Widening Participation Highlights 2019
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2019 Highlights
Widening Participation Unit

Message from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Programs and Pathways

Colleagues, friends and supporters of Widening Participation at MQ,

I am pleased to present this account of the achievements realised by the Widening Participation Unit (WPU) during 2019. The outcomes of the Unit’s efforts reflect the collaborative nature of the team and their focus on building positive and productive relations with our stakeholder partners.

The Unit has built on the excellent work conducted in 2018 to meet the Widening Participation Strategic Framework 2018 – 2023 plan. Our activities ensure the delivery of quality, value-added opportunities for students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds. Our engaging student initiatives follow evidence-based research aimed at raising student success through both academic and social engagement in an educational journey.

Our commitment to refugee and asylum seeker students was recognised in 2019 when the LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring program was named winner of the AFR Equity and Opportunity Award at the Hilton Brisbane in August. Over 100 Macquarie students volunteered their time to mentor high school students from across Western Sydney last year. Transition support for those from humanitarian backgrounds has gone from supporting 10 students in 2017, to nearly a hundred students in 2019.

Our team continues to work with partner schools and communities, delivering our popular Roadshows and InRoads Programs for Regional and Remote Students. MQ academics, professional staff and students gave up their time to travel to regional NSW, meeting 1,400 school students plus community members in collaboration with partners including The Smith Family, TAFE NSW and the Rural Fire Service. In addition, nearly 60 high school students from regional schools came on campus to get a taste of the University life through our InRoads program.

Collaborations with internal partners across MQ and our external partners continue with the projects including mentoring programs, Junior Science Academy, National Indigenous Science Education Program, Dunmore Lang College rural student support, the FBE (now MQBS) financial literacy skills workshops, and Career Development Programs.

The year also saw Sonal Singh and Bonnie Faulkner leverage their skills and experience built through their management of WP activities to secure new senior job roles beyond MQ. We wish them well and thank them for their efforts during their time with us. And my thanks to Dr Stuart Upton who has taken on the interim manager role.

Reflecting on WPU’s achievements in 2019 during the COVID-19 emergency of 2020 highlights the Unit’s agility to respond and adapt to the changing dynamic of the higher education environment. Beyond the achievements outlined in this report, I hold great anticipation for the Unit’s impact during the current emergency and in the years to come.

PROFESSOR SEAN BRAWLEY
PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR PROGRAMS AND PATHWAYS
The Widening Participation Unit

The Widening Participation Unit works to meet the University’s commitment to the national widening participation agenda, with the goal of equitable access and participation in higher education learning.

The WPU’s initiatives engage disadvantaged and underrepresented students with enriching educational opportunities that encourage them to realise their personal potential.

The WPU’s mission is also to broaden the community of equitable practice, through advocacy, collaboration and partnerships. Broadening the community of practice, by sharing awareness of the challenges that underrepresented and disadvantaged students face, improves inclusivity in higher education and has long term benefits and impacts on society at large.

The WPU’s initiatives are primarily funded by the Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP). HEPPP funding encourages the development and implementation of strategies that improve student access to undergraduate courses, and that promote retention and completion rates.

Target strategies aim to empower the following categories of disadvantaged and underrepresented students:

- Low socio-economic backgrounds
- Low socio-economic and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- Low socio-economic and disability
- Low socio-economic and women in non-traditional areas of study
- Low socio-economic and culturally and linguistically diverse
- Low socio-economic and rural and remote

Widening Participation Unit Initiatives

In 2019, the University’s Widening Participation Unit (WPU) delivered, or partnered in the delivery of, twenty-nine initiatives.

Disadvantaged and underrepresented students were engaged across the life cycle of their learning journey.

Primary and high school students were empowered with knowledge relating to alternate learning and entry pathways into university; and encouraged in their confidence to pursue higher education learning.

Students beginning higher education were supported through their transition with academic preparedness and connected with opportunities, academics and services to enhance their learning outcomes, student experience, employment-ready skills and networks.

