



SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

Overview

UQ seeks to enrich communities and the cities they inhabit in Queensland, and around the world. UQ's efforts in reconciliation, global development and capacity building, broadening access to education, and leveraging research impact to strengthen the economy are part of the University's commitment to delivering for the public good. Through these integrated efforts in teaching, research, outreach and operations, UQ has made substantial contributions to SDG 11.

In teaching, UQ offers specialised programs such as the Bachelor of Music, Master of Writing, Editing and Publishing, and Master of Urban Development and Design. The University fosters lifelong learning through multiple language short courses available to the public through the Institute of Modern Languages.

UQ's research initiatives span urban biodiversity, sustainable transport, housing equity, and climate resilience, with interdisciplinary projects like the Urban Design Challenge and the ARC Research Hub for Timber Innovation. Initiatives like the Infrastructure CoLab foster innovation across government and industry, while the City Impact Lab co-designs solutions for urban equity and resilience. Partnerships amplify the impact and reach of UQ's research and collaborations with Brisbane City Council, UNICEF, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and other international institutions supporting projects ranging from smart city planning in Manila to climate-resilient infrastructure in Papua New Guinea.

Outreach and community engagement are central to UQ's mission. The University provides free public access to its heritage buildings, libraries, museums, and green spaces, and hosts diverse cultural events including music festivals and exhibitions for public audiences. UQ also seeks to create meaningful impact for local communities by supporting sustainable and inclusive planning and development through collaborations with local authorities via research, student projects and community initiatives.

For staff and students, UQ promotes sustainable commuting and pedestrian-friendly campuses, accommodates flexible work arrangements, and provides advice on affordable housing. The University's Design Standards mandate sustainability in all new builds.

Progress made in 2024 towards SDG 11 is reported here with reference to the following domains and enablers from UQ's Strategic Plan 2022-2025:

- Learning and student experience
- Research and innovation
- Enriching our communities
- Our global profile
- Our people.

Related SDGs

- [SDG 1 No Poverty](#)
- [SDG 2 Zero Hunger](#)
- [SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure](#)
- [SDG 13 Climate Action](#)
- [SDG 14 Life Below Water](#)
- [SDG 15 Life on Land](#)

Learning and student experience

UQ aspires to create positive impact by preparing students to make meaningful contributions to the creation and maintenance of sustainable cities and communities, both locally and globally. The University offers an array of courses that equip students with both specialised and multidisciplinary skills and knowledge through curricula, professional development opportunities and other experiences that foster leadership, entrepreneurship and civic duty. In addition to its programs and coursework, UQ fosters a sense of belonging and community for all learners through the art and heritage of its vibrant campuses and varied residential options.

Courses and units relating to Sustainable Cities and Communities

UQ offers an array of programs that equip students with both specialised and multidisciplinary skills and knowledge in the broad disciplinary areas of design and development, engineering, environmental management, archaeology and history, communication, and the arts. UQ takes pride in employing innovative teaching and learning methods. For example, in 2024 the '[Urban Design Challenge](#)' team, led by Professor Steven Kenway, was recognised with an Australian Award for University Teaching for their efforts engaging students in solving complex, sustainable urban design problems creatively through gamified learning experiences.

In 2024 UQ continued to offer bachelor's level degrees in [Urban Planning](#), [Engineering](#), [Design](#), [Social Science](#), [Arts](#), and [Music](#). Within these programs, students can elect majors and focus areas that provide a deeper understanding of topics that contribute to sustainable community and city planning and management. The Bachelor of Urban Planning (Honours) has courses such as Sustainability for Global Citizenship, Conservation Planning and Management, and Development Practice and Social Impact. Similarly, in the Bachelor of Social Science students can choose majors in Development, Environment and Society, and Health and Social Policy. The Bachelor of Arts offers majors in history, archaeology, art history, drama, sociology, and music.

Postgraduate options offer further specialisation through, for example, the [Master of Environmental Management](#), [Master of Urban Development and Design](#), and [Master of Writing, Editing and Publishing](#).

