



Research and Enterprise Plan 2022–2023

World-leading research,
with impact.

Nurturing the research ecosystem

The priority of ACU's research intensification strategy, commenced in 2013, was to develop the university's standing within the academy. ACU's significant rise in world rankings attests to the success of this strategy.

The next stage of development for research at ACU is to expand beyond our current focus on a single component of research-related activity – knowledge creation – to nurture all components of the research ecosystem. In line with the current ACU Strategic Plan 2020-2023, the priority of the Research and Enterprise Plan 2022-2023 is to achieve sustainable excellence in the development of future research capability, effective infrastructure and systems, fundamental research, the translation of research, and the application of research.



Knowledge creation

World-leading fundamental research in focus areas addressing key issues and challenges, involving strategic global academic collaborations with leading research institutions, and partnerships with stakeholders.



Translation and impact

Real-world impact and outcomes from research translation, demonstrating tangible local, national and international social, cultural and economic benefits.



Partnerships

Connected and mutually enriching strategic national and international partnerships: build on existing partnerships with Catholic stakeholders in research and education-related activities, and develop new collaborations with industry, government and the wider community.



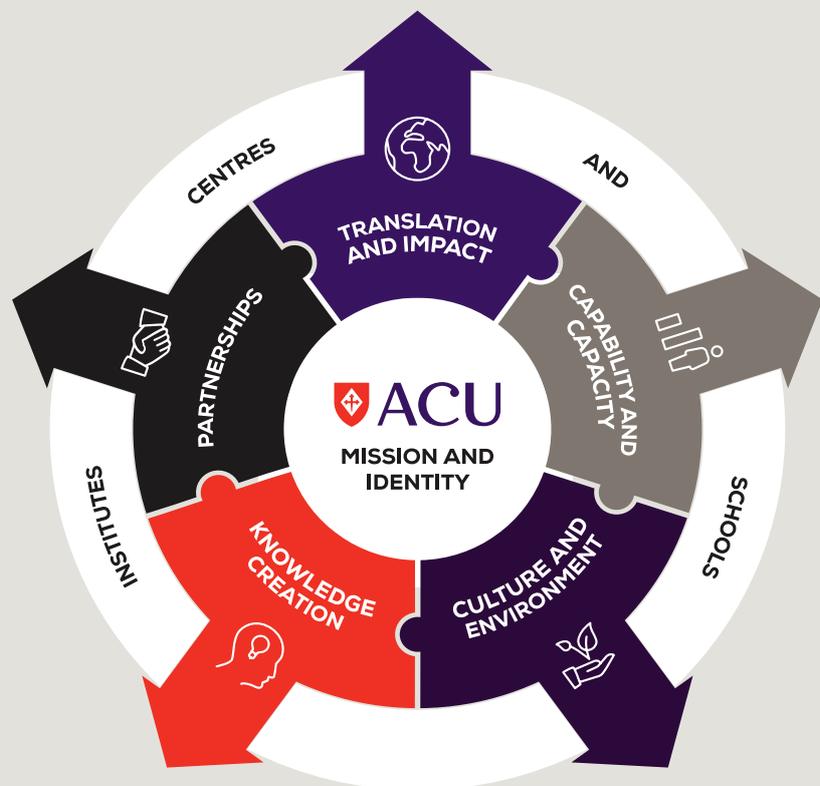
Culture and environment

A public-facing, engaged and vibrant academic community and a research-informed curriculum with structures and systems that inspire and drive excellence, support entrepreneurial initiatives and multidisciplinary exploration of global issues and challenges, and provide mentoring and leadership in research.



Capability and capacity

World-leading researchers driving excellence, developing and empowering future generations – with a particular focus on Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students and Early Career Researchers (ECR) – and increasing pathways and opportunities to ensure ACU develops world-ready graduate researchers.



Living the ACU Mission

A fundamental feature of our Catholic university identity is to ensure that ACU's research addresses the challenges and issues of contemporary society so as to improve the lives of all, especially those in greatest need. We seek here to be a creative contributor to the wellbeing of our local and global communities (*Ex corde Ecclesiae* 32-33). To achieve such impact ACU must engage in meaningful partnerships that serve the Church and the whole human family. The Research and Enterprise Plan 2022-2023 directly aligns with and advances ACU's responsibility as a Catholic university to promote the common good, support human need and uphold human dignity through its focus on the entire ecosystem of research-related activity.



