Widening Participation Highlights 2018
LEAP! (LEARNING, EDUCATION, ASPIRATION, PARTICIPATION)
# 2018 Highlights

Widening Participation Unit

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Message from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Programs and Pathways

Colleagues and friends,

I am pleased to present the achievements realised by the Widening Participation Unit (WPU) during 2018. The outcomes of the Unit’s efforts reflect the collaborative nature of the team and their focus on building positive and productive relations with stakeholder partners.

Many objectives outlined in the Widening Participation Strategic Framework 2018 – 2023, launched in March 2018, have been met and others are now well underway. Efforts thus far demonstrate a cohesive focus on creating opportunities, raising awareness and expanding networks of equity partners, both within and external to the University.

The sum of WPU’s achievements are pursuant to the University’s “commitment to inclusiveness” (Our University: A Framing of Futures, Macquarie University 2013, p15) and cannot be understated in their collective and synergistic impact.

Activities, including outreach and transition engagement, planning, evaluation, financial and administrative program management, ensure the delivery of quality, value-added opportunities for students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds. Initiatives that engage students follow evidence-based research aimed at raising student success through their education journey, through both academic and social engagement.

Reviewing WPU’s achievements in 2018 highlights the Unit’s agility to respond and adapt to the changing dynamic of the higher education environment. Many new initiatives identified in the Strategic Framework, including the Compact Model for partners, Roadshows and InRoads Programs for Regional and Remote Students, introduction of LEAP - Partnerships Engagement Grant Scheme and Fundraising ventures, illustrate our commitment to student equity. Innovative and relevant initiatives incorporated into WPU’s business processes have expanded capacity to broaden the network of partners and promoted a more effective and sustainable use of valuable resources.

Beyond reflecting on the achievements outlined in this report, I hold great anticipation for WPU’s impact in the years to come.

PROFESSOR SEAN BRAWLEY
PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR PROGRAMS AND PATHWAYS
THE WIDENING PARTICIPATION UNIT

The University’s Widening Participation Unit (WPU) focuses on delivering targeted, evidence-based engagement programs and opportunities to students from underrepresented equity groups.

Programs are developed around identified areas of service and engagement that broaden the opportunities for student participation and success in higher education, as outlined by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) guidelines.

WPU PATHWAYS AND PLANNING

The WPU is made up of two teams – Pathways and Planning – who work collaboratively to achieve the objectives set out in the Widening Participation Strategic Framework 2018-2023.

The WPU Pathways team closely engage with stakeholders to design and deliver LEAP programs to student cohorts in the outreach and transition space. The LEAP programs aim to increase student access and participation in higher education through evidence-based initiatives. Outreach and transition programs specific to the needs of student equity groups are provided throughout the student life cycle.

The WPU Planning team also works closely with stakeholders and provide research, analysis, evaluation, administrative and financial oversight of Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) funded programs delivered across the University. WPU Planning team research provides evidence-based design for programs around the needs of students from equity groups; while evaluations and financial administration of programs fulfil critical criteria of institutional and government reporting.

Widening Participation Unit reports to the PVC Programs and Pathways – Professor Sean Brawley.

The team members are:
Bonnie Faulkner, WP Pathways Manager
Saya Hussain, LEAP Project Officer
Subhash Koirala, LEAP Project Officer
Margaret Meehan, LEAP Project Officer
Ellie Rutter, LEAP Project Assistant
Sonal Singh, WP Planning Manager
Joy Hou, WPU Finance Officer
Melissa Wong, WPU Administrator
Carolina Morison, WP Planning Officer
John Tran, WP Planning Assistant

LEAP!

WPU’s flagship LEAP programs aim to engage students from equity groups with opportunities that enhance Learning, Education, Aspiration and Participation.

LEAP forms part of each of the four Widening Participation Strategic Framework pillars and provides direction for objectives to be delivered over the life-cycle of the student journey, in collaboration with parent/carer and community networks.

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LEAP PROGRAMS

- LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring
- LEAP School Engagement (ROADSHOW/inROADS)
- LEAP Rural Students University Experience
- LEAP LINKS (Virtual Classroom)
- LEAP IN (Phase 1 & Phase 2) Refugee Transition
- LEAP Through Refugee Transition Support
2018 Highlights

Widening Participation Unit

2018 LEAP IN REVIEW

LEAP UP REFUGEE MENTORING

WPU’s longest running and award-winning program was formally reviewed in 2018 by the WPU Pathways team in close consultation with stakeholders. The review aimed to ensure the program’s delivery and impact are responsive to and in line with the evolving needs of stakeholders, as well as reflective of evidence-based practices. The revised program was delivered in session 2 of 2018 with many past participants responding very positively to the changes incorporated into the program.

