Annual statement of progress 2017

Background and context
Making the Future Partnership 2015-2025 brings together the Tasmanian Government and the University of Tasmania in a 10 year agreement with the expectation of an ongoing future shared commitment.

The Agreement outlines bold plans designed to position Tasmanian education at the heart of the State’s future. The Tasmanian Government and the University of Tasmania appreciate and acknowledge the contribution made by the wider community including the industry, education, health and community sectors to the objectives of the Making the Future Partnership.

Progress towards partnership objectives
We have advanced all Partnership objectives in 2017. Over the past year we have worked to revitalise regions, deliver results for communities and build and deepen relationships.

Regions
The Partnership supports regional revitalisation through strategic investment, developing infrastructure and partnering with industry and local communities. This includes:

> Establishing a joint commitment to, and investment in, infrastructure in Northern and North West Tasmania to support learning pathways and increase the volume and diversity of opportunities for Tasmanians.
> The Tasmanian Government committing $75 million towards the building of new campuses.
> Restructuring course delivery and increasing student numbers across Northern Tasmania including planning for the establishment of an institute for applied science and design in Launceston.
> Achieving Priority Project status on the Infrastructure Australia Priority List for the Tasmanian Innovation Network STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Centre in Hobart with a vision to anchor STEM research nodes in Burnie and Launceston.

> Supported industry driven research and innovation including:
  • Assisting agricultural businesses, for instance through the launch of the Aspirations in Food and Agriculture project, a major initiative to define the future direction of the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture’s (TIA’s) research, development and extension to determine how we can create value for the agriculture sector.
  • Helping ensure farmers are equipped with the right skills, information and access to research and online irrigation and cropping tools to increase profits and sustainability through the Water for Profit Program.
  • Developing new objective management systems for the abalone fishery industry to propose revised quota limits around Tasmania.
  • Commencing construction on Tasmania’s most ambitious cultural and arts infrastructure project – a $96 million creative industries and performing arts development, The Hedberg.
  • Partnering to increase international student numbers, including joint international student recruitment missions and education agent familiarisation tours.
  • Supporting the University’s Asia Institute through grant funding to undertake research, education and development activities with a focus on the broader Asian region.
  • Helping shellfish farmers manage impacts of Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) and harmful algal blooms through research to show best husbandry practice.
  • Undertaking research at the Experimental Aquaculture Facility on large salmon improved feed formulations for Tasmanian summer conditions and increased food security by reducing fish meal (in partnership with Huon Aquaculture, Skretting Australia and the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS)).
  • Creating hubs such as the National Institute of Forest Products Innovation informing industry and skills acquisition of the future.
Results
We delivered real outcomes for Tasmania’s communities, industry and individuals. A number of activities and initiatives have been improving opportunities for Tasmanians to access learning. This includes:

> Inspiring young people through the Children’s University in Tasmania with 15 schools participating, 273 participants undertaking 10,466 hours of extracurricular learning at 152 Learning Destinations in 2017. The Children’s University in Tasmania is coordinated through the Peter Underwood Centre.

> Supporting talented young people to achieve their full potential through a new Premier’s scholarship fund including the Education Inspiration Scholarship Program.

> Launching five Associate degrees (Agribusiness, Applied Business, Applied Design, Applied Science, Applied Technologies) through the University College which have been designed with industry and responds to sector skills needs.

> Launching the Global Education Growth Strategy to increase the Tasmanian share of the international education market. In the past 12 months, enrolments of international students undertaking higher education in Tasmania increased from 4,147 to 5,019 – an increase of 17 per cent.

> Launching the Health Flagship Research Programmes in Multiple Sclerosis, Obesity and Dementia under the leadership of the Menzies Institute for Medical Research.

Relationships
The relationship between the Tasmanian Government and the University has gone from strength to strength. Activity across the two organisations has grown with firm foundations of strong networks and many and varied relationships across Government and the University. We have:

> Worked together through the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and the TIA on research, development and extension opportunities for the agriculture sector. This led to the release of the Tasmanian Government’s White Paper – Growing Tasmanian Agriculture RD&E for 2050.

> Facilitated and supported a number of forums including:
  • The Education Transforms Symposium 2017, an international meeting organised by the Peter Underwood Centre, brought together scholars, policy-makers and practitioners to reflect on and share insights about our collective mission to raise aspirations for educational attainment.
• The 2017 Tasmanian Economic Forum discussed Tasmanian economic issues.

• The University of Tasmania led Symposium brought together representatives from across Australia to examine the role of higher education in reimagining and revitalising communities.

• The Blue Futures Conference, hosted by IMAS, brought together all the Tasmanian Salmonid companies and government.

Focus for 2018

> Progressing the Northern campuses projects in Burnie and Launceston.

> Developing and delivering Associate Degrees and undergraduate degrees across the State.

> Continuing construction of The Hedberg creative industries and performing arts development, with the project scheduled for completion in 2019.

> Furthering capability and cooperation for the Tasmanian Defence sector, including activity to support a potential Defence Innovation and Design Precinct in Newnham through the University of Tasmania and Department of State Growth Joint Defence Industry Steering Committee.

> Undertaking a strategic review of the University’s capability and opportunities in the maritime defence sector in connection with those of the Tasmanian maritime cluster more broadly.

> Investigating, identifying opportunities and developing a business case for the future repurposing of the Newnham campus, including its potential use as a Defence Innovation and Design Precinct.

> The research sector and community stakeholders met with international experts to lay the groundwork for a Global Salmon Symposium to be held in Hobart in 2018.

> The Tasmanian Defence Futures Forum, hosted by the Department of State Growth, brought together Tasmanian industry, the University and Australian defence representatives and leading international manufactures, to provide a platform to inform industry about key defence initiatives, including research and engagement with key public and private sector defence personnel.

> Continuing implementation of the Global Education Strategy.

> Identifying sustainable opportunities for Antarctic and Southern Oceans partnerships.

> Increasing collaboration in health and medical research and professional education to improve health outcomes for Tasmanians.

> Developing a greater understanding of the future of work and providing the opportunity to keep ahead with the knowledge and the skills needed to succeed.

> Collaborating to implement the More Teachers, Quality Teaching: Tasmania’s Education Workforce Action Plan which will see 250 more teachers in Tasmanian schools.

> Continuing to inspire young people through the Children’s University in Tasmania with a further seven schools to join in 2018.

> Reviewing the Partnership Agreement in line with a commitment to review every three years.