Learning, Education, Aspiration, Participation (LEAP)

The WPU has designed and delivered research-informed initiatives for students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds since 2011. In that time, thousands of students have engaged with WPU initiatives that are delivered under the Learning, Education, Aspiration, Participation (LEAP) banner.

LEAP initiatives seek to engage students across four identified widening participation pillars.

| WIDENING PARTICIPATION UNIT Learning, Engagement, Aspiration, Participation (LEAP) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pillar 1 | Pillar 2 | Pillar 3 | Pillar 4 |
| LEAP UP | LEAP IN | LEAP THROUGH | LEAP ON |
| Outreach | Pathways | Participation | Impact |
| Strengthen the capacity of students from equity groups to participate in higher education | Increase opportunities for students from equity groups to study at Macquarie University | Enhance support to students from equity groups, from enrolment through to graduation | Improve graduate outcomes, employment and professional opportunities for students from equity groups |
2019 Highlights
Widening Participation Unit

In 2019, seven LEAP initiatives were delivered by the WPU, including:

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**LEAP UP REFUGEE MENTORING**

An award winning and long-standing initiative, engaging high school students from refugee backgrounds in a peer mentoring relationship with university trained student mentors.

LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring mentee students gain valuable insights and guidance into the local learning landscape; as well as confidence in their capacity to reach and achieve postsecondary goals. University student mentors gain enhanced leadership and interpersonal skills; alongside a greater awareness of the diverse cultural perspectives and challenges faced by students from refugee backgrounds.

**2019 Engagement**

- 12 high schools located in Sydney’s western and south-western areas participated in LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring. 3 of these schools were new to LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring
- The WPU initiative partnered with the NSW Department of Education
- 227 students from refugee backgrounds participated as mentees
- 102 university trained students participated as mentors
- Since 2011, more than 1700 mentee students from refugee backgrounds and over 600 university student mentors have engaged with the LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring initiative

**2019 Highlights**

- Personal growth and development that is shared by both mentees and mentors as a result of their participation in the initiative
- LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring continues to remind us of the great power young people have in enacting change in our community

“Personally speaking…I think it really did help me. Because even though I study really hard, I do sometimes have the disadvantage of not knowing many words in English or I’m struggling to find the right phrases. So seeing the scholarships or the pathways that they offer for refugees really did motivate me to ... look at other universities that (are) more...supportive, right, and more attainable for people like us.”

*Mentee student, 2019*
2019 Highlights

Widening Participation Unit

**LEAP THROUGH REFUGEE TRANSITION SUPPORT**

An initiative engaging students from humanitarian backgrounds with academic preparedness and confidence to participate in learning opportunities that enhance their student experience.

LEAP Through Refugee Transition Support was delivered by the WPU’s dedicated Transition Support Officer, who met regularly with students to provide them with guidance and connection to a network of allied services and academic support across the campus and with external stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2019 Engagement</th>
<th>2019 Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 98 students from humanitarian backgrounds participated in LEAP Through Refugee Transition Support, a near 10-fold increase since piloting in 2017 with 10 students</td>
<td>• Enabling students who otherwise couldn’t afford to study at an Australian university, to realise their dreams to pursue tertiary education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most students originated from places experiencing continued insecurity, including Iraq, Syria, Iran, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Afghanistan</td>
<td>Student feedback also confirmed the initiative assisted them to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some students were supported by the University’s Asylum Seeker Fee Waiver Scholarship</td>
<td>• Engage in co-curricular activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build peer networks for social and academic engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Foster a sense of belonging to the learning community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I think, for me, I’m the first generation in my family that will go to university, especially in Australia, in a foreign country. So, my parents wouldn’t be able to support me... and I found about this transition program, it made more sense. Because there’s heaps of things that we never knew when we first came.”  