Student Engagement with Industry and Community

UQ's Bachelor of Urban Design provides students with hands-on experience through real-world planning projects in collaboration with local councils and planning bodies across

Queensland. In addition to enhancing students' skills in sustainable development and community engagement, this program contributes valuable academic input to local planning initiatives, fostering stronger ties between the University, planning authorities, and regional communities. 2024 initiatives included:

- an overnight field trip where students engaged with stakeholders, such as Traditional Owners and Scenic Rim Regional Council, about the planning challenges being experienced in South East Queensland. Working in teams, students canvassed the role of planning in disaster recovery and community resilience and identified and assessed a suitable site for a community resilience hub.
- a 2-day development intensive at the UQ City campus, where students engaged with leaders in the planning and development sectors through workshops, guided walks and site visits to a selection of Brisbane's signature infrastructure and commercial projects
- students working as consultant teams to prepare a Resilience Strategy for the City of Brisbane. Students developed an applied understanding of how to draft, communicate and defend a citywide strategy, in addition to investigating opportunities for government and private sector funding and engagement.

Student Cultural Life

UQ aims to nurture an inclusive and vibrant student community and to provide enriching educational experiences. In 2024 a variety of opportunities were offered across UQ's campuses which facilitated student participation in the University's rich cultural life, including through the arts and heritage. These included:

- UQ Union offering more than 220 affiliated [Clubs and Societies](#), where students can learn new skills and strengths, attend events, and expand their peer network
- [UQ Life](#) presenting a range of events, programs and initiatives across all campuses and online platforms to help students engage and connect with others, enhance their UQ experience, and feel part of the UQ Community
- UQ Art Museum's [Cultural Mediation Program](#) training students as Cultural Mediators, with the aim of providing an enriched experience where visitors feel welcome, heard and empowered to learn and explore. The program contributes to the development of the Connected Citizens attribute outlined in [UQ's Graduate Attributes](#).
- UQ providing students with the opportunity to participate in – sometimes audition for – a variety of musical and theatre ensembles. These include:
 - [Underground Theatre Company](#): UQ's resident student theatre company that supports emerging actors, crew and creatives to produce high quality pieces of theatre
 - [Queensland University Musical Society \(QUMS\)](#): a non-auditioned choir open to all members of the public regardless of age or musical ability that performs music of all genres and eras in a wide range of venues across Brisbane
 - The School of Music's [UQ Symphony Orchestra](#) and [UQ Chorale](#), specialist ensembles comprised mainly of students from the Bachelor of Music (Honours)

program, but also including student performances from other schools in the University.

Sustainable Living Options for Students

As part of The Queensland Commitment, UQ is dedicated to improving accommodation for students by implementing strategies that ensure availability and affordability and cater to the diverse needs of those requiring housing support. In 2024 UQ began construction on a new 1,000 bed accommodation complex at St Lucia to help address the shortage of student rental accommodation. UQ also offered competitively priced accommodation to students, and information and services about accessing affordable housing. Examples include:

- [UQ Res](#), a student living community that offers competitively priced long and short stay accommodation at St Lucia and Gatton campuses. It includes [Kev Carmody House](#) which has 610 state-of-the-art student accommodation rooms for rent; apartments at [48 Walcott Street](#); the [Halls of Residence](#) at Gatton; [UQ Res Homes](#) which are prioritised for students from regional Queensland, interstate or overseas, or those facing difficulty; the [Gatton Motel](#) which offers 14 rooms; and the [Gatton Cottage](#) for visiting academics and international students completing an internship.
- [UQ Rentals](#), an online resource for students and staff to help them find accommodation, including through UQ Residential Colleges, purpose-built student living, and private rentals. The platform connects prospective tenants with a wide variety of providers – including private landlords, real estate agencies, and commercial accommodation – which have vacant properties and rooms close to campuses at St Lucia, Herston, and Gatton.
- [Online information and resources](#) on the cost of living in Brisbane, including a comparison of affordability of student housing options
- [The UQ Residential Scholarships Scheme](#) which offers financial support for students who have experienced financial hardship, to help cover accommodation costs at a UQ approved provider.

