

# Shaping a sustainable future together

CONSULTATION PAPER  
ON THE NUW ALLIANCE

University of Newcastle —  
University of New South Wales —  
University of Wollongong —



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE  
AUSTRALIA



UNSW  
SYDNEY



UNIVERSITY  
OF WOLLONGONG  
AUSTRALIA

# HELP US SHAPE THE FUTURE OF NSW

Universities are increasingly critical to the success of local economies. In addition to providing a skilled workforce, universities need to work with their local communities on transformational projects to generate new ideas and innovative approaches to business, to drive economic growth, job creation and future industries.

The *NUW Alliance* is a commitment by three of Australia's leading research-intensive universities, the University of Newcastle (UON), the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and the University of Wollongong (UOW), to harness their shared experience, global reach and excellence in innovation, to create new knowledge, grow more jobs and build new businesses to benefit the economic and social wellbeing of our local communities and beyond.

With a geographical reach from the mid-north coast to the south coast of NSW, our 3 universities are working to achieve something transformational for NSW – something that would be impossible for just one university to achieve on its own and will make a lasting difference to the lives of people in our State.

Working with business, industry and government, as well as local community groups, the *NUW Alliance* aims to identify areas where our combined efforts can create economic growth, solve local problems and deliver practical benefits. And we want you to be part of this.

An important first step for the *NUW Alliance* is to start a conversation with the people and sectors we hope to benefit. We want to understand what and where the local issues are and investigate areas where our shared resources can work together to provide a solution. To achieve this, we need your help.

This consultation program is a remarkable opportunity to be actively involved in guiding the future direction of the *NUW Alliance* – and the future of NSW and its regions.

We are strongly encouraging all members of our communities to think carefully about the challenges they face and where collective resources could provide the right solution or work to benefit. We look forward to hearing from you about how we can make a difference for the people of NSW.



**Vice-Chancellor**  
**Professor Caroline McMillen**  
University of Newcastle



**Vice-Chancellor**  
**Professor Ian Jacobs**  
University of New South Wales



**Vice-Chancellor**  
**Professor Paul Wellings CBE**  
University of Wollongong

## SMART IDEAS FOR COMPLEX PROBLEMS

The policy issues facing NSW today will have impacts well into the future for our communities. From tackling energy security and unlocking the benefits of big data, to improving healthcare solutions and creating liveable communities, there are many areas where greater collaboration can deliver transformational change.

The creation of the *NUW Alliance* followed detailed discussions among our respective University Councils and meetings of our senior leadership teams. Here it was unanimously agreed that there were tremendous opportunities for the three universities to work together collaboratively with the people of NSW to help shape the future of the state.

Brought together by our shared vision, the *NUW Alliance* is the first grouping of its kind in Australia and is based on similar alliances internationally, such as northern England's N8 Research Partnership and the SETsquared Partnership in southern half of the country, which have delivered significant value to their communities by leveraging complementary strengths in a co-located geographic region to benefit the local communities they serve.

Positioned through the Mid North Coast, Hunter, Central Coast, Sydney, Illawarra and South Coast regions – home to more than 25% of Australia's population - the *NUW Alliance* universities educate over 120,000 students across 25 campuses in NSW and overseas, and collectively earn more than \$500 million in research income, including \$112 million sourced from national and international industry partners.

Combining our multidisciplinary research, educational and innovation clusters we have the skills and resources to tackle some of the biggest challenges and deliver smart solutions for NSW.

- **37,181** students
- **23,372** undergraduate
- **6,488** postgraduate
- **1,752** higher degree research
- **3,207** Enabling students

**3,222 STAFF**

- **5** Faculties
- **15** Schools
- **2** Institutes
- **70** UON and external research centres

**CAMPUSES IN**

Newcastle, Central Coast, Port Macquarie, Sydney and Singapore

**RESEARCH STRENGTHS**

- Energy, resources, food & water
- Engineering & future technologies
- Health & medical research
- Creative industries
- Education & social sciences

- **56,085** students
- **34,177** undergraduate
- **16,126** postgraduate
- **4,215** higher degree research

**6,189 STAFF**

- **8** Faculties
- **1** College
- **47** Schools
- **125** UNSW and external centres and institutes

**CAMPUSES IN**

Kensington and Paddington, and at UNSW Canberra at the Australian Defence Force Academy

**RESEARCH STRENGTHS**

- Biomedical sciences
- Water, climate, environment and sustainability
- Next generation materials and technologies
- Defence and security
- Social policy, government and health policy
- ICT, robotics and devices
- Law, business and economics

- **34,144** students
- **23,976** undergraduate
- **7,235** postgraduate
- **1,695** higher degree research

**2,373 STAFF**

- **5** Faculties
- **1** College
- **22** Schools
- **67** UOW and external research centres

**CAMPUSES IN**

Wollongong, Batemans Bay, Bega, Moss Vale, Shoalhaven, Southern Sydney, Central Sydney CBD, Liverpool, Hong Kong and Dubai

**RESEARCH STRENGTHS**

- Advanced manufacturing
- Materials science and engineering materials
- Health and medical research
- Education and social inclusion
- Ocean resources and security
- Medical and molecular bioscience
- Smart Infrastructure