Alongside the program’s review, new stakeholders were engaged to participate in the LEAP UP Refugee Mentoring program, allowing for broader reach and positive impact on a wider number of students.

LEAP SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT (ROADSHOW / INROADS)

LEAP ROADSHOW was implemented in 2018 as a new program following its successful pilot delivered by the WPU Pathways team in 2017.

LEAP ROADSHOWS aim to firstly engage students and families from low-SES backgrounds by bringing a taste of university to regional areas. Secondly, it is an opportunity to collaborate with many stakeholders undertaking outreach within the University, with the view to potentiate resources.

Our approach to regional outreach is multipronged, engaging high schools during the day and parents and community members afterhours. In 2018 we broadened our reach by successfully piloting a taster event with primary school students in Broken Hill.

LEAP inROADS was piloted as an on-campus experience for over 80 year 11 students from the mid north coast (NSW). These students had previously participated in the LEAP ROADSHOW pilot in 2017. This is an important initiative to provide regional students a more in-depth on campus experience, more targeted information about university, as well as a means of continuing to build relationships with communities established during the LEAP ROADSHOW.
In 2018 LEAP ROADSHOW and inROADS were successful in meaningfully engaging over 500 students and over 200 community members from regional areas of NSW, including the Far West, Riverina and Mid North Coast. LEAP ROADSHOW and inROADS continue to provide an important platform to build upon our strong partnerships within these communities.

LEAP LINKS (VIRTUAL CLASSROOM)

The LEAP LINKS (Virtual Classroom) program engaged regional and remote high school students attending Aurora College, with University academics, via a series of live videoconference masterclasses aimed at providing curriculum enrichment and connection between students in regional and rural communities and the University.

LEAP RURAL STUDENTS UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

The LEAP Rural Students University Experience project was piloted in collaboration with the Country Education Foundation of Australia, (CEFA) and Dunmore Lang College. High school students from rural areas were provided with an on-campus accommodation experience, faculty-specific activities and information about pathways to university. The project aimed to increase student confidence and foster a sense of belonging with the University.

LEAP IN

LEAP IN was successfully piloted in 2017 following a National Priority Pool (NPP) research grant awarded to the University. The program was designed as a scaffolded two phased program (in school and on campus) to engage students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds as they transitioned out of high school to begin higher education journeys.

Research evidenced that support provided during transition empowered students with a greater sense of academic preparedness and stronger sense of belonging within the University space.
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**LEAP THROUGH REFUGEE TRANSITION SUPPORT**

The LEAP Refugee Transition Support program was first piloted in 2017 as a direct research recommendation from the NPP LEAP UP project, that identified a need for a designated Transition Support Officer to support students.

The Transition Support Officer provides a central point of contact for students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. From this point, students are provided with ongoing information, referral and support. The program also offers a drop-in centre – a safe space with computer and printing resources, as well as ad hoc support from LEAP staff and other peers.

The number of students actively engaged in this program grew from 2017, reflecting greater connection with this cohort of students as well as growing awareness among students that a specialised support program and its related resources are available to them.

**WPU STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

2018 saw many new initiatives pursued, reflecting the University’s encouragement to increase institutional coordination and collaboration. These initiatives were designed to promote sustainability and efficiency of resources. Initiatives also focused on encouraging alternate sources of funding and the building of new partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders by offering portfolios and faculties the opportunity to affirm their commitment towards inclusivity and the promotion of equitable opportunities.

**WP COMPACT MODEL**

As outlined in the Widening Participation Strategic Framework 2018 – 2023, the WP Compact Model was introduced to provide greater certainty of continuation for WP activities at the University, through structured funding agreements.

In 2018 three compact agreements were completed with highly successful and well-established programs, funded to date with HEPPP funds, to engage students from equity groups.

A further twelve new initiatives were signed as compact partners for year-long pilots under the 2018 LEAP PEGS initiative.

**2018 LEAP PEGS**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor Programs and Pathways allocated $200,000 of HEPPP funding to be available for a new LEAP initiative focused on encouraging partnership engagement. The full title of the initiative was LEAP Partnerships Engagement Grant Scheme (PEGS) and was aimed at building and expanding our network of equity partners across the University through the support of new initiatives targeted at promoting opportunities for students from equity backgrounds.
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The strategic allocation of HEPPP funding to LEAP PEGS allowed twelve pilot initiatives and partnerships to be started in 2018. Collectively, these initiatives engaged over 17,000 students and delivered on the objectives to empower low-SES students across an array of study stages.

