



ACU Global Strategy 2020-2023

INTRODUCTION

Deeply engaged, globally renowned

Up until 2020, international education in Australia underwent unprecedented growth and expansion. International enrolments in Australian higher education grew to 417,000 in 2019, and Australia became the third most popular destination for international students. Initiatives such as the New Colombo Plan have resulted in major increases in outbound student mobility and facilitated regional collaboration.

During this time, Australian Catholic University (ACU) also saw significant growth in its engagement and collaboration with leading international universities, the Catholic Church and international peak bodies. International enrolments have nearly doubled and 25% of all undergraduate students have enjoyed an international study experience.

2020, however, has seen the higher education sector world-wide confront one of the most significant challenges since World War 2, in the form of the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact on universities domestically and internationally has been profound.

Research activity and collaboration have been severely curtailed, global student mobility has all but ceased, international student enrolments have collapsed, institutional endowments have been severely impacted and universities have had to move swiftly into on-line teaching.

As the university pursues a new strategic direction articulated through the ACU Strategic Plan 2023, it must capitalise on the success of its global positioning in order to thrive and develop in the future. ACU is committed to being a globally engaged university. As a Catholic institution, the University will continue to encourage and support global engagement, leadership and innovation in teaching and research. Our strategic location in Rome provides the perfect avenue to progress these activities and advance our Catholic Mission.

This Global Strategy has been cast specifically to enable the university to swiftly pivot its strategic focus and respond to new and evolving challenges and opportunities.

OUR ROME CAMPUS

As a leading global, Catholic research university, it is critical that ACU's engagement with Rome and the Holy See is strong and enduring. Nestled in the heart of the Eternal City, our campus offers students and staff an opportunity to immerse themselves in the heart of the Catholic Church. It plays a critical role in reinforcing our Mission as one of the world's leading Catholic universities.

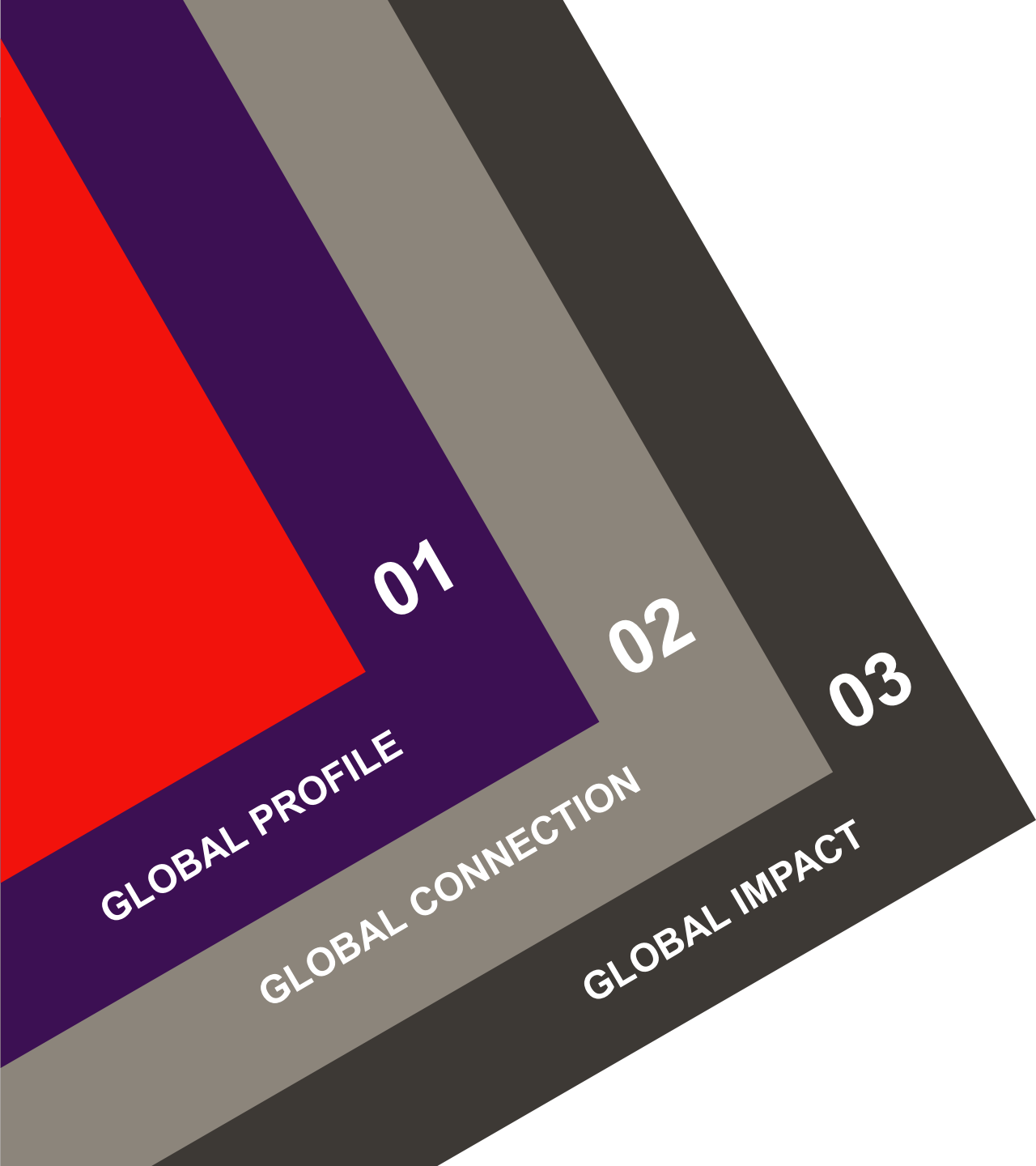
The campus serves staff and students seeking to become engaged global citizens through an expansive curriculum that embeds global perspectives across teaching research and engagement.

