In pursuing our vision of ‘knowledge leadership for a better world’, the University of Queensland (UQ) contributes directly to the Government’s key objective to create jobs in a strong economy, by engaging more young Queensladers in education. In parallel, UQ’s research is tackling head-on some of the major challenges facing Queensland, and indeed the world.

Thanks
Throughout 2018, our broad range of achievements helped create a healthier, safer and more diverse community as a result of the unswerving endeavours of our staff, and the continued commitment of our partners, donors and supporters.

I also acknowledge the fine work undertaken by our 34th Senate, led by Peter Varghese, AO. With their assistance, we continue to work towards our vision. For this, I want to say thank you.

Continuous evolution
When an Act of Queensland Parliament established The University of Queensland in 1909, it was known as ‘the people’s university’ and throughout the decades has remained so, playing a key role in the development of our state.

Today, UQ continues to focus on serving the people and advancing Queensland – but we now engage deeply with global communities and issues as well. While the majority of our students are from Queensland, they are joined by a diverse community of over 18,000 international students. And although many of our students remain here after graduation, contributing daily to the state’s economy and society, we also have over 100,000 countries outside Australia, all of whom will forever include a chapter—at least—featuring Queensland.

Commercialising our innovation
Likewise, our research and innovation have huge international implications, as seen in the appetite of global pharmaceutical companies to invest in UQ start-ups like Sphinnix and Inflazome. All are testament to the success of our outstanding researchers and UniQuest, our commercialisation entity, which this year celebrated the launch of its 100th startup company—a milestone unsurpassed by any other Australian university, raising more than $700 million funds in the process.

Projecting Queensland globally
Like other Australian universities, we operate in a challenging and, at times, uncertain national policy and funding environment.

Being a global enterprise competing with well-resourced institutions worldwide, we must also be alert to fluctuations in international geopolitics and markets.

It is important for the future of our state and country to have a Queensland university in the top tier of the world’s 10,000 plus universities. UQ has worked hard and strategically to remain ranked in the global top 50 in 2018, even though the competition for this coveted territory has intensified. This status is important to Queensland because it brings a range of premiums.

Economy injection
UQ has been recognised for its significant contribution to Queensland’s export sector. International students attending UQ in 2018 contributed $170 million in direct tuition fees alone. Other spending—such as retail, accommodation, entertainment and tourism—has a multiplier effect on the economy. A 2018 London Economics report found that just three international students at a Group of Eight university, such as UQ, generate $1 million in economic impact. Moreover, the immediate and long-term cultural and social flow-on effect is profound. Many of our former students become lifelong advocates for Queensland and Australia, paying dividends through trade, tourism, diplomacy and future education exports.

Research towards a better future
In 2018, UQ attracted $605 million in new funding from the Australian Research Council (ARC), more than any other Australian institution. We also received generous support from state and federal government and philanthropy, which allowed us, for example, to conduct pioneering research in brain sciences. A notable development has been in progressing the use of ultrasound technology for a non-invasive targeted treatment that could delay the effects of dementia, a condition expected to affect almost 11 million Australians by 2056. Clinical safety trials will commence in late 2019.

Corporate investment and partnerships
We partner with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) to jointly train scholarship-supported Doctor of Philosophy candidates who will focus on solving urgent problems facing society.

We reached over 75 per cent of our $500 million philanthropic target to fund students and research that will benefit our communities across the globe.

Graduate, teacher and Master of Philosophy student Graham Aihunst became the first Indigenous Australian to win a coveted Fulbright W.G. Walker scholarship (announced in 2018 for 2019).

The creators of a popular online comic strip, ‘meatcorrigan’ won the 2018 edX Prize for Exceptional Contributions in Online Teaching and Learning.

A team led by Dr Jacob Moreno and Dr Fabio Costa published a quantum physics paper that was named a Top Ten Breakthrough of the Year.

We continued to upgrade our facilities and services to provide a better experience for our students and researchers on campus.

In 2018, the world gained new knowledge, thanks in part to UQ. Research contributed to improving and saving lives around the world. Education lifted people out of poverty and gave new hope to families and entire communities. Progress occurred across the gamut of what some broadly call ‘human endeavour’. And, by helping create such progress, UQ generated some optimism for the future.

This is a priceless gift.

Professor Peter Haje, AC
Vice-Chancellor and President