, as measured through student numbers in campus-based fieldwork subjects and number of external participants in biodiversity-specific educational events.</p>
<p>Consider water sensitive urban design in campus developments.</p>	<p>All new development actively seeks to manage its water cycle impacts in a sustainable way considering water-conscious building standards<sup>22</sup></p>
<p>Monitor campus water use and identify opportunities to reduce potable water consumption.</p>	<p>By 2030, annual potable water consumption (average per full-time equivalent staff and students) will have reduced by 10% based on 2023 consumption.</p>
<p>Monitor and manage natural waterways on our campuses to ensure we support healthy catchments and improvement environmental outcomes.</p>	<p>By 2030, sensitive natural water bodies on campus will show no loss in ecological value or biodiversity and sediment erosion monitoring will show no deterioration in levels of waterway and catchment based on bi-annual ecological surveys compared with baseline year (2025).</p>
<p>Develop a Waste Management Plan to provide practical and measurable improvements in waste management that progresses towards a circular economy and low-waste campuses by 2030.</p> <p>Improve waste monitoring systems across the generated waste streams on campuses and analyse waste management performance and, alongside waste contractors, identify opportunities to improve performance in accordance with the waste hierarchy.</p>	<p>By 2030:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>annual waste to landfill (average per full-time equivalent staff and students from all sources) at Griffith University will be less than 30kg</li> <li>recycling diversion as a proportion of all waste will be greater than 25%.</li> </ol> <p>From 2024, organic waste on campus will be processed on campus to produce compost.</p>
<p>Eliminate single-use plastics from campus operations aligning with state government roadmap.</p>	<p>By 2030, all campuses will have zero single-use plastic across our food outlets, catering and non-medical consumables.</p>
<p>Reduce consumption, and where consumption is unavoidable, prioritise products that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have been repurposed</li> <li>can be reused or recycled at the end of asset life</li> <li>are from local, sustainable, and ethical sources</li> <li>are supplied by First Peoples' organisations.</li> </ul>	<p>From 2026, 3% of suppliers will be from First Peoples' organisations or groups, with an annual increase in suppliers or spend from First Peoples' organisations or groups and from social enterprises over baseline year (2023).</p> <hr/> <p>From 2026, university merchandise will be sourced, where possible, from ethical and sustainable manufacturing practices and post-consumer recycled materials.</p>

<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>ENABLING FRAMEWORK</b>	
<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>	Partnerships	Griffith University Engagement Strategy	
	Healthy and inclusive campuses	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
	Sustainable commuting for staff and students	Sustainable Transport Strategy	
<b>GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING</b>	Governance	Environmental Sustainability Committee Sustainability Operating Framework	
	Reporting	Environmental Management System Environmental Sustainability Policy	



KEY ACTIONS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
Have one major partnership that delivers on a key sustainability metric, such as climate resilience, biodiversity conservation and improving waterway health and that delivers measurable environmental and social improvements for the communities adjoining Griffith University campuses.	By 2027, we will have established a new major partnership focused on a Sustainable Development Goal/s that delivers tangible community outcomes around social, economic and environmental sustainability and we will ensure SDG elements are articulated where they exist for each major partnership.
Complete impact reports on our pathway to an Athena SWAN Silver Award.	We will aim to win at least one Cygnet Award annually until the end of 2025, with submission of our Athena SWAN Silver Award in 2026/27.
Expand the Getting To and From Campus Program offerings across all Griffith campuses, pending the success of the trials with suitable pathways to support sustainable commuting.	From 2025, there will be an annual increase of 5% over baseline year (2024) in the uptake of public transport usage, carpooling (as reported via the preferred carpooling application), and sustainable commuting transport such as e-scooters and (electric) bicycles (as measured through access to end-of-trip facilities and secure storage facilities monitoring).
Introduce an ISO-14001 aligned environmental management system to ensure compliance with environmental legislation and best practice environmental management.	By 2027, an Environmental Management System will be implemented.
Develop an annual sustainability report to track performance against the University's sustainability goals and commitments.	From 2024, an annual sustainability report will be published detailing performance against this strategy.
Investigate developing consolidated sustainability data repositories within existing IT infrastructure to facilitate data-driven decision-making, share information to internal and external parties, and provide evidence basis for sustainability reporting.	By 2027, sustainability data will be accessible through a centralised repository which facilitates open-access data visualisation.



