



UNAI MEMBER ACTIVITY REPORTS 2013-2014

The University of Western Sydney

Australia

During the 2013-14 reporting period, The University of Western Sydney (UWS) engaged in a number of activities that progressed the following principles of the UN's Academic Impact initiative: emphasizing educational opportunity for all; capacity-building in higher education systems; and sustainability through education. The following examples stand out as particularly notable.

Two research projects—entitled *Governing Digital Cities* and *Urban Innovation Platforms*, respectively—examine the impact of smart city initiatives on sustainability measurements and the applications of urban sustainability data as a tool for awareness-raising and citizen engagement in local sustainability initiatives. These projects seek to identify best practice in the development of open data platforms, sensing city initiatives and city innovation precincts by urban governments with comparative studies to be undertaken in New York, Shanghai, Christchurch and Sydney.



In December of 2013, the University and Parramatta City Council entered into a new strategic partnership arrangement. The “Knowledge City” partnership will see the University and Council collaborate on a broad range of projects, which include the new City Campus. The partnership brings together representatives from Council and the University to develop “shared communities” of interest, working together on such priorities as improved connectivity between Parramatta Central Business District and UWS, shared use of venues and facilities, increased links between business and academia, joint research and academic sharing, and UWS graduate and internship programs.

Finally, Dr. Sarah Barns and Professor Donald McNeill of UWS's Institute for Culture and Society have been awarded fellowships to research the relationship between Digital Cities and Urban Innovation Platforms. Supported by the Urban Studies Foundation (USF) and the Australian Research Council, respectively, a key element of the work has been developing links with urban governments to investigate comparative uses of data-driven innovation platforms to promote smart city strategies. The project has a strong focus on generating impact outside the academy, and demonstrates UWS commitment to an expanding international research profile in smart cities' innovation strategy at local, national and international levels of engagement.

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