Providing a structure

As a first step, ACU has consolidated the leadership of Research and Enterprise, locating Research Impact (under the leadership of Professor Sandra Jones) and Innovation and Industry Engagement (under the leadership of Professor Myriam Amielh) into the expanded Research and Enterprise portfolio. A Dean of Graduate Research (Professor Philip Parker) has been appointed to oversee the expansion and enrichment of Higher Degree by Research. The expanded Research and Enterprise portfolio will support industry and community partnerships in research and education to address global social challenges and deliver real-world outcomes.

The next essential step is a recalibration of the way ACU's research expertise is profiled, moving from the current discipline-based descriptions to broad, mission-driven programmatic themes that can be readily understood by end-users and the wider community. Through consultation with internal and external stakeholders, ACU will identify up to five programmatic themes which articulate the university's commitment to creating a better future for humanity.

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE

Research Impact

Innovation and Industry Engagement

Graduate Research

Research Services



Supporting ACU's Strategic Plan

The Research and Enterprise Plan 2022-2023 will support the three focus areas that underpin the ACU Strategic Plan 2020-2023. The 2022 and 2023 priorities for the research ecosystem are directly linked to the ACU Strategic Plan and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and are grounded in the university's mission.



Opportunity

In the ways we activate early career schemes and higher degree research to support our talent pipeline and cultivate professional growth.



Innovation

In the ways we translate research into economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts to effect positive change in our communities.



Ethics

In our sustained activities to forge strong and mutually beneficial local, national and international partnerships and networks to develop research outcomes that benefit the wider community.



Knowledge creation

World-leading fundamental research in focus areas addressing key issues and challenges, involving strategic global academic collaborations with leading research institutions, and partnerships with stakeholders.

SUPPORTING ACU'S STRATEGIC PLAN											
2022–2023 RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM PRIORITIES	SP LINKS	KPI	IMPLEMENTATION								
			2022				2023				
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Implement <i>Competitive Grant Start Up</i> scheme to increase the number of high-quality competitive grant applications	3.1, 3.6, 4.2	14, 15	●	●				●	●		
Establish a Research and Enterprise gateway hub at the Rome Campus	3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 5.1, 5.8	14, 22						●	●	●	●
Continue the focus on high-quality publications	3.1, 4.3, 5.1	14, 15, 23, 26	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Update and revise publication lists as indicative guides	3.1, 5.1, 5.2	14, 15, 23, 26		●					●		
Establish an ACU health precinct based in Melbourne (including the establishment of a metabolic chamber) that will develop collaborative partnerships with other campuses	3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.7	14, 15, 22, 23, 29		●	●	●		●	●		
Prepare for ERA 2023 assessment	3.1, 5.1, 5.2	14, 23	●	●	●	●		●	●		



Partnerships

Connected and mutually enriching strategic national and international partnerships: build on existing partnerships with Catholic stakeholders in research and education-related activities, and develop new collaborations with industry, government and the wider community.

SUPPORTING ACU'S STRATEGIC PLAN										
2022-2023 RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM PRIORITIES	SP LINKS	KPI	IMPLEMENTATION							
			2022				2023			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Establish <i>PartnershipInvest</i> scheme for industry-linked collaboration, consultancy, revenue diversification and commercialisation (includes corporate scholarships, Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs, innovation vouchers, tenders and hackathons)	3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 2.7, 5.3, 5.6	15, 16, 17, 29		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Grow university-based consultancy income and facilitate translation to research partnerships	3.3, 5.3, 5.6	15, 16, 17	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Increase participation in strategic industry networks (e.g., Sphere, Defence Science Institute)	3.3, 3.5, 5.3	16, 17, 29	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Strengthen preferred, long-term local, national and international stakeholder partnerships	3.3, 3.5, 5.3, 5.6, 5.8	16, 17, 28, 29	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Develop an industry contact hub for collaboration, and review existing partnerships for research opportunities	3.5, 2.7, 5.3, 5.6	28, 29		•	•	•	•	•	•	•



Translation and impact

Real-world impact and outcomes from research translation, demonstrating tangible local, national and international social, cultural and economic benefits.