Research and innovation

UQ contributes to SDG 11 through research that promotes inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and communities. UQ achieves this by translating research into real-world innovations that provide solutions to challenges in areas such as urban planning and development, housing, transport, infrastructure, and cultural heritage. UQ's partnerships are diverse and strategic, involving collaboration with international organisations such as UNICEF and UNESCO, government bodies like Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and local councils such as Mornington Shire and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire.

In 2024 major milestones for SDG 11 included launching the first Indigenous-led ARC Centre of Excellence – the Indigenous Futures Centre – which aims to transform the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People through an innovative, community-led transdisciplinary research program, and facilitating the acquisition of UniQuest startup Advanced Mobility Analytics Group by Canadian company Transoft Solutions. The startup uses real-time AI-interpreted data to reduce road crashes and monitor road infrastructure.

UQ also continued work in other major research initiatives which demonstrate its commitment to sustainable built environments, low carbon solutions, resilient and equitable communities, and cultural heritage preservation. Examples are listed below.

Sustainable built environments

- **ARC Research Hub to Advance Timber for Australia's Future Built Environment.** From 2023-2028 the UQ-led Centre is working to transform Australia's timber and construction sectors by stimulating rapid growth in timber innovation and uptake of use of timber in buildings. Significant benefits include opportunities for regional development and supporting sectors to transition towards a circular, net-zero economy.
- **UQ City Impact Lab.** The UQ City Impact Lab at the School of the Environment works with government and industry to build fairer and greener cities. It links world-leading research and capability in urban change, sustainable development and city-making with government and industry to unlock innovative future-focused solutions to economic, social, environmental and governance challenges that impact neighbourhoods, cities and regions. In 2024 the Lab continued its investigations of affordable regional housing strategies, climate adaptation tools, and local resilience planning. It also continued to focus on the impacts of urban design on disadvantaged groups and co-designed place-based interventions to improve access to services.

Low carbon solutions

- **Climate resilient regional communities – Decarbonisation and wellbeing in homes and energy systems.** In late 2024, UQ and partners launched a collaborative project to support climate-resilient, low-carbon housing and energy systems in regional Australian communities. Co-designed with Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, 3 Queensland Government departments, and industry, the project aligns housing adequacy, cultural needs, and energy security in the face of climate change. UQ researchers developed strong cross-sector partnerships through workshops in December 2024 to enable gathering and integration of community priorities into infrastructure design and procurement. By developing technology-agnostic solutions and practical implementation pathways, the project supports just transitions and demonstrates how locally led innovation can drive systemic resilience and decarbonisation.
- **Transition to electric vehicles (EVs).** In 2024 UQ researchers submitted key recommendations in response to an inquiry into the transition to electric vehicles by the Federal Parliament Standing Committee on Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water. UQ supports Australia's transition to EVs as a crucial measure to reduce urban emissions. Key recommendations include improving EV charging infrastructure, focusing on fast-charging stations for trucks and buses, and enhancing the accessibility of public chargers. The University also advocates for integrating EVs into the energy grid, enabling them to store and supply power, and reducing costs and emissions.
- **Infrastructure CoLab.** UQ is driving innovation in sustainable infrastructure through the Infrastructure CoLab, a pioneering initiative co-designed with industry and the

Queensland Government. Recognising that infrastructure is a major contributor to global emissions and resource use, UQ research identified systemic barriers – such as policy gaps and procurement process norms – that hinder sustainable practices. In response, the Infrastructure CoLab fosters collaboration across government and industry, enabling more than 15 companies to co-create practical solutions such as circular wind farm blueprints and industry standard early carbon assessment frameworks. The program has strengthened partnerships, enhanced sustainability training, and generated valuable research insights. The initiative exemplifies how academic research can catalyse real-world change through strategic partnerships and community-focused innovation.