2018 LEAP PEGS partners included:

- Academics for Refugees
- Bawurra Foundation – Indigenous Transitions and Outreach Program
- FBE PACE Internships
- Future Students School Outreach
- Global Leadership Program Enrichment Activities
- LEAP LINKS Digital Literacy
- Low-SES Orientation Program
- Robert Menzies College Short Stay Program
- Swim Safe Warriors
- Yugul Mangi Education Hub
- Lighthouse Virtual Reality 360 Outreach

Further information about these initiatives can be found at HEPPP@MQ:

mq.edu.au/about/about-the-university/offices-and-units/wideningparticipation

FUNDRAISING REFUGEE SCHOLARSHIP

The growing number of students from humanitarian visa backgrounds choosing to study at the University, and WPU’s long-term support and engagement of these students, were behind WPU’s involvement in several key initiatives in this space during 2018.

The WPU Planning team worked closely with the Admissions and Enrolments team, as well as the manager of the Coursework Scholarships and Prizes Unit to formalise processes around the admission and support of students from humanitarian visa backgrounds.

Provision from the University around scholarship support for students from equity groups is generous, however demand invariably exceed supply. To help meet this demand and raise awareness of the challenges faced by students from humanitarian visa backgrounds, WPU endeavoured to create opportunities to raise alternate sources of funding for grants to alleviate the financial hardship experienced by many of these students.

Initiatives to raise alternate sources of funding for grants were realised through the development of fundraising events.

WIDENING PARTICIPATION FUNDRAISING TREK

The first fundraising event delivered by WPU coincided with the UN’s #WithRefugees during Refugee Week in June. The 25km trek sought to spotlight the courage, resilience and positive contributions made by people forced to flee in search of safety.

The Spit to Manly via North Head trek was headed by WP Planning Manager Sonal Singh and included hardy companions Georgette Roumanos (PACE) and Raelene Mair (Faculty of Business and Economics) Teams from Corporate Advancement also participated in the trek, though their footprints were more localised, around the campus.
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THE SWEETEST MEMORY

The second fundraising initiative delivered by WPU took the form of a published book. The Sweetest Memory was a collaborative project involving students, academics and professional staff from across the University who generously contributed a favourite sweet recipe and personal memory linking to that recipe.

Collectively, the book delivered a simple message around our shared humanity. Through the exchange of food and memories we are able to glimpse experiences that connect us to understand each other’s perspectives.

The Sweetest Memory was officially launched by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Professor Kevin Jameson, to a wide community of University supporters.

In sum, WPU’s two fundraising initiatives raised over $10,000 in 2018 for student grants. Following this success, WPU fundraising initiatives will continue in 2019.

PUBLICATIONS

The following publications were researched and delivered by the WP Planning team addressing specific strategic objectives.

1) “Methodological diversity as an asset for transition-focused higher education research with students from refugee backgrounds” Review of Education
   http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3133

2) “(Re)Claiming social capital: improving language and cultural pathways for students from refugee backgrounds into Australian higher education” Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching Report

3) “Macquarie University LEAP-Links (Digital Literacy): Developing the ICT competencies of regional and remote low-SES students”, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education
   https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/project/

4) “LEAP-UP — University Preparedness: Developing a Tertiary Enabling Program for Low SES Students from Refugee Backgrounds”, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education
   https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/project/
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AWARDS

2018 AUSTRALIAN RURAL EDUCATION AWARD

The University’s Lighthouse Virtual Reality 360 Outreach project, developed by WPU and the Department of Computing, as a LEAP PEGS initiative, was awarded the 2018 Australian Rural Education Award by the Society for the Provision of Rural Education in Australia (SPERA). The project engaged students from regional and remote areas to experience university through the virtual reality realm, and through that experience encourage aspirations to pursue higher education studies.

COMMUNITY OF PARTNERS

The WPU has established firm collaborative relations with several key external partners, who collectively form part of a broader community of equity advocates. Our involvement with our partners includes the joint delivery of outreach and engagement programs, secretariat functions and high-level representations within non-government organisations in the equity space.

Our external community network includes: The Smith Family, Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF), the Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia (SPERA), Dunmore Lang College, the NSW Department of Education, Refugee Council of Australia, Refugee Education Special Interest Group (SIG), Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA) and the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE).

During 2018 the WPU team worked collaboratively with partners within and external to the University to grow the network of practitioners, academics and community partners involved in engaging students from equity backgrounds.

Connecting with new partners helped to promote WPU’s profile as a point of service and connection, while also highlighting key contact personnel and teams providing alternate services and opportunities to students from equity groups.

Work to expand our community remains on-going and will continue to spread awareness, resources, research and best practice.

Two key events were facilitated by WPU in 2018 to engage our HEPPP community of partners, including:

HEPPP LUNCH AND LEARN

This event brought together project coordinators responsible for delivering HEPPP funded initiatives across the University. The forum provided project coordinators an opportunity to share information about projects, objectives and common challenges. Widening participation representatives from UNSW were also invited to attend the event as guest speakers.
FACILITATING SUCCESS FOR EQUITY STUDENTS – EPHEA WORKSHOP

This workshop was organised by the Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA) and hosted at the University by WPU to HEPPP project coordinators, in livestream with widening participation practitioners representing 6 other universities. The workshop was presented by an academic from Deakin University and delivered information around disadvantages and strategies to support low-SES students.