SUPPORTING ACU'S STRATEGIC PLAN											
2022–2023 RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM PRIORITIES	SP LINKS	KPI	IMPLEMENTATION								
			2022				2023				
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Establish impact hubs in designated areas	3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 5.3, 5.6	15, 16, 17		●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Implement <i>Translate4Impact</i> scheme to support research translation, including opportunities to embed end-users, practitioners and students in research projects	3.1, 3.3, 3.5	15, 16, 17		●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Prepare for E&I 2024 assessment	3.1, 5.1, 5.2	22, 23	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Undertake groundwork for the E&I 2027 assessment, including support of the Vice-Chancellor impact priority areas to foster interdisciplinary research engagement, and the development of articulated research impact support plans in designated areas	3.1, 3.5, 4.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6	16, 17, 22, 23	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●

Culture and environment



A public-facing, engaged and vibrant academic community and a research-informed curriculum with structures and systems that inspire and drive excellence, support entrepreneurial initiatives and multidisciplinary exploration of global issues and challenges, and provide mentoring and leadership in research.

SUPPORTING ACU'S STRATEGIC PLAN										
2022-2023 RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM PRIORITIES	SP LINKS	KPI	IMPLEMENTATION							
			2022				2023			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Increase collaboration between institutes, centres and schools on research and on research-informed learning experiences (e.g., joint HDR supervision, grant projects, mentoring, opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students to engage with research during their studies)	3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4	14, 15, 20, 23		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Establish a Research and Enterprise mentoring program, including entrepreneurship training, in collaboration with the faculties	3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.6, 4.3	14, 15, 20, 23			•	•	•	•	•	•
Enhance infrastructure support for grant writing, submission of tenders, industry collaboration and for research translation	3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 4.3	14, 15, 16, 17		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Review of policies and procedures for ethics, integrity and compliance to ensure best practice	3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 4.3	14, 15				•	•			
Undertake functional review of research institutes	3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3	14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23		•	•	•				

Capability and capacity



World-leading researchers driving excellence, developing and empowering future generations – with a particular focus on Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students and Early Career Researchers (ECR) – and increasing pathways and opportunities to ensure ACU develops world-ready graduate researchers.

SUPPORTING ACU'S STRATEGIC PLAN										
2022–2023 RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM PRIORITIES	SP LINKS	KPI	IMPLEMENTATION							
			2022				2023			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Continue growth in the number of timely HDR completions and in the number of HDR enrolments	3.6, 1.3, 4.2	18, 19, 23	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Enrich HDR candidature experience, including increased end-user and broader industry partner collaboration (e.g., joint industry-funded scholarships, industry internships and end-user co-supervision; continue to grow supervisory capacity and capability; career development programs)	3.2, 3.6, 2.8, 5.3	18, 19, 23		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Implement <i>ACU Early Career Researcher Development</i> scheme	3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.3	20, 23		●		●	●			
Targeting onshore appointments for future talent recruitment of ECRs and high-profile researchers	3.1, 3.6, 4.3	14, 15, 20, 22	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Review structure, role and support of research centres in consultation with faculties	3.1, 3.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4	14, 15, 22, 23			●	●	●	●	●	●

Appendix

KPIs WITH 2023 TARGETS	
KPI	2023 TARGETS
14 Research is 'at or above world standard' and 'well-above world standard' in research strategic priorities	
14.1 Research is 'at or above world standard' in areas of specialisation	80% at 2-digit FoR 100% at 4-digit FoR
14.2 Research is 'well above world standard' in areas of specialisation	40% at 2-digit FoR 75% at 4-digit FoR
15 Total research income (government and non-government)	Greater than \$7.5 million
16 Research Engagement (HERDC Category 2-4 income)	Sector median
17 Research Engagement (HERDC Category 2-4 income proportion)	Sector median
18 Proportion of HDR students	Sector median
19 HDR timely submission rate	Baseline is 75%, no target set
20 Proportion of Early Career Researchers (ECRs)	Baseline is 9.2%, no target set
22 Research influence	86%
23 Strengthen global recognition in research and teaching	35 in research Top 500 overall
26 Proportion of quality co-authored publications with international partners	52%
28 International and domestic reputation	Top 500
29 Proportion of identified industry partners with a strategic partnerships agreement in place	50%

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