Participating Student, 2019

**LEAP IN (REFUGEE TRANSITION)**

An initiative engaging students from refugee backgrounds in their final year of high school, with university preparedness and transition support to assist with their university entry and learning journey. LEAP IN (Refugee Transition) delivered information to students on alternate pathways to university, support services, academic skills and learning expectations.

LEAP IN (Refugee Transition) was delivered by the WPU’s Transition Support Officer and a number of University representatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2019 Engagement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 68 Year 12 high-school students from 4 schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2019 Highlights
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LEAP RURAL STUDENTS UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE
An initiative engaging regional students from West Wyalong and Cootamundra to participate in a three day on-campus university experience. As part of the initiative, students attended University Open Day and workshops aimed at enhancing academic and university preparedness.

LEAP Rural Students University Experience was delivered in partnership with Country Education Foundation of Australia and Dunmore Lang College.

2019 Engagement
- 20 Year 10-12 students

LEAP PASIFIKA FAMILY
An initiative supporting students from Pacific Islander backgrounds to connect and establish a student society on campus to foster a deeper sense of belonging and community identity.

In addition to encouraging students to connect socially and culturally, LEAP Pasifika Family actively engaged students in workshops on academic learning skills and career preparedness.

2019 Engagement
- 48 students joined the LEAP Pasifika Family
- 12 academics participated

2019 Highlights
- Welcoming commencing students and many academics from Pacific Islander backgrounds
- Fostering a Pasifika student identity on campus and contributing to student cultural diversity
- Hosting a lunch for the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Pacific Strategy Unit and LEAP Pasifika Family students
- Encouraging academics to create Pasifika Connections, Academic Mentoring program
- Encouraging students to feel a sense of belonging and connection to the University learning community

“I truly appreciate the LEAP Pasifika family to a great extent. This group has given me the support I needed from my pacific island community. I am so proud to be in a group that is so inclusive of our culture. I finally have a space to communicate and share my struggles as well as my successes, which is encouraging and motivational.”

Participating student 2019
## 2019 Highlights

**Widening Participation Unit**

### LEAP SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT – REGIONAL AND REMOTE

A two-fold set of initiatives aimed at empowering regional and remote students, and their communities, with information, awareness, interactive opportunity and confidence to access higher education pathways, learning opportunities and career possibilities.

Roadshow and inROADS were collaboratively delivered by the WPU along with a representative team of Macquarie University academics and professional staff from Walanga Muru, Future Students and Dunmore Lang College.

### ROADSHOW

Regional primary and secondary school students, along with their communities were engaged in “taster” university experiences delivered at their school communities by the Roadshow team. ‘Taster’ experiences comprised of mock lectures, faculty breakout and Q&A sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2019 Engagement</th>
<th>2019 Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2 NSW regions: Mid North Coast and Hunter Region</td>
<td>• Connecting with an increased number of regional students and schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 11 High Schools and 5 Primary Schools</td>
<td>• Enabling the University to create deeper and more meaningful connections with regional areas, students, schools and their communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1,425 school students</td>
<td>• Fostering greater collaboration and alliance across the University network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 171 community members</td>
<td>• Developing strong partnerships with external stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 40 University staff</td>
<td>“The fact that you took time to visit rural schools. The connections of your presenters with students was outstanding. Builds capacity in the students to realise that they can achieve anything even if they have been educated in the bush.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 5 University students</td>
<td>Teacher, Hunter Region, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• External partners included:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Smith Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o TAFE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Rural Fire Service</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o Dunmore Lang College</td>
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</table>

### INROADS

Senior high school students from disadvantaged regional communities, who formerly participated in the Roadshow initiative, were invited to attend inROADS - an on-campus university experience initiative.