## HOW CAN THE NUW ALLIANCE HELP?

We know this is a time of great opportunity. The State of NSW generates over 33% (2015-16) of the country's GDP and houses the financial, commercial and legal engine room of Australia. It is also arguably the country's cultural crucible. It is truly one of the most beautiful and stable places on earth to live. Yet there are significant issues that we still grapple with as a State, such as:

- The pace of **technological change** and our ability to keep up – particularly for our young people who need new skills to take up productive and fulfilling jobs in the future, and to ensure our economy stays strong and continues to grow
- Whilst over 80% of our population lives in our vibrant coastal cities, the remainder live in regional and remote communities where access to key services such as **healthcare** is more challenging. How could university research and innovation help us to deliver health advice and early intervention more successfully to people living in the farthest reaches of our State?
- Unemployment in NSW is low at 4.8% but there are still communities where unemployment – particularly **youth**

**unemployment** is over 50%. How can universities help provide training and development opportunities over the long term, to address systemic unemployment in our more remote communities?

- Access to the very best **education**, from primary school through to university, should be available to all children in our State. How should we be thinking and collaborating differently, to make our education model the best in the world and to ensure we leave no child behind?
- Our Indigenous communities are an important part of our past and integral to our future. How can we **support the ideas and aspirations of our First Australians**?

The NUW Alliance is now ready to start a conversation with our communities, local business, industry and government leaders to better understand the challenges they face and feel most passionately about, and help identify where gaps in research and knowledge might be contributing to those challenges. Importantly, we want to identify ways where the NUW Alliance can help fill those gaps so NSW can prosper.

## DEFINING OUR PURPOSE AND ACTIONS

To help start the conversations we have identified a number of ideas that take advantage of our collaborative strengths in education, health and technology these will be shared in greater detail during the public consultation period.

Ideas include:

- Developing skills in critically important new sectors for NSW, such as **cybersecurity**, a relatively new field for most businesses and industries and now a major priority for governments at all levels. Here the NUW Alliance could develop and deliver collaborative new programs to meet industry skills shortages, and work with key industries such as financial services and defence to identify new frontiers of cybersecurity research and innovation centres
- Applying "**Smart Cities**" technologies to improve the connectivity, productivity and liveability of our regional cities and coastal communities. This might include conducting or overseeing regional air pollution studies - a priority in the NSW State Plan - or analysing big urban datasets to determine better ways to build or develop our regions.
- Partnering with health services to **improve healthcare systems** and outcomes for the community, for example by establishing telehealth networks to connect rural and remote communities, or analysing some of the state's largest health databases to support evidence-informed healthcare.
- Supporting organisations to address energy security and resilience, at a local, regional or even national level. For instance, understanding how planning can be improved to ensure maintenance of electricity services to local communities in extreme weather events such as heatwaves.
- Creating **greater access to education for students** in regional and remote communities – including Indigenous students – that could include access to greater support, supervision and resources or providing more opportunities for scholarships.

Of course there are many other ways in which the NUW Alliance can work together with the people of NSW to help shape the future of our State. These ideas are here to start a conversation that we hope will see grow over time to drive innovation, economic growth, and equity for the people of NSW.

## HELP US TO SOLVE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES FACING NSW

Over the coming months, the NUW Alliance will engage with key groups across the State, including the health, education, business and government sectors, along with Indigenous and other community groups to understand how the aims of the NUW Alliance align with the priorities of stakeholders across the state and to look for opportunities for knowledge exchange.

Some of the questions we would like to put to you include:

- What are the key challenges – economic, social and technological - facing NSW and its communities?
- What are the most important actions or projects to include in the NUW Alliance?
- How can the NUW Alliance work more effectively with government, industry, business and community groups to deliver better economic and social benefits?

Together we hope that this consultation process brings to light issues and challenges facing communities in NSW, which the combined efforts of our three universities can address through research, innovation and intellectual capability, leading to better outcomes for the people of NSW.

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY FEEDBACK?

Your input will help to define the direction of the NUW Alliance and ensure that its work reflects the diverse needs of government, organisations, individuals and community groups across NSW.

Once all feedback is collated and considered, a refined set of NUW Alliance goals and a list of priority actions for each focus area will be published, as well as a timeline for when these actions will commence.

With your input we can unlock the full potential of a NUW Alliance for NSW.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Consultation on the NUW Alliance is now open. To find out more about the NUW Alliance or to determine how we can help you please contact us.

**Keryn Stewart**  
Policy Advisor  
University of Newcastle  
P: +61 2 49217321  
E: keryn.stewart@newcastle.edu.au

**Peter Noble**  
Chief of Staff and Vice President  
University of NSW (UNSW)  
Sydney  
P: +61 2 9385 9131  
E: peter.noble@unsw.edu.au

**Canio Fierravanti**  
Director, Government Relations  
University of Wollongong  
P: +61 2 4221 5931  
E: caniof@uow.edu.au

Or Visit our website [www.nuwalliance.edu.au](http://www.nuwalliance.edu.au)

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