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### Who's the greenest of them all?!

#### Australasia's leading sustainable universities shortlisted in the 2016 Green Gown Awards

##### News Release

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Today Australian and NZ institutions find out who have been shortlisted for this year's Green Gown Awards Australasia, presented by Biniris. 34 initiatives, from 17 institutions have found themselves in the running for the top sustainability honours.

Every year the Awards bring together some of the most inspirational sustainability projects from across the sector, and 2016 is no exception. With representation from across most Australian states and New Zealand, it shows that sustainability and 'being green' is continuing to gain importance and traction across our campuses.

Leanne Denby, President of Australasian Campuses towards Sustainability (ACTS) said "I'm continually inspired by the work of the sector and in particular by those who have been recognised through the Green Gown awards. Every year, the quality of the initiatives is outstanding, and indicative of the many ways in which the sector is contributing to a more sustainable society. My heartfelt congratulations to all those successful finalists. I am really looking forward to seeing everyone at the Awards night and finding out who our winners are for 2016.

All 34 finalists were chosen with the help of over 40 independent sector experts from organisations across the globe.

Of these Universities Australia, Deputy Chief Executive Catriona Jackson said the awards honoured the many staff and students who were working on sustainability initiatives across the country. "The annual Green Gown Awards recognise the commitment of Australia's universities to sustainability," she said. "The level of innovation and creativity demonstrated by the finalists is a credit to the sector."

With a big interest in carbon reduction this year, five institutions have pledged their commitment to lowering their carbon footprint. Charles Sturt University, which officially gained carbon neutrality earlier this year, along with RMIT, University of Queensland, Federation University Australia and the University of Melbourne are all hoping to take out the top gong.

The always, extremely popular student engagement category has five institutions with initiatives that are varied both in scope and geographical location. RMIT, Western Sydney University and the University of Tasmania are all hoping to impress through fair trade, inspiring student conferences and community outreach programmes. Whilst across the ditch, two NZ institutions, the University of Waikato and Victoria University of Wellington,

are hoping to impress the judges through inter-halls competitions and quirky projects such as the eco-emporium and Wow Films!

There are 10 individual finalists for three personal excellence awards – including Prof. John Dewar from La Trobe University, Prof. Lesley Hughes from Macquarie University and Prof. Paul Gough, RMIT University, all hoping to show how senior leadership and vision have helped their institutions led the way.

Winners of the student engagement, community engagement and the prestigious continuous improvement categories will then go head to head with the national winners from UK & Ireland, French-speaking Europe and Canada and the six UNEP regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and West Asia for the international titles. The international awards will be announced in Europe in the spring of 2017.

Peter King, Managing Director of Biniris, headline sponsor said “Biniris services many campuses within the Tertiary Education Sector and is continually seeking new ways in which we can value add to our customers. Our sponsorship of the 2016 Green Gown Awards allows us to acknowledge the excellent sustainability initiatives being practised across all campuses”.

The winners will be announced at the stunning beach front surf club in Mooloolaba, QLD. Greens Senator Larissa Waters will be amongst the high profile guests attending and presenting at the awards night on 3 November 2016. To purchase tickets or for more information visit [www.actsconference.com.au](http://www.actsconference.com.au)

The Green Gown Awards Australasia ceremony will take place during the [16<sup>th</sup> International ACTS conference](#) taking place at the University of the Sunshine Coast 2-4 November. It’s the premiere sustainability event for the tertiary education sector within Australasia.

We’d like to thank our Awards sponsors: Headline sponsor – [Biniris](#), [Envizi](#) – Built Environment, [Conservia](#) – Carbon Reduction and [Veolia](#) – Continuous Improvement.

**The end**

#### **Notes to the editor**

- ❑ A full list of the finalist institutions can be found in Appendix I (see below). Additional information is available from [www.acts.asn.au](http://www.acts.asn.au)
- ❑ 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, World Wide Fund for Nature, Green Cross Australia and 1 Million Women.

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **2016 Green Gown Awards Australasia Finalists**

#### **Built Environment**

University of Tasmania  
The University of Queensland