Participating students engaged in a three-day interactive program delivering, information on study choices, pathway opportunities, scholarships and student support services.

inROADS students stayed at Dunmore Lang College, granting them insight into the rigours of the student experience, moving away from home and campus living.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2019 Engagement</th>
<th>2019 Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2 High schools</td>
<td>• Enhancing student aspirations to consider higher education a financial and academically viable potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 57 students and 4 teachers</td>
<td>• Empowering student confidence in their capacity to participate in higher education learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 10 University staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 5 University students</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
2019 Highlights
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- Building accessibility via alternate pathways
- Reassuring students that on-campus support would be available throughout their study journey
- Encouraging regional students and their communities to feel valued

“I didn’t want to do uni but coming here has really changed my decision and perspective on uni so I would definitely do uni.”

Year 12 Student, Broken Hill, inROADS participant, 2019

LEAP LINKS (VIRTUAL CLASSROOM)
An initiative engaging regional and remote students with a series of online workshops aimed at enriching their learning experiences. LEAP Links Virtual Classroom workshops were delivered by University academics and explored diverse areas of study and potential professional outcomes related to particular fields of study.

This initiative was delivered in partnership with Aurora College.

2019 Engagement
- 120 students from Years 7-10
LEAP PARTNERSHIPS ENGAGEMENT GRANT SCHEME (PEGS)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Programs and Pathways) allocated $200,000 of 2019 HEPPP funding towards the design and pilot of innovative initiatives to engage disadvantaged and underrepresented students.

11 initiatives were successfully piloted in 2019, resulting in new collaborations and the engagement of 600 students.
## 2019 Highlights

### Widening Participation Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academics for Refugees – Making Connections</th>
<th>MQ Outreach Mobile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Academic mentoring connecting academics with students from refugee backgrounds in their area of study</td>
<td>• Purchase of a vehicle to support the delivery of outreach initiatives to regional and remote students and their communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aimed at enhancing students’ academic confidence.</td>
<td>• An asset to be used collectively by teams across the University to transport program-specific resources, to engage disadvantaged audiences in regional and remote areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 30 academics and 19 students participated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dunmore Lang College Short Stay</th>
<th>Regional Engagements, Future Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Offering disadvantaged students access to subsidised accommodation during times of acute or short stay need</td>
<td>• Empowering regional and remote students with information on learning pathways, career options and consultations to demystify expectations around the student experience in higher education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Leadership Program (GLP) Enrichment Experiences</th>
<th>Science in the City, The Australian Museum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Providing financial support to enable students from equity backgrounds to participate in a variety of culturally immersive activities</td>
<td>• Enhancing students’ scientific literacy and confidence in STEM via interactive workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Delivered as part of National Science Week, in partnership with The Australian Museum and participating LEAP high schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 123 students and 3 schools participated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Junior Science Academy Wingham Public School University Familiarisation</th>
<th>Suits You: Suit Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A 3-day STEM focused school holiday workshop for stage 3 primary school students</td>
<td>• An initiative aimed at enhancing student confidence by enabling them to access a library of corporate suits for interviews and or internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information sessions were delivered to attending parents on the benefits, options and possibilities for their students to pursue higher education pathways</td>
<td>• Employment ready workshops were also offered to participating students to enhance their preparedness to approach and meet prospective employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 13 students and their parents/carers participated and were offered short stay accommodation at Dunmore Lang College</td>
<td>• Delivered by the University’s Career and Employment Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 40 students participated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2019 Highlights

### Widening Participation Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAP into Finance, Business &amp; Economics (FBE)</th>
<th>Wuyagiba Bush Hub Remote Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Empowering high school students with financial literacy skills and supplementary workshops into finance, business and economics, in line with the school curriculum</td>
<td>• A highly interactive initiative delivered by Walanga Muru to students living in remote Aboriginal communities throughout Arnhem Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enabling students to access a library of FBE resources</td>
<td>• Engaging students with learning opportunities and pathways to enhance their participation in higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 40 students across 5 high schools participated and a further 316 students participated in this initiative from LEAP Roadshow regional visits</td>
<td>• Empowering student confidence and academic preparedness through transition support and ongoing academic workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Engaging students with First Year Advisors to provide connected wellbeing during their learning journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 15 students and 33 University professionals participated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Miller Tech High School Football Club

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• An initiative delivered by LEAP partner school, Miller Tech High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encouraging newly arrived students from refugee backgrounds to feel a sense of belonging to and engagement with their learning community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Team uniforms were purchased to build team identity and student confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 2019 Highlights

## Widening Participation Unit

## Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) Network

Since 2011, the WPU has developed strong collaborative relationships with teams across the University as well as external partners who share an interest in furthering opportunities for students from disadvantaged and or underrepresented backgrounds.

