USC

Strategic Plan
2019–2022

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Rise, and shine.

Our University

USC was founded by its community in 1996 in the belief that opportunity is everywhere, and especially in regional Queensland. The first green field university to open in Australia since 1971, in just over 20 years USC has helped unlock the innovation, productivity and potential of its regional communities. Its impact on economic, social, cultural and environmental development is clear, with almost 18,000 students, more than 120 Higher Education programs, $400 million invested in infrastructure and $9 billion flowing into the local economy, including through the contributions of its 21,000 graduates.

USC has planned its growth carefully in response to its region's needs to obtain and improve knowledge, skills and resources, to effect social change and to meet 21st century challenges. This regional focus has now expanded well beyond the original Sunshine Coast campus to encompass the region between Moreton Bay and Fraser Coast. While the needs and aspirations of these geographic communities occasionally differ in detail, the greatest opportunities for building community prosperity lie in drawing together the complementary expertise, efforts and assets of the entire region. The challenge for USC in this strategic plan is to contribute to and, where appropriate, to lead this regional advancement in a sustainable way, and in doing so truly become an unsurpassed community asset.

USC's history offers firm foundations to build upon as we pursue this strategic plan. USC remains the most awarded university for quality teaching in Queensland, with an independently assessed five-star teaching quality ranking awarded 13 years in a row. Research activity, impact and quality have been growing exponentially for the past five years. Initiatives in sport, health and mental health, school engagement, and national and international linkages all demonstrate our breadth of focus in supporting and serving our communities. Our commitment to environmental sustainability is reflected in teaching and research, as well as award-winning campus operations.

We'll carry this same determination to provide quality Higher Education opportunities for regional communities into USC Moreton Bay, a new full-service campus on the northern edge of Brisbane created for a local community of 450,000 people. A key priority of our Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022 is establishing and then integrating this campus into USC's existing network of campuses, learning hubs, specialist research and clinical sites, field stations and other infrastructure developments, so that the region gains the greatest benefit from it.

Our Plan

The USC Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022 is our vision for the next stage of the University's development as a uniquely successful, regionally focused institution with a growing international profile. This vision is reflected in the three goals articulated in the plan. Six imperatives provide the focus for how these goals will be achieved. Each imperative includes a description of the future state we seek, the priorities and initiatives which tell us where to put our effort, and the measures by which we will gauge our success. We are ambitious for all our communities and stakeholders, and look forward to working with them to build a bright future.

Our Commitments

USC is a responsible employer and educator. Our staff and students are committed to

- protecting the health, safety and well-being of all our people
- considering the views and choices of others, and
- acting with integrity.

Our Vision

USC will be a university of international standing and an unsurpassed community asset, focusing on the region from Moreton Bay to Fraser Coast.

Our Strategic Goals

USC will be

- a primary engine of capacity building for our region
- a comprehensive multi-campus university growing towards 35,000 students, and
- positioned globally as a top-500 university, and a top-100 university under 50 years of age.

Our Imperatives

USC will

- increase student enrolments and improve student success
- increase research productivity and impact
- fulfil the potential of its expanded geographic footprint
- improve institutional effectiveness
- provide leadership in capacity building
- strengthen engagement with its communities

Our Values in Action

SCHOLARSHIP
Academic activity and achievement underpin education at USC. This is enabled by the highest quality educational experience and environment for students and staff, one that supports achievements now and into the future.

DISCOVERY
Research, particularly in areas of community challenges and needs, is a core activity of the University.

SUSTAINABILITY
Supporting sustainability and capacity building across social, economic, cultural and environmental domains is a core responsibility of the University.

ENGAGEMENT
The University is passionately committed to working with and for its diverse communities.

RESPECT
At all times USC staff and students treat each other, the community and the environment with respect.

SOCIAL JUSTICE
The University is committed to advancing human rights within a free, tolerant and inclusive society and contributing to better outcomes for all Australians.

The University respects and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, land, culture and history and will work collaboratively to advance Indigenous outcomes

INTEGRITY
The University has an overarching commitment to freedom of enquiry and expression.

