
**Who's the greenest of them all?
Australasia's leading sustainable institutions**

News Release

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Last night sustainability leaders from across Australia and New Zealand were on the edge of their seats, as the winners of the 2016 Green Gown Awards Australasia were announced from the stunning Mooloolaba Surf Club on Queensland's Sunshine Coast

34 finalists from 17 institutions held their breath as the President of Australasian Campuses towards Sustainability (ACTS), Leanne Denby, and Vice President, Corey Peterson, announced 14 winners representing 9 institutions from across Australasia.

"A warm and heartfelt congratulations to all finalists and winners. The efforts of the sector continue to amaze" said ACTS President, Leanne Denby.

Every year the Awards bring together some of the most inspirational sustainability projects from across the sector and 2016 is no exception. Showcasing a diverse range of innovative and ethical initiatives, the Awards demonstrate that sustainability and 'being green' continues to gain importance across our campuses.

Winner of the fiercely fought Carbon Reduction category, Charles Sturt University, recently became the first and only university in Australia to be certified Carbon Neutral.

"To be recognised through the Green Gown Awards Australasia for our hard work and commitment in becoming Australia's first certified Carbon Neutral university is a fantastic honour. We have shown how an organisation with nine campuses spread over a thousand kilometres in regional New South Wales and Victoria can operate and thrive while being aware of and showing care for the places where we live and learn." Said Professor Andrew Vann, Vice Chancellor and President – Charles Sturt University.

The University of Technology Sydney achieved success in three categories, including one for their community driven sustainability radio show, as well as the big win for the highly sort after Continuous Improvement category, demonstrating how they are true leaders of sustainability across campus and curriculum.

"At UTS we've been working for more than two decades to embed sustainability into the organisation, striving to continually improve our sustainability performance, and to achieve tough targets in greenhouse gas emission reduction, recycling and waste minimisation, and energy and water efficiency. This win is a great validation of the efforts of staff and students from across the University." Vice Chancellor, Attila Brungs, UTS.

La Trobe University's Vice Chancellor – Professor John Dewar – stood out amongst exceptional competition from leaders at Macquarie University and RMIT University to take home the Sustainability Leadership Award.

“I am delighted to accept the Green Gown Leadership Award on behalf of everyone at La Trobe. The University's success in developing and implementing sustainability initiatives across so many areas of our activity is the result of the hard work and dedication of numerous staff. In particular, our team in the Environmental Suitability Unit share this award with me and should be very proud that La Trobe has received this leadership award. We are also proud that La Trobe students played such a major role in driving our decision to divest from fossil fuels held in our managed funds, a decision which was also strongly supported by our governing Council'. Professor John Dewar, Vice Chancellor, La Trobe University.

And from across the ditch, New Zealand's University of Waikato excelled in their student engagement initiatives, blowing the judges away with their extensive range of highly engaging sustainability activities.

“Winning the Green Gown Award is an acknowledgement of our commitment to sustainability on campus and in the community. It reinforces and rewards the sustainability work that we carry out. It also encourages staff to maximise our potential for sustainability, and recognise our leadership to continue developing this area. It is a great achievement and recognition of our work”. Professor Neil Quigley, Vice Chancellor University of Waikato.

There were 14 worthy winners:

- Monash University, Victoria – Built Environment
- Charles Sturt University, NSW – Carbon Reduction
- RMIT University, Victoria – Carbon Reduction (Highly Commended)
- The University of Queensland, QLD – Community Engagement
- University of Technology Sydney, NSW – Community Engagement (Highly Commended)
- The University of Queensland, QLD – Facilities & Services
- University of Technology Sydney, NSW – Continuous Improvement
- University of Tasmania, Tasmania – Learning, Teaching & Research
- University of Tasmania, Tasmania - Student Engagement (Highly Commended)
- University of Waikato, NZ – Student Engagement
- La Trobe University (Professor John Dewar), Victoria – Leadership
- University of Melbourne (Danielle Rostan-Herbert), Victoria – ACTS Award of Excellence – Staff
- University of Technology, Sydney (Daisy Amanaki) – ACTS Award of Excellence Staff (Highly Commended)
- University of Melbourne (Emily Newton), Victoria – ACTS Award of Excellence – Student

A full list of winners and finalists can be found at www.acts.asn.au

The end

Notes to the editor

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- ❑ We'd like to thank our Awards sponsors: Headline sponsor – Biniris, Envizi – Built Environment, Conservia – Carbon reduction and Veolia – Continuous Improvement and Warp it – Facilities & Services
- ❑ The Green Gown Awards Australasia are run by ACTS – [Australasian Campuses towards Sustainability](#) ACTS is the sector champion for improving and promoting sustainability in the further and higher education sector. Representing over 90% of universities, and other TAFEs and polytechnics within Australasia.
- ❑ The Award submissions were subject to strict judging by a panel of independent international experts. Representatives from 40 organisations such as universities Australia, TAFE Directors Australia, Centre for Sustainability Leadership, WWF, Green Cross Australia and 1 million women.

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