Resilient and equitable communities

- **Exploring strategies for creating productive, sustainable cities**. In 2024 UQ researchers published findings in *House Precinct Territory: Design Strategies for the Productive City* exploring strategies for creating productive, sustainable cities. The study, involving students, alumni and industry practitioners, focuses on Brisbane's West End and advocates for urban designs that integrate housing, local production, and businesses to reduce long commutes and foster self-sufficiency. A collaboration with Hongik University in Seoul and RMIT University, the research contributes towards international data gathering for SDG best practice by providing a case study for how issues such as climate change, urban expansion, and community wellbeing can be addressed through innovative urban design for sustainable, resilient cities across the world.
- **Housing issues in remote communities**. Researchers from UQ's School of Architecture, Design and Planning collaborated with Mornington Shire Council to tackle housing inadequacy in Gununa, Mornington Island. The UQ-led team conducted extensive community engagement, surveys, and workshops to assess housing needs. The project report, released in 2024, provided culturally responsive design recommendations and highlighted accessibility and overcrowding issues. By working directly with local authorities and residents, the researchers helped shape future development plans and advocated for housing that respects cultural identity and meets international adequacy standards. Their work is now guiding Council efforts to improve access to appropriate housing.
- **Affordable Housing Lecture Series** In 2024 UQ's School of Architecture, Design and Planning hosted an Affordable Housing Lecture Series, spotlighting local, interstate, and international approaches to sustainable housing. The series addressed climate-responsive design, passive solar orientation, biophilic communal spaces, and high-performance materials, such as Brisbane's Habitat on Juers, an affordable and energy efficient social housing project. With invited speakers from diverse industry backgrounds, the series fostered creative, cross-sector dialogue between architects, policymakers, and community stakeholders on affordability, resilience, and well-being.

Cultural heritage preservation

- **Architecture and Cultural Heritage: Values and Standards (2022-2024)**. UQ's School of Architecture, Design and Planning has been working on a project that combines archival and interview-based research on the social, cultural, and historical

values of architecture, and explores how qualitative data can inform built environment and heritage governance. It examines the management, representation and utility of data archives and digital models and the conceptual and technical challenges they pose. The project has conducted several case studies including the concrete architecture of the UQ St Lucia campus, the industrial past of the regional Queensland city of Maryborough, and the archives and legacy of the architectural practice Donovan Hill. It also contributes to the Digital Archive of Queensland Architecture (DAQA).

- [Queensland Atlas of Religion](#). Launched in 2024, this resource shares stories of Queensland's faith communities, past and present, to explore aspects of religious practice in Australia. This is the first time that a place-based approach has been employed for the scholarly study of Queensland's religious pluralism and diversity, emphasising the patterns of historical accommodation and inclusion needed to inform religious toleration and cross-community understanding. Funded by an ARC Linkage Grant, the project was undertaken by researchers from the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry in partnership with the State Library of Queensland.
- [Language Data Commons of Australia \(LDaCA\)](#). The LDaCA project receives investment from the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) which is funded by the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS). Led by UQ in collaboration with partner institutions and in conjunction with the ARDC, the project makes nationally significant language data available for academic and non-academic use and provides a model for ensuring continued access with appropriate community control. With Australia being one of the world's most linguistically diverse nations, this project is preserving intangible cultural heritage by securing at-risk collections while improving access to under-utilised collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, Australian Englishes, and regional languages of the Pacific.
- [Austlit](#). In 2024, UQ contributed to the preservation of storytelling and Australia's literary ecosystem through Austlit, a national information resource and authoritative database of Australian literature and storytelling led by the University in collaboration with academic, library, education and research organisations. In 2024 AustLit continued to expand its comprehensive collection and provide resources for researchers, teachers and students with new projects such as: the [AustLit Environments for Cross-Curriculum Priorities \(AECCP\)](#); [Audiobooks and Digital Book Cultures](#) and [Writing Disability](#) projects; relaunch of the [BlackWords Calendar](#); and [Australian AI in the Archive](#), which explores more than 100 years of Australian literature about AI and robotics.

Enriching our communities

UQ seeks to demonstrate its power as a force for social good in communities everywhere and embeds best-practice approaches in community outreach and engagement in all its operational aspects. This includes nourishing intellectual vitality through inclusive access to debates and public lectures, cultural events, and UQ's museums, libraries, significant buildings and green spaces. UQ also seeks to include sustainable practices in its campus operations, improve sustainability performance of its infrastructure, and maintain several sites of conservation importance throughout South East Queensland for the benefit of UQ and the broader community.

