



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Sydney Conservatorium of Music **Strategic Plan 2024 to 2028**

Reimagining music for the future



Professor Deborah Cheetham Fraillon: Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, February 2023. (Photo: Stefanie Zingsheim)

Acknowledgement of Country

The Sydney Conservatorium of Music stands on a place of first contact; interaction through music is part of our past, present, and future. Gadigal songlines provide us with deeply embedded cultural connections to continued music practice on this unceded land. As musicians and artists, we benefit from the knowledge and wisdom that Gadigal people have sung, danced, and storied into this Country and we hold responsibilities for recognition, deep understanding and reciprocity.

General Statement

As the Sydney Conservatorium of Music we acknowledge that First Nations people and knowledge are integral to our way of thinking and working through music.

Our appreciation of the depth of knowledge embedded in our people and location ensures that our education is transformational for students and faculty.

Our musical community thrives on cultural diversity as we are able to explore cultures through music both modern and ancient.

Our research spans contemporary ideas, historical practices, scientific principles, beauty, and creativity – all in a way that contributes to the common good.

Wherever we go we acknowledge that music is an essential human, and more than human, experience and that our work can change lives.



“As a mark of respect to local Aboriginal communities and First Nations people of Australia, I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, who are the traditional owners of the land on which Sydney Conservatorium of Music is built. Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land.”

**Professor Anna Reid,
Head of School and Dean**



Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AO QC, Governor of New South Wales, and Mr Dennis Wilson are Joint Vice Regal Patrons of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Courtesy of Government House, Sydney



(Photo: Ruari Campbell, 2022)

From the Head of School and Dean

The Sydney Conservatorium of Music is a strong and vibrant musical community with graduates involved in a myriad of musical activities all over the world.

The original aspiration for the Conservatorium was to be as good as any conservatoire in Europe – we have achieved that aspiration and now must re-imagine how we can provide the highest quality music education into the future.

Our courses include our acclaimed performance and composition degrees, undergraduate and postgraduate music education degrees, contemporary music, composition for creative industries, music theatre, opera, and research degrees that prepare students to work in modern music industries.

Our faculty consists of highly regarded musicians with real industry and performance experience.

We are now focusing on the preparation of our students to engage in a complex and changing world where cultural competence – and the ability to create music in intercultural context – is simply a requirement of our age.

In 2023, our entire faculty contributed to the development of this strategic plan to lead us into the future.

Professor Anna Reid
*Head of School and Dean,
Sydney Conservatorium of Music*

www.sydney.edu.au/music

Vision

Sydney Conservatorium of Music provides a distinctive, innovative and creative environment for musicians to learn, create and perform.

Our students and faculty constructively engage with Australia's first peoples and cultures, contemporary society in domestic and international locations, and technology through music.

We seek to build upon the centuries-old conservatory model and to extend its relevance and reach into the 21st century. We are committed to excellence, leadership and diversity in music education, performance, creative practices and research, for the cultural and social enrichment of our community and the wider world.

With a comprehensive curriculum and interdisciplinary approach, we prepare students to thrive in today's evolving music industry. We bring together renowned faculty, passionate students, and distinguished artists to create a vibrant hub of musical excellence.

Through performances, recordings, and outreach, we engage with local and global communities, promoting cultural understanding and inspiring a lifelong love for music.

Sydney Conservatorium of Music will achieve this vision through an uncompromising pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and engagement. The Conservatorium will deliver this strategy through collaboration with our students, alumni, and through a wide range of partnerships both within and beyond the University.

Our approach will be underpinned by a vibrant, diverse and innovative culture.

© NIDA 2023. (Photo: Phil Erbacher)



Education

Sydney Conservatorium of Music provides and fosters a broad and thorough knowledge of music and its role in society leading to transformational learning experiences.

We prepare independent and resilient music students who are sensitive to cultural difference, technical complexity and artistic diversity for work at the highest level in a musical world.

Partnerships with First Nations communities, music industries, and international peers ensure innovation in our pedagogical practices.

Our environment includes pedagogical methods of Western art music that have been cultivated over many centuries, and are reinforced by contemporary innovations to prepare our students for their diverse careers in music.