The following HEPPP funded programs were delivered in 2019 by a range of dedicated University teams in various portfolios and faculties, along with external partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create Your Future Career Development Program</th>
<th>National Indigenous Science Education Program (NISEP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging second year, University students with career development workshops</td>
<td>• Engaging primary and secondary school students in a variety of interactive science-based activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aimed at enhancing student confidence in employability skills and career readiness</td>
<td>• Aimed at igniting students’ scientific interest and curiosity while enhancing their scientific confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delivered by the University’s Career and Employment Services team</td>
<td>• Delivered by the Faculty of Science and Engineering in partnership with the NSW Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 46 students participated</td>
<td>• 2460 students participated in NISEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 35 schools participated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 40 University staff participated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dunmore Lang College Rural Student Support</th>
<th>Rising Stars (Indigenous Outreach and Transition)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Outreach and transition support for students from regional and remote areas</td>
<td>• Encouraging high school students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds to connect with cultural Indigenous knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging regional high school students, in collaboration with other outreach programs delivered by the WPU, to supplement students with information on student experiences and on-campus accommodation</td>
<td>• Empowering students with life and leadership skills, as well as confidence in their capacity to pursue higher education learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encouraging student transition into university and through their learning journey via on going engagement, academic support, peer mentoring and career-development workshops</td>
<td>• Delivered by the University’s Walanga Muru portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supporting students with accommodation scholarships</td>
<td>• 978 school students, 19 university students and 9 professional staff participated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delivered by Dunmore Lang College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2019 Highlights

**Widening Participation Unit**

### LEAP Links – Digital Literacy
- Offering high school teachers NESA accredited professional development workshops to enhance their digital literacy skills
- Teachers and their students benefit from this initiative
- 44 teachers from 6 schools participated
- Initially designed and developed by the WPU to fulfil a National Priorities Pool grant awarded to the University, this initiative was taken on and delivered by Macquarie School of Education, Academy for Continuing Professional Development in Education

### SBS/NITV/ABC Media Mentoring
- A three-year scaffolded initiative designed to engage students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, undertaking media studies
- Empowering students with industry-specific professional skills and networks to enhance their opportunity for successful representation in the media industry following completion of their studies.
- Delivered by the University’s PACE and Faculty of Arts, in partnership with Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), The Ethnic Community’s Council of Australia, and National Indigenous Television (NITV)
- 29 students participated

### Gifted and Talented pathways
- A university preparedness initiative aimed at engaging regional and remote students
- Enhancing awareness around alternate entry pathways into university
- Delivered by the University’s Academic Pathways team

### Scholarships
- Enabling students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access a variety of financial, accommodation, academic scholarships and grants to support their learning and participation in higher education
- Administered by the University’s Scholarships and Prizes Unit
- 357 students were supported

### LEAP Robotics
- Engaging primary and high school students with interactive robotic technologies
- Promoting student confidence in STEM and enabling students to participate in FIRST Robotics competitions
- This long-running initiative was delivered by the University’s Faculty of Science and Engineering, in partnership with the NSW Department of Education
- 208 students from 9 schools participated

### Learning for Life Scholarship and Support Program
#### The Smith Family
- Encouraging students to remain engaged with learning by providing academic support, mentoring, pastoral care and family financial assistance to mitigate hurdles that may limit their participation in education
- Offering students career skills workshops and career-focused mentoring as part of the Learning for Life initiative
- A holistic student-focused initiative that connects with students across the life cycle of their learning journey
- Delivered by The Smith Family
- 23 students studying at the University were awarded academic scholarships via Learning for Life
2019 Highlights

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Macquarie Undergraduate Research Internship (MURI)

- Offering paid research internship placements to undergraduate students
- Enhancing students' research skills and enabling them to build professional and academic networks
- A student-led initiative supported by academic sponsorship of research projects
- 9 students and 9 academics participated

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The WPU is focused on enhancing awareness around issues of equity in education for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds. Building the community of practice with a diverse range of partners and stakeholders is part of the widening participation mission.