Community Learning

Throughout 2024 UQ provided an array of opportunities and services to the local community that facilitated lifelong learning and knowledge sharing.

- **Alumni and Community**. The UQ Alumni and Community Engagement team deliver programs and resources that build affinity, connection and partnership to extend the value of the UQ experience and strengthen community. These offerings include:
 - UQx free online courses in a variety of subjects that can be audited for free or verified with a certificate for a small fee
 - Free podcasts including the Queensland Brain Institute's Grey Matter, UQ Talks, Global Leadership Series, and Liveris Academy podcasts
 - Free webinars and interviews, including UQ ChangeMaker events, UQ Contact Magazine, Frontier Forum, Steve Irwin Memorial Lecture and "Stories of Resilience"
 - Free events open to alumni and community: notable 2024 examples include the Friends of Antiquity Sunday Series: Heyworth-Smith Memorial Lecture, BrisScience events, a public lecture on emotionography and the case of 'mixed emotion', and "Getting deep into sleep" for Brain Awareness Week.
- **UQ Neighbours**. The University launched the UQ Neighbours program in 2024 to foster meaningful relationships through events and outreach that connect UQ with its local communities and strengthen mutual engagement. This includes:
 - information about UQ spaces such as the Avalon theatre, UQ Lakes and Amphitheatre
 - UQ Arts, with information on campus museums, performances, and cultural events
 - UQ sporting clubs, sport facilities and events such as the St Lucia Park Run
 - services such as the UQ Vets Small Animal Hospital and advanced farriery at Gatton.
- **Libraries**. UQ's libraries welcome visitors from the community and secondary schools to use library spaces and onsite collections during staffed hours. Visitors can use library computers and create, print, copy and scan documents. Visitors can also view items from special collections. Most library-subscribed online resources are licensed for use by UQ students and staff only, however visitors can access some online resources including selected databases and eBooks on Library computers. Open access resources, including digitised items from Fryer Library (cultural heritage collections) can be accessed by anyone online on UQ eSpace, the University's institutional repository. The UQ Library also provides guidance on accessing other open educational resources. Community Membership costs \$25 per year, which also allows members to borrow books.
- **The Institute of Modern Languages**. The Institute celebrated 90 years of operations in 2024. It was established to give the community opportunities to connect with UQ through language learning. The Institute runs courses in 30 languages taught by qualified language tutors who are either native speakers or have native proficiency. Seventeen courses were offered in 2024, including the Arabic Beginner Short Course,

the [Chinese Mandarin Beginner Short Course](#), the [French Beginner Short Course](#), and the [Japanese Beginner Short Course](#), all run from 1 October-19 November.

- **UQ Press (UQP)** UQP is one of Australia's leading publishing houses, known for publishing literary works, poetry and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories. In 2024 UQP published more than 40 literary works and hosted the [annual Fryer Lecture](#), a tribute to internationally acclaimed novelist, poet, writer and librettist David Malouf AO.

Access to Heritage and Culture

UQ's campuses hold rich local heritage, which the University endeavours to share through accessible buildings and outdoor spaces. UQ also fosters an environment that offers diverse cultural and artistic experiences to the local community. In 2024 UQ hosted more than 1,235 events, celebrations, exhibitions and performances at its locations across Queensland.

