

Journey in the Academic and Research world of Australasia

Antonietta Cooper

University City Project

A Strategic South Australian Government initiative

The University City concept stemmed from the Premier's discussions with senior business leaders and federal ministers in 2005 on the 'sorts of things we need to transform the South Australian economy' including various international universities which 'would add enormous prestige to our being a university city'.

In a subsequent 2006 Ministerial Statement he championed the opening of Carnegie Mellon and the locating, in Adelaide, of other branch campuses such as the Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute, US and Cranfield University, UK. The Premier's vision was 'for Adelaide to become a world-class "University City"'. In 2007, at the Sesquicentenary Opening of Parliament, the Governor, highlighted the Government's continued efforts in developing 'Adelaide's status as Australia's 'University City of the Future' with the interest of further overseas institutions'.

The University City Project used South Australia's Strategic Plan targets to determine its directions.

- Growing prosperity – eg economic, employment and export including defence, mining and international students
- Attaining sustainability – eg energy, climate change
- Fostering creativity and innovation – eg investment in science and research
- Expanding opportunity – eg education and workforce development and training for key areas

In essence, it considered the need to attract industry and business by skilling the workforce, attracting research investment, building export revenue and expanding the State's population. Education and research, which combines the expertise of local universities with high calibre foreign universities, are considered critical to building a knowledge and skills epicentre to draw business and people to the State.

The success for Adelaide becoming a 'University City' is based on attracting top ranking universities for the long term whilst also building a network of specialised centres that further distinguishes the city from other university cities. The aim is to build capability in Adelaide by raising the profile of those areas in which Adelaide excels and filling the gaps where there is a lack of expertise in Australia – the result, a highly integrated and competitive teaching and research environment.

Carnegie Mellon, USA (public policy, IT, defence, sustainable design), University College London, UK (energy and resources) and Cranfield University, UK (defence) form the core of the major international universities to be located in Adelaide. These may expand over time to include more courses or research areas and other universities may also be attracted to join teaching and research consortiums.

Specialised centres which will network with the international universities, domestic universities, research organisations and industry include the centre for International Minerals and Energy Resources (energy and mining), the Governments of Apulia – South Australia collaborative research initiatives and student exchanges and a Hellenic Languages and Cultural Centre (population and migration).

The establishment of the International University Precinct in the Torrens Building on Victoria Square will provide the hub for international teaching and research.