Many of the University’s initiatives were recognised in 2019 for their meaningful contribution to educational equity for students.

Australian Financial Review Higher Education Award
Equity and Opportunity Category

LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring
2019 Highlights

Widening Participation Unit

ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION

The following academic posters were created by the WPU and accepted for presentation at leading equity conferences in 2019.

Engaging and empowering low-SES students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds while celebrating our shared humanity.
Carolina Morison, Dr Sonal Singh
Students, Transitions, Achievement, Retention & Success (STARS)

Developing and implementing digital literacy professional learning workshops for teachers in regional and remote high schools.
John Tran, Dr Sonal Singh
Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA)

References:

- Carolina Morison, Dr Sonal Singh, "Engaging and empowering low-SES students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds while celebrating our shared humanity," Students, Transitions, Achievement, Retention & Success (STARS).
- John Tran, Dr Sonal Singh, "Developing and implementing digital literacy professional learning workshops for teachers in regional and remote high schools," Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA).

Further Information and Feedback:

If you would like to provide any feedback or have any questions about the content of the posters or the Widening Participation Unit, please contact us at widening.participation@mq.edu.au.
2019 Highlights

Widening Participation Unit

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Working with our network of partners, WPU hosted and co-hosted the following workshops to:

- enhance awareness around equity and diversity
- promote discussion and a collective approach to improve the challenges faced by disadvantaged students
- encourage a broader practice of equity across the institution
- build a network of partners

HEPPP Lunch and Learn

- WPU’s popular workshops explored the topics of equity as a whole-of-institution approach, the challenges and opportunities faced by students in rural and remote areas and the positive impact of scholarship support on students’ engagement and participation
- Guest workshop speakers included Kylie Austin, Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students), University of Wollongong; Virginia Cluff, Technology for Learning (T4L), NSW Department on Education; Juliet Pettersen, Acting CEO, Country Education Foundation of Australia; and Brian Hurd, Manager, Scholarships and Prizes Unit, Macquarie University.

Student Focused MQ Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

- Co-hosted with the University’s Student Inclusion and Diversity team
- Engaging representatives from the University’s student-facing support services teams
- Aimed at enhancing awareness around the diversity of students and how to best respond to their needs to foster a greater sense of inclusion and participation.

SECTOR REPRESENTATION

The WPU participated in the following high-level activities in non-government organisations operating in the equity space:

Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE)

- A WPU team member successfully applied to participate in an academic writing workshop run by the CEEHE
- The workshop program encourages writing contributions from practitioners, to add to the literature and discourse of equity
- A publication is due for release in 2020

Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA)

- WPU participated in the EPHEA Committee in the role of Treasurer, assisting to maintain the organisation’s financial governance and integrity
## COMMITMENT TO HUMANITARIAN VALUES