Our strategic priorities for education are to:

1. Ensure that curriculum focusing on First Nations knowledge is led by First Nations people.
2. Provide integrated, multi-faceted music programs relating to music professions, research and professional practice.
3. Focus on professional preparation for a diverse range of careers.
4. Recruit well-qualified and musically self-directed students.
5. Recognise and cultivate creative and cultural diversity.
6. Focus on innovation in all aspects of our teaching including e-learning, music technology, and entrepreneurship.
7. Enhance and recognise teaching excellence and the educational experience for staff and students.
8. Enable teaching exchanges with international partners.
9. Provide workplace opportunities and mentoring for HDR candidates.
10. Recognise the strengths of each degree program and create more opportunities for student and faculty collaborations between programs.



(Photography: Stefanie Zingsheim, 2023)



Research

Sydney Conservatorium of Music supports and facilitates research excellence in music. Our research covers a diverse range of perspectives including First Nations knowledge, composition, performance, music education, musicology, music cognition, and music in societies that are vital to cultural development and heritage in Australia and worldwide.

We are international leaders in articulating multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research across artistic and traditional contexts. We continue to strengthen our knowledge of historical musical practices, providing rich contexts for our day-to-day teaching, while also developing research methodologies that aid global understanding of diverse musical cultures.

Our strategic priorities for research are to:

1. Further develop our research activity in Indigenous musics, including research led by First Nations scholars and practitioners.
2. Expand our research focusing on music of diverse cultures.
3. Develop relationships and cutting-edge research projects with key industry partners nationally and internationally.
4. Acknowledge practice-led research as embodied knowledge, and articulate the value of research-led performance.
5. Engage nationally and internationally in the development of quality metrics for artistic research and other non-traditional research outputs.
6. Communicate the importance of non-traditional research worldwide
7. Invest in and drive diverse research with an excellent track record of output and impact.
8. Build excellence and success in external funding opportunities.
9. Mentor early- and mid-career researchers through the Academic Excellence Framework.
10. Support HDR activity in areas of existing and emerging excellence.
11. Provide strategic support for multidisciplinary collaborations, and recognise the contribution of professional staff to ongoing research quality and management.
12. Lead the research narrative about the importance of the arts for Australia.



*(Photography: above, Anna Warr, 2023;
below, Stefanie Zingsheim, 2023)*



Engagement

Sydney Conservatorium of Music enhances the quality of life for people locally and globally through purposeful relationships in music with communities and industries.

We build the values of diversity and inclusion through our engagement with research, teaching and professional practice. We incorporate new technologies to ensure that we have a world-wide reach.

Our strategic priorities for external engagement and reputation are to:

1. Create strategic research, teaching and performance alliances with Indigenous communities, Asia and the Pacific.
2. Be a vibrant and active music and creative research hub within the broader Australian society.
3. Contribute to local, national and global peak body discussions on music performance, research, education and creation through effective external engagement.
4. Create pathways for low SES students, especially from Western Sydney.
5. Foster interactions with local and international arts organisations and Indigenous communities that improve the quality and impact of our teaching, research, and creative practice.
6. Support the NSW Regional Conservatoriums as a major source of student recruitment and school engagement, ensuring a diversity of students in all of our programs.
7. Ensure that the Open Academy is at the centre of the local musical community.
8. Increase staff public profiles for engagement as experts in their fields.
9. Develop the use of music as a means to foster social justice through the provision of courses and experiences that enable young people and their communities to find their musical voice.

A Better Place to Work

The Sydney Conservatorium of Music has developed its learning, research and creative environment for over a century. Now we seek to use innovative technology to support these practices to transform our experience of working at the University. We will:

1. Integrate our administrative systems with University best practice systems.
2. Focus on supporting researchers, creators, and teachers through investment in their professional development.
3. Attract new staff who will contribute creatively to our musical enterprise as professional or academic members of our community.
4. Ensure that SCM staff successfully integrate with new University innovations and directions.
5. Ensure that our physical spaces are attractive workplaces for staff and students.

(Photo: Ruari Campbell, 2022)





Left to Right: Ocea Ralph (Sydney Conservatorium of Music), Zinata Green, and Cindy Marks (Kintore Kungka Band). Ripple Effect and Kintore Kungka Band event at the Marrickville Bowling Club, supported by Sydney Conservatorium of Music, October 2023. (Photo: Tanja Bruckner)

We recognise and pay respect to the Elders and communities – past, present, and emerging – of the lands that the University of Sydney’s campuses stand on. For thousands of years they have shared and exchanged knowledges across innumerable generations for the benefit of all.

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