- **Public access to heritage buildings.** UQ continues to offer free public access to many of its significant buildings and campus spaces. Visitors can experience heritage-listed buildings such as the [St Lucia Great Court Complex](#), [Customs House](#), [Herston campus](#), [Gatton campus](#) and [308 Queen St Brisbane](#).
- **Museums.** UQ invites members of the public to visit its 4 museums on the St Lucia campus free of charge. These include:
 - [Anthropology Museum](#): the largest university collection of ethnographic material in Australia cares for the cultural heritage of Australian Aboriginal and Pacific peoples and individuals from the late 19th century to the present. Other smaller collections from South East Asia and east Africa are also featured.
 - [RD Milns Antiquities Museum](#): Queensland's premier collection of classical Mediterranean relics and artefacts, representing the profound impact that the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean have had upon the literature, art, politics, and society of the modern world.
 - [UQ Art Museum](#): one of Queensland's most significant public art collections. The Collection comprises works by Australian artists from the colonial era to the present, and the Nat Yuen Collection of Chinese antiquities.
 - [Fryer Library Collections](#) (by appointment only): a rich store of rare books, manuscripts, theses, pictorial collections and architectural drawings, including an extensive Australian studies collection of published and unpublished material.
- **Public performances.** UQ cultivates a vibrant artistic culture, delivering more than 30 public performances in 2024 in the form of free and paid concert series and theatrical productions by a number of ensembles, societies and groups, including:
 - UQ's School of Music, encompassing the UQ Symphony Orchestra, UQ Wind Symphony, UQ Chorale, Pulse Ensemble, UQ Singers, Sketch Ensemble, Signwaves Flute Ensemble, the Saxophone Ensemble, the UQ Brass Ensemble, and the Brisbane Chamber Choir (by affiliation).
 - Queensland University Musical Society, a non-auditioned choir hosted by the UQ Union and based at UQ, open to both students and members of the public

- The Underground Theatre Company, UQ's resident student theatre company.

Community Spotlight: Preserving and Sharing Indigenous Cultural Heritage

In 2024 UQ was involved in 2 exhibitions that contributed towards the maintenance and sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and knowledge.

- As part of its tour to regional and remote Queensland centres, the [Kirrenderri, Heart of the Channel Country exhibition](#) was displayed at the Qantas Founders Museum in Longreach and Cairns Museum. Curated by UQ's Anthropology Museum and Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation, the exhibition presented a visually striking and narrative-rich resource of knowledge, chronicling the stories and perspectives from the past of Indigenous peoples living on Channel Country via rarely seen artefacts, historic and contemporary photographs, letters and maps. The exhibition was highly commended at the 2024 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards.
- The UQ Anthropology museum also hosted the free public exhibition [Voices of Our Elders, Aboriginal Story Tellers](#) from 26 February-6 December. The exhibition celebrated Aboriginal cultures and story tellers who lived through times of change (for example, forced displacement on missions), and documented key Aboriginal Elders and their stories which have contributed to recording and maintaining Aboriginal history and culture.

Both exhibitions reached audiences in Brisbane as well as Longreach and Cairns, highlighting the vital role of community-led storytelling in strengthening cultural continuity and identity, and demonstrating the enduring strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture.

Campus Access and Sustainability

UQ recognises its responsibility to care for the lands on which it operates, creating a welcoming space for students, staff, the local community. Many of UQ's campuses and green spaces are free and open to the public, and UQ has sustainable transportation and building practices for the benefit of all who attend.

- **Public access to green spaces.** UQ's campuses have free public access to general grounds, green spaces and feature locations such as:
 - St Lucia Lakes, eco-walk and Amphitheatre
 - [St Lucia campus grounds including Great Court](#)
 - St Lucia barbecue and picnic areas
 - Bush Tucker Garden, [Community Gardens](#) and children's all-abilities playground
 - UQ Sustainability Walk
 - Gatton Environmental Park
 - [The Boyce Gardens](#) at Gatton Campus, where an open day was held in 2024 as part of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers.
- **Sustainable travel.** UQ promotes and prioritises sustainable and active travel options in and around campus. These include:

- connecting to public transport services at the St Lucia, Herston and Gatton locations. This includes the new [Brisbane Metro](#) which involved major infrastructure works completed at the UQ Lakes Bus Station in 2024.
- offering micromobility transport resources and options, including dedicated bicycle paths and a range of [cycling facilities including: end-of-trip shower, change room and locker spaces](#), secure and open-air bicycle parking, bike maintenance and repair stations. [Electronic micromobility devices](#) (e-bikes and e-scooters) are also available at the St Lucia campus through 3rd-party operators like Lime and Neuron.
- a [fleet of vehicles](#) which includes electric vehicles, for staff to hire
- private [electric vehicle charging](#) for both staff and the public. UQ has staff-only electric vehicle charging stations, with dedicated parking zones.
- an intercampus bus service running between St Lucia and Gatton, and St Lucia and Long Pocket campuses.
- pedestrian priority options such as safe walking paths, pedestrian crossings and wayfinding services including the [UQ Maps app](#) and the [UQ virtual tours](#)
- specially designed and constructed infrastructure to curate enjoyable walking experiences, including the [John Oxley River Walk](#) at St Lucia, the Gatton Environmental Park, and the UQ Sustainability Walk
- **Sustainable building standards.** As stated in the [UQ Design Standards](#), sustainability must be a consideration for every aspect of a project. Sustainability principles must be applied in ways which allow the benefits to be measured prior to project commencement. UQ's Design Standards detail mandatory minimum sustainable building standards across a range of measures including, but not limited to, architectural, landscape, civil, hydraulic, mechanical, electrical, fire, acoustics, IT, wayfinding, and labs. These are made available to all parties involved in the design and construction process and are on the UQ staff website.

Our global profile

UQ seeks to enrich communities not just in Queensland but also around the world, including through global development and capacity building. The University achieves this by leveraging its research impact to achieve sustainable outcomes for cities, their people and infrastructure across diverse locations.

- **[Stone for Development](#).** The Fiji Heritage Stone Project, completed in July 2024, explored the cultural and economic significance of development minerals – locally sourced materials vital to construction, agriculture, and infrastructure. Despite their low global market value, these minerals drive domestic development and community empowerment. The project united UQ students and Pacific Island professionals, including from Fiji's Mineral Resources Department, to document the role of stone in Fijian architecture and traditions. Through storytelling and workshops, it raised awareness of Fiji's geoheritage and proposed the establishment of a UNESCO Global Geopark, promising long-term cultural and economic benefits. A key focus was the Lapita people's pottery, highlighting women's historical contributions and engaging local artisans to preserve ancestral practices. Participants gained insights into sustainable development, artisanal mining, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The

project fostered strong community partnerships and laid the groundwork for future research and heritage protection, enhancing local identity and resilience.

- **SM Bay City Urban Sustainability Framework.** Researchers from across 6 schools and institutes collaborated with SM Prime to develop the SM Bay City Sustainability Framework, which informed urban design guidelines and utilities planning for a smart city development in Manila. This international collaboration engaged with Pasay City Council and other private partners to advance transport equity and climate-resilient infrastructure, building energy efficiency and access to nature. The framework integrates biodiversity, water, energy, and social wellbeing outcomes for SM Bay City, forecast to be home for 300,000 people.
- **Climate resilient infrastructure procurement – DFAT/PNG.** In 2024, UQ began a partnership to co-design a Climate Resilient Infrastructure Guide for Papua New Guinea through the Economic and Social Infrastructure Program (ESIP) funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The project enhances sustainable infrastructure procurement across energy, water, health, and telecom sectors, embedding emissions reduction and climate adaptation strategies. The UQ team worked closely with global development company DT Global, PNG stakeholders, and PNG government to gather data and perspectives about local priorities, gender equity, and long-term capacity building.

Our people

UQ aims to promote a positive balance between healthy work and a healthy life. The University engages in sustainable practices for staff and students, including flexible working arrangements and providing information on affordable housing.

Sustainable Work Practices

UQ [accommodates flexible work for staff](#), including remote working, upon request from the employee and by mutual agreement. Flexible work is any approved variation to the standard daily or weekly work pattern within a workplace. UQ provides a number of flexible work options for staff subject to the provisions of [UQ's Enterprise Agreement](#) and the [Fair Work Act](#) including

- [working from home \(remote working\)](#)
- [flexible working hours](#)
- [nine-day fortnight](#)
- [19-day month](#)
- [voluntary banked time](#)
- [flexi-time](#)
- [purchased leave](#)
- [part-time work](#)
- [job sharing](#).