In line with the University’s commitment to inclusivity, the WPU actively continued its support for students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. Though small in total number, these students are most often made to feel vulnerable by their unique and compounding challenges as well as their limited capacity to access resources. To assist these students to pursue learning, the WPU were instrumental in the following initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asylum Seeker Fee Waiver Scholarship (ASFWS)</th>
<th>Financial Needs Grant</th>
<th>The Refugee Education Special Interest Group (RESIG)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Creating a streamlined process for asylum seeker students to access scholarship support to waive the international tuition fee they would otherwise be required to pay upfront</td>
<td>• Initiated by WPU to help alleviate acute financial hardship experienced by students from refugee and or asylum seeker backgrounds</td>
<td>• A coordinated advocacy network committed to furthering educational opportunities for students from refugee backgrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Streamlining the process enabled greater collaborative efficiency across the institution and for more students to access learning, with minimal added stress</td>
<td>• Administered by both WPU and the Scholarships and Prizes Unit</td>
<td>• WPU represented the University in the RESIG Steering Committee in the roles of Secretariat and Social Media/Website Coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 16 asylum seeker students have been successfully supported by the University</td>
<td>• Funding of the Financial Needs Grant is raised through initiatives delivered by WPU, including The Sweetest Memory World Refugee Day High Tea 2019 and 2019 Macquarie TedX event.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Key University stakeholders engaged in enabling the ASFWS included the Office of the DVCA, WPU, Macquarie International and the Scholarships and Prizes Unit</td>
<td>• Contributions to the Financial Needs Grant can be made through <a href="https://mq-wpu-store.ecwid.com/">https://mq-wpu-store.ecwid.com/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I have no words to describe how grateful I am to receive the Financial Needs Grant. With the help of Macquarie University, I felt less financially stressed and was able to focus on my studies again.”  
*Humanitarian Visa Student, Financial Needs Grant recipient, 2019*
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Universities are central agents to the national widening participation agenda. Genuine improvements to equity in education for Australia’s most underrepresented and disadvantaged students can however only be realised when the commitment to achieve this is shared broadly amongst a community of partners. The WPU values the importance of strong relationships, achieved though close working partnerships, with a community who collectively create meaningful impact and opportunities for students.

In 2019, the WPU’s external community of partners included:

- NSW Department of Education
- Art Gallery of NSW
- The Australian Museum
- Country Education Foundation of Australia
- Dunmore Lang College
- Refugee Council of Australia
- NSW Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARRTS)
- City of Ryde
- The Smith Family
- Robert Menzies College
- Aurora College
- CareerSeekers
- Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA)
- National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE)
- TAFE
- Rural Fire Service

Work to grow our community to raise awareness, resources, research, and best practice is ongoing and we look forward to establishing new partnerships and alliances in 2020.
COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Celebrating with our community is important. The following events were celebrated in 2019 to raise awareness and support for our students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds.

Harmony Day

- An on-campus event delivered by WPU in collaboration with Student Inclusion and Diversity
- WPU’s close ally, Associate Professor Munjed Al Muderis participated in the Cultural Diversity: A Strategy for Career Success forum, delivering the keynote address
- Student group performances were led by students from the LEAP Pasifika Family group.

The Sweetest Memory High Tea, World Refugee Day

- The WPU and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Programs and Pathways) hosted a high tea at the Art Gallery of NSW to celebrate World Refugee Day on June 20th
- Honorary guest speakers included Edward Santow, Australian Human Right Commissioner, Archie Law, Chair of Sydney Peace Foundation and Humanitarian Director at Save the Children Australia; and Sofia Ishan, Macquarie University student
- Over 80 guests attended the event
- More than $4,400 was raised towards the Financial Needs Grant

“The power of the human spirit can bridge cultural divides”
– UNHCR

Macquarie TedX

- The WPU were invited to participate at this event to promote awareness of the University’s Financial Needs Grant
- Sales of The Sweetest Memory book and associated merchandise raised more than $700 for the Financial Needs Grant
## 2019 Highlights

### Widening Participation Unit

### At a Glance

#### Macquarie University Widening Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pillar 1</th>
<th>Pillar 2</th>
<th>Pillar 3</th>
<th>Pillar 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEAP UP Outreach</strong></td>
<td><strong>LEAP IN Pathways</strong></td>
<td><strong>LEAP THROUGH Participation</strong></td>
<td><strong>LEAP ON Impact</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen the capacity of students from equity groups to participate in higher education</td>
<td>Increase opportunities for students from equity groups to study at Macquarie University</td>
<td>Enhance support to students from equity groups, from enrolment through to graduation</td>
<td>Improve graduate outcomes, employment and professional opportunities for students from equity groups</td>
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</table>