Priorities, initiatives and key result areas to deliver the six imperatives

1. USC will increase student enrolments and improve student success

USC will be a comprehensive university with an aspiration to have 35,000 students and double the number of USC graduates within the next decade. To achieve significant and sustainable growth of our student body, we will increase the numbers and diversity of students we attract to USC and enhance the quality of their experiences and learning outcomes.

PRIORITIES

1. Strategically develop and support innovative and distinct programs and courses that strengthen graduate employment.
2. Expand access and pathways into USC.
3. Focus on initiatives and support that enhance student engagement and maximise student success.
4. Expand and diversify international student enrolments.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. Increased student enrolments in total and as planned for each campus.
2. Demonstrable improvements in student success.

2. USC will increase research productivity and impact

Research performance is key to USC's standing, and in meeting 21st century challenges locally, nationally and internationally. USC is committed to further develop and expand research capacity and productivity and translate this into meaningful outcomes.

PRIORITIES

1. Expand research capacity focusing on areas of strength, and further embed a research culture throughout USC.
2. Increase HDR enrolments as a proportion of total enrolments.
3. Create productive research partnerships with industry, both domestically and internationally, that lead to meaningful research outputs and applications.
4. Expand commercialisation of USC innovations.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. Times Higher Education ranking improvement.
2. Improvement in standard input and output research metrics and external assessments such as ERA.
3. Demonstrable research impact.

3. USC will fulfil the potential of its expanded geographic footprint

USC will realise the potential of its multi-campus network for the benefit of the communities within our geographic footprint.

This includes leveraging the distinctive features of each site to ensure USC is sustainable and responsive to local needs and opportunities.

PRIORITIES

1. Ensure the success of USC Moreton Bay.
2. Implement sustainable academic, resourcing and development plans for the campus network, ensuring the multi-campus vision is realised.
3. Ensure USC is a valuable and valued anchor institution for the diverse communities we serve through our campus network.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. All campuses performing as planned, with demonstrable contributions to the realisation of USC's vision and goals.

4. USC will improve institutional effectiveness

Institutional effectiveness and long-term planning underpin USC's decision-making. USC will be selective and strategic in its choices, and will be effective in aligning planning, evaluation and budgeting processes with its strategic aspirations. Efficient and adaptive University operations will help facilitate USC's achievement of the goals in this Strategic Plan.

PRIORITIES

1. Attract, retain and support staff who are committed to USC's vision and values.
2. Embed a commitment to excellence and leadership within the University's governance, management and decision-making frameworks.
3. Improve systems, processes and structures to secure efficiency gains, and reporting and analysis capability to guide decision making.
4. Effect responsible and innovative management of resources that supports the University's strategic goals.
5. Develop and implement plans in key business areas to underpin institutional sustainability.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. Continued improvement in the University's operational cost structure to allow greater investment in strategic activities.
2. Improvement in staff composition and ratios (student:staff, professional:academic) to better align the workforce with the University's strategic ambitions.

5. USC will embrace and strengthen its role as a driver of capacity building

USC will play a leadership role in capacity building, helping to prepare the region for significant shifts in environmental, economic and social conditions that will play out over the coming decades. This implies a broader view of working within and beyond the region with regards to gaining and improving knowledge, skills and resources to effect social change and meet 21st century challenges. USC will also demonstrate an organisational commitment to social, economic and environmental sustainability and inclusion in decision making and priority setting.

PRIORITIES

1. Develop a better understanding of USC's current and potential contribution to economic, social and environmental sustainability in the region, and use this information in planning and decision making.

2. Partner with industry and government to contribute to the development and sustainability of the region.

3. Implement strong USC environmental sustainability deliverables.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. Proactive activities are implemented to improve sustainability at USC across multiple dimensions.

2. Evidence-based plans developed and implemented to build capacity within the region and beyond.

6. USC will strengthen engagement with its communities

As an engaged and place-based university, USC emphasises partnership and collaboration to achieve meaningful outcomes. Our core activities of learning and teaching, research and engagement are undertaken with and for our communities. USC will continue to build productive partnerships, including with industry, government, community, and education and training organisations.

PRIORITIES

1. Develop and implement a vision for USC Engagement, ensuring staff and students can participate in, progress and benefit from our engagement agenda.

2. Develop and strengthen meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and their communities.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. Expand productive regional partnership activities.

2. Increase revenue from industry and philanthropy.