

Friday, 10 September 2021

Opening milestone for Cradle Coast campus

A new University of Tasmania campus has opened for the North-West community in Burnie.

Shaped by, and built for, the region, the Cradle Coast campus at West Park will allow more people to study closer to home, enable new courses to be offered, and provide students with distinctive learning experiences.

The campus will serve an entire region, making higher education more accessible, while welcoming community and industry and adding to the vitality of Burnie.

The \$52 million development is the first building to be brought to life through the Northern Transformation Program and was funded through contributions from the Tasmanian and Australian Governments, Burnie City Council, and the University.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Rufus Back said it was exciting to see the transformation vision for the region being realised as the campus celebrated its opening week.

“This has been a project delivered for and with the community and has resulted in our students being able to learn in the sort of truly contemporary learning facilities that will mean their educational opportunities will be as good as you will find anywhere,” Professor Black said.

“It is also a building you could find nowhere else - a building about the Coast. Its design reflects the headlands that stretch along the rugged Bass Strait coastline, the rolling fields of the region and the industrial heritage of Burnie.

“It is a campus that is distinctive to the region, with new educational offerings that respond to the needs of the North-West and West Coast communities it will serve.

“Importantly, it complements the surrounding West Park precinct and its rich history as a gathering place for people to enjoy learning, recreational, cultural, and community activities.”

Professor Black said growing and strengthening the University on the Coast was part of a commitment to being regionally networked and ensuring students had more opportunities to study and gain the skills and knowledge they need closer to home.

“Improving access to education sits at the heart of our mission. We want people to be able to stay in their community to further their learning rather than incur the costs of transport and living away,” Professor Black said.

“The new campus spaces have not only allowed us to grow our local programs, but to also evolve our teaching in a way that is more interactive, industry-relevant and flexible - reflecting how students here want to engage with study.

“We look forward to the bright future ahead as we continue working closely with communities to help solve the issues that matter to them through teaching and research.”

Construction has been overseen by local firm Fairbrother with 552 workers engaged to support the build, 440 of them living and working in North-West communities.

In sourcing materials and services, a strong emphasis was placed on prioritising local contractors and suppliers, enabling economic benefits for the region to flow.

The campus design was led by John Wardle Architects and supported by local firm Philp Lighton with features including contemporary, immersive learning facilities, social spaces for students, staff, and the community to enjoy, a sustainable green roof with more than 10,000 native plants, a café and a central courtyard.

The development has already paved the way for the Bachelor of Nursing and Bachelor of Psychological Science to be offered locally this year, with an accelerated Bachelor of Business and Master of Business Administration the next additions to complement existing courses on offer.

Staged works will continue across West Park until mid-2022 to finalise sections of the shared car park for site users, landscaping and penguin habitat regeneration, and to build a new \$1.5 million purpose-built home for the City of Burnie Brass Band and Burnie Highland Pipe Band.

The community is invited to tour the new campus during the University's [Burnie Open Day event](#) happening **tomorrow (Saturday, 11 September)** from 10am – 2pm.

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