### 2019 Initiatives

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring</th>
<th>LEAP IN – Phase 1 Refugee Transition</th>
<th>LEAP THROUGH Refugee Transition Support</th>
<th>Suits You: Suit Library</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEAP School Engagement – ROADS</td>
<td>LEAP School Engagement – inROADS</td>
<td>Equity &amp; Accommodation Scholarships</td>
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<td>LEAP Robotics</td>
<td>LEAP Rural Students University Experience</td>
<td>GLP Enrichment Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rising Stars – Indigenous Outreach and Transition Program</td>
<td>Bridging Scholarships</td>
<td>LEAP Pasifika Family</td>
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<td>LEAP NISEP</td>
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<td>LEAP LINKS – Virtual Classrooms</td>
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<td>LEAP LINKS – Digital Literacy</td>
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<td>Gifted and Talented Pathways</td>
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<td>Regional Engagements Future Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Smith Family Co-Funding Engagement Initiatives</td>
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<td>Science in the City – Australian Museum</td>
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<td>LEAP Rural Students University Experience – Country Education Foundation</td>
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<td>MQ Outreach Mobile</td>
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<td>Wuygiba Bush Hub Remote Engagement</td>
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<td>Junior Science Academy Familiarisation with University</td>
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<td>LEAP into FBE</td>
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<td>Miller Tech High School Football Club</td>
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<td>Promote Virtual 360 Outreach</td>
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2019 Highlights

Widening Participation Unit

2019 Macquarie University Widening Participation Engagement and Impact
## 2019 Highlights

**Widening Participation Unit**

### Demonstrated Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMONSTRATED IMPACT</th>
<th>Enhanced</th>
<th>Enabled</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Encouraged</th>
<th>Empowered</th>
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<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>Awareness of the benefits of higher education</td>
<td>Students to discover alternate learning pathways</td>
<td>Students’ support network of parents/carers and community</td>
<td>Students’ confidence in their capacity to pursue educational goals</td>
<td>Students to engage with opportunities that enhanced their learning experience</td>
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<td>Enabled</td>
<td>Students with a network of affiliated support services across the university</td>
<td>Positive, affirming relations to evolve via peer mentoring</td>
<td>The development of a learning community for students to feel a sense of belonging to</td>
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<td>Students to connect with a network of academics</td>
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<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Macquarie University to engage in initiatives promoting inclusivity for all students</td>
<td>New stakeholder partners in our growing network of practice and actively contributed to academic discourse practice around equity</td>
<td>Network collaborations across our community of learning to better support and engage our students with opportunities</td>
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<td>Empowered</td>
<td>Students to develop employability skills and networks to assist them to successfully capitalise on graduate opportunities</td>
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</table>
Macquarie University is a vibrant hub of intellectual thinkers, all working towards a brighter future for our communities and our planet.

A PLACE OF INSPIRATION
Macquarie is uniquely located in the heart of Australia’s largest high-tech precinct, a thriving locale which is predicted to double in size in the next 20 years to become the fourth largest CBD in Australia.

Our campus spans 126 hectares, with open green space that gives our community the freedom to think and grow. We are home to fantastic facilities with excellent transport links to the city and suburbs, supported by an on-campus train station.

RENOUMED FOR EXCELLENCE
We are ranked among the top two per cent of universities in the world, and with a 5-star QS rating, we are renowned for producing graduates that are among the most sought after professionals in the world.

A PROUD TRADITION OF DISCOVERY
Our enviable research efforts are brought to life by renowned researchers whose audacious solutions to issues of global significance are benefiting the world we live in.

BUILDING SUCCESSFUL GRADUATES
Our pioneering approach to teaching and learning is built around a connected learning community: our students are considered partners and co-creators in their learning experience.

FIND OUT MORE
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