There are five elements to the University's strategic activities in Rome:

- 1. Church Relations.** The Campus will facilitate and support the university's global engagement with the Church which is critical to the university's position as a globally engaged and renowned Catholic university.
- 2. Programs.** The Rome Campus will offer students at all levels, the opportunity to study in one of the world's leading global cities, where for ACU and our partner's students, Rome becomes the classroom.

- 4. Research.** The Campus will support ACU's continued development as an institution of research excellence, through engagement with partners, the facilitation of research events and the enhancement of global profile.
- 5. Partnerships.** Our Rome Campus will provide ACU with the ability to deepen and expand our relationships with stakeholders in Rome and Europe including the Holy See.
- 6. Community engagement.** ACU will partner with the Sant' Egidio community and other social service organisations to provide students with opportunities to engage with and assist people in need. ACU will give students the opportunity to reflect on tangible ways they can have a positive impact in our world.





A MANDATE TO BE BOLD

Recasting the Global Strategy

The ACU Global Strategy is borne out of a time of high volatility. The full impact of Covid-19, the depth, length and aftermath of its disruption on the sector, the country, and the world, are largely unknown at the time of developing this strategy. As the world tentatively steps forward to find its 'new normal', how will this strategy work?

To answer this this, we took the time to ask the question about what are some of the bold actions we've been hesitant to pursue in the past, even as we've known they would eventually be required? Strange as it may seem, right now, in a moment of uncertainty, is precisely the time to boldly advance our global agenda and leverage our international partnerships and Rome Campus to achieve our goals.

Our aim to advance ACU's Mission, profile, connection and impact on the world stage remain unchanged, but the path to get there is now different. We will focus on injecting innovation into our approach, creating diversification in the breadth and quality of our offerings, as well as delivering an authentic digitalised global experience that is truly integrated into the learning experience.

ACU will have global profile which clearly articulates the vision and Catholic mission of the university

1.1

ACU will be a committed and active member of and provide leadership to key Catholic networks, and deepened partnerships with the Catholic church around the world.

1.2

ACU will strengthen and deepen its international partner network, developing both comprehensive and bespoke relationships. In doing so, the university will identify and forge new strategic partnerships that are mutually beneficial and support our Mission and global objectives.

1.3

ACU will be the leading Catholic university in the Asia Pacific region. ACU will increase its profile in the Asia Pacific Region and deepen and diversify the portfolio of partnerships, enrolment markets, program offerings and research opportunities.

ACU will build a community that is borderless, with global experience and connectivity at its heart.

2.1

ACU will be a vibrant and diverse community where physical and virtual opportunities for global citizenship are integrated into our curriculum to provide a distinctive education experience for all students.

2.2

ACU will grow its international enrolments in Australia as well as transnationally with a focus on sustainability and diversification. Central to this will be an intensified approach to priority markets, international partnerships, discipline diversification and driving innovation in new product development and implementation.

2.3

ACU will have an active and engaged community of international alumni who will remain connected to ACU and become advocates for ACU in their communities.

ACU will have a global impact through research, community engagement, academic excellence and collaboration with our international communities

3.1

ACU will focus on building and deepening partnerships with leading global universities and institutions it aspires to partner with. This will enhance the university's Mission, global reputation, research intensification strategy, community engagement, global university rankings, and student and staff mobility targets.

3.2

ACU will offer tailored programs across the Asia Pacific region that foster collaborative opportunities with international partners and Catholic organisations. This will support key Catholic stakeholder organisations in furthering their mission integration through enhancing formation to increase organisational impact.

3.3

ACU will grow its international research community through the recruitment of high quality international HDR students into areas of research excellence such as health, education, theology and philosophy, and collaborate in joint hosting and mentoring of research students.

Links to ACU Strategic Plan 2023
Strategic Priorities 3.1, 3.5, 3.6, 5.3

GLOBAL IMPACT

03

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS



GLOBAL RANKINGS

- THE World University Rankings: Top 500, 35 (score research metric), 30 (score teaching metric), Top 6 Catholic university
- QS World University Ranking: Top 500
- Top 20 in Sport Science and Top 25 in Nursing in ARWU



INTERNATIONAL ENROLMENTS

- 25% enrolment growth in new or underdeveloped disciplines, e.g. IT, Business, Public Health, Social Work, etc.
- 17.5% of overall enrolment are international students



PARTNERSHIPS

- Establish partnerships with 5 Top 400 (THE) universities in the Asia/Pacific
- A mutually-beneficial partnerships blueprint established and milestones implemented
- Strengthen the relationships with our network of international alumni to support ACU's Advancement Strategy and to broaden global professional and social connections



GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

- 25% of domestic UG and 15% of PG students have had a global experience at time of graduation
- Re-conceptualise the Rome Campus as an active learning, research and engagement focused campus.

