

2025

ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

UNIVERSITIES FOR ALL

A YEAR IN REVIEW

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR
STUDENT EQUITY AND SUCCESS





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success acknowledges Indigenous peoples across Australia as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which the nation's campuses are situated. With a history spanning more than 60,000 years as the original educators, Indigenous peoples hold a unique place in our nation. We recognise the importance of their knowledge and culture, and reflect the principles of participation, equity, and cultural respect in our work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and future, and consider it an honour to learn from our Indigenous colleagues, partners, and friends.



> WHO WE ARE

ABOUT

The Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES) is a national leader in a future-orientated, evidence-based approach to student equity, leading universities towards accessibility and success for every student.

FUNDING

ACSES is largely funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and hosted by Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia.

VISION

An Australia where no student is left behind.

MISSION

To work with universities to close the gap for equity groups, by using the latest data collected through trials, evaluations, and research to inform better practice.

VALUES

Integrity | Fairness | Collaboration | Innovation | Impact

CORE PROGRAMS

- > Trials and Evaluation
- > Research and Policy
- > Data

PROJECTS MANAGED BY ACSES

- > Regional University Study Hubs (RUSH) Network
- > Higher Education Disability Support Program – Capacity Building Fund (CBF)

This is a summary of the ACSES 2025 Annual Report. **Scan the QR code** to read the full report on the ACSES website.



MILESTONES FROM OUR CORE PROGRAMS

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- > Full commitment of funds for Equity Frontiers Trials Program and launch of new Trials Registry
- > 2025 Small Grants, Large Grants, First Nations Fellowships, Equity Fellowships, Visiting Scholars Program, and Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Stipends Scheme
- > Launch of new Impact Grants Program
- > Student Equity in an Era of Change 2025: The Australian Student Equity Symposium
- > First annual ACSES Awards for Innovation and Excellence in Impact on Higher Education Policy and Practice
- > ACSES Education and Work Survey added as module to QILT Student Experience Survey
- > Launch of evaluation skills training modules via ACSES Equity Hub
- > Launch of Education Data Sources
- > Relaunch of upgraded Interactive Data Tool

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

- > *Equity Insights 2025: Policy, Power, and Practice for a Fairer Australian Tertiary Education System*
- > Three Data Insights Series reports
- > Two Student Equity Data Guides
- > Eleven research publications

STATS



Events
18

**ACSES
Fellowships**

4

**Media
reach**



326.6m

**Grants
funded**

13



2

**Visiting
Scholarships**

HDRS



5

19



Publications

> DRIVING DISCUSSION, SHAPING POLICY

It's been another momentous year for ACSES, with the Centre continuing to expand its presence in Australia's higher education sector and cementing its status as a nation-leading What Works Centre.

In 2025, we:

- > were front and centre in national student equity discussions, building on our reputation as a trusted source of evidence and advice for policymakers and university leaders (for example, the Commonwealth Government's Equity in Higher Education Panel, Disability Roundtable, Universities Australia)
- > increased our visibility through innovative new initiatives such as our trials program, sector-leading data products, and impactful research
- > generated national and international media coverage and record growth in digital engagement
- > established the ACSES Policy Symposium as a key annual gathering of sector leaders for exploring transformative student equity policy and practice
- > supported the implementation of the Australian Universities Accord's key recommendations, including the formation of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission
- > informed impactful policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation through 19 major publications
- > supported evaluative capacity-building through the ACSES Equity Hub, three Community of Practice forums, and the launch of the ACSES Evaluation Learning Program
- > remained committed to best practice in governance and compliance and embedded in a strong web of accountabilities.





ACSES AT WORK

- > **5 February:** Capacity Building Grants information session
- > **13 February:** Small Grants webinar | Investigating the relationships between first-in-family status, equity groups, and university access
- > **11 March:** Fellowships Forum 2025
- > **12 March:** Fellowships Commencement Event 2025
- > **13 March:** Evidence for Action: Equity Frontiers Forum 2025
- > **14 March:** Equity Hub Community of Practice March 2025
- > **20 March:** Small Grants webinar | Financial challenges of students studying in Australian and New Zealand universities
- > **15 May:** ACSES Trials for Equity workshop, South Australia
- > **23 May:** Enabling access and engagement for all through Universal Design for Learning workshop with Visiting Scholar Sean Bracken
- > **18 June:** Practitioner Resource Grants information session
- > **25 June:** Quasi-Experimental Design Program information session
- > **8 September:** Equity Hub Community of Practice September 2025
- > **9–10 September:** Student Equity in an Era of Change 2025: The Australian Student Equity Symposium
- > **1 October:** Equity Hub: Training modules and Program Logic Model (PLM) Tool launch webinar
- > **28 October:** World Access to Higher Education Day webinar
- > **30 October:** Impact Evaluation for Equity workshop, Canberra
- > **11 November:** Research webinar: HDR Stipends Scheme
- > **24 November:** Equity Hub Community of Practice November 2025



Our people

CORE STAFF

Professor Shamit Saggar CBE FAcSS – Executive Director
Professor John Phillimore – Deputy Director
Associate Professor Gemma Cadby – Data Program Director
Professor Ian Li SFHEA – Research and Policy Program Director
Associate Professor Tim Pitman – Trials and Evaluation Program Director
Anna Will – Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Manager
Canki Yuan – Business Manager
Dr Patrick Broman – Manager, National Student Equity Evaluation
Isabel Buitrago Diaz – Communications Officer
Daniel Doss – Data Analyst
Vince Gingoyon – Research Assistant
Andrew Hone – Project Manager (Research and Policy, Data, Capacity Building Fund)
Dr Paul Koshy – Research Fellow
Dr Novia Minaee – Research Officer
Jasmine Muscat – Communications Officer
Jesse Parmar – Program Manager (Trials and Evaluation)
Dr Gwyneth Peaty – eLearning Designer
David Raithel – Senior Data Scientist
Indu Rani – Administrative Officer
Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce, CE – Trials Lead

DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM – CBF

Dr Matt Brett – Project Director

RUSH NETWORK

Amma Buckley – Project Manager
Anne Whitehouse – Administrative Officer
Laura Niebel – Communications Officer

ADVISORY BOARD

Professor Harlene Hayne CNZM – Chair
Professor Scott Bowman AO – Deputy Chair
John Craven
Dr Nicola Cull
Professor Paul Harpur
Suzi Hewlett
Professor Leanne Holt
Kathleen Nelly
Professor Deborah Terry AC

As of December 2025.



ACSES

Australian Centre for
Student Equity and Success
Universities For All



Curtin University



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