CAREERSEEKERS – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

In late 2018 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was agreed between the University and CareerSEEKERS. The WPU Planning team was instrumental in building a connection between the two organisations.

CareerSEEKERS provide paid internship opportunities to students and mid-career professionals from humanitarian visa backgrounds. Via CareerSEEKERS, our students will be able to access professional opportunities from an extensive array of institutional partners.

The University’s MOU with CareerSEEKERS provides a valuable opportunity for students to build their professional skills and experience.
HEPPP @ MQ

The Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) aims to ensure Australians from low Socio-Economic-Status (SES) backgrounds who have the ability to study at university, have the opportunity to do so. Through the provision of HEPPP funding, the government assists universities to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses, as well as improve retention and completion rates.

The WPU has actively managed and reported on MQ’s HEPPP related activities to the Australian Government since 2011. Since that time partnerships have formed across the University with WPU and various portfolios, faculties and teams who deliver programs focused on raising awareness, access, retention and ultimately success of students from equity backgrounds.

HEPPP funded programs that have had significant impact and on-going engagement with students include:

EQUITY SCHOLARSHIPS AND BRIDGING GRANTS

This initiative, delivered by the Coursework Scholarships and Prizes Unit, offers low-SES students access to accommodation and financial scholarships. Most of the accommodation recipients are of regional or remote backgrounds, residing at Dunmore Lang College.

LEAP ROBOTICS

This well-established outreach program is delivered by the Faculty of Science and Engineering in partnership with the NSW Department of Education. The program engages high school students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) activities using robotics technology to inspire students to pursue higher education studies in this field.

LEAP NATIONAL INDIGENOUS SCIENCE EDUCATION PROGRAM (NISEP)

The NISEP outreach program is delivered by the Faculty of Science and Engineering in partnership with the NSW Department of Education. The program engages students from low-SES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds to participate in interactive science-based activities.

EQUITY SCHOLARS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This initiative offers career development workshops to low-SES students in their second year of university study. Through the program students are offered valuable skills that boost their employability readiness.
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INTERNSHIP (MURI) PROGRAM
MURI is a student-led initiative that offers undergraduate research students the opportunity to participate as paid research interns in a project sponsored by an academic mentor. Participating students not only develop research skills and practice but are also introduced to a network of researchers.

SBS/NITV MEDIA MENTORSHIP PROGRAM
A long-running program developed in partnership with The Ethnic Community's Council of Australia, the Special Broadcasting Services (SBS) and National Indigenous Television (NITV). Offered as a 3-year scaffolded program, students engage in various media related workshops and activities to build industry specific professional skills and networks.

STUDENT GROUP COACHING
The coaching program provides targeted intervention for equity students identified as likely to fail or discontinue their studies. Students are paired with peers in their final year of bachelor study, or from post-graduate level, the aim being to support students with personalised coaching.
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### Widening Participation Unit

### Widening Participation Unit Strategic Framework 2018 – 2023

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<td><strong>LEAP THROUGH Participation</strong></td>
<td><strong>LEAP ON Impact</strong></td>
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<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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### HEPPP@ PROGRAMS

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<td>LEAP School Engagement – ROADSHOW</td>
<td>LEAP School Engagement – inROADS</td>
<td>LEAP THROUGH Refugee Transition Support</td>
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<td>LEAP LINKS</td>
<td>LEAP Rural Students University Experience</td>
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### Bawurra Foundation – Indigenous Outreach and Transitions Program

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<td>LEAP NISEP</td>
<td>Equiity Scholars (Careers) Development Program</td>
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<td>LEAP LINKS - Digital Literacy</td>
<td>MURI Program</td>
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### Indigenous Outreach

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<td>Robert Menzies College Short Stay Program</td>
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<td>GLP Enrichment Activities</td>
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<th>Yugul Mangi Education Hub</th>
<th>The Smith Family Co-Funding Scholarship Program</th>
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<td>Low-SES Orientation Program</td>
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2018 Widening Participation Engagement and Impact at a Glance

Widening participation programs delivered in 2018 engaged:

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<tr>
<td>264</td>
<td>22,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary and Secondary Schools</td>
<td>School Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td>5,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>University Students</td>
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Evaluation of the programs revealed positive impact in the following areas:

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<th>Educational engagement and motivation to study</th>
<th>Student confidence and sense of belonging</th>
<th>Awareness of the benefits provided by education</th>
<th>Motivation to attend and succeed at university</th>
<th>Improved graduate outcomes</th>
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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.

RENOWNED 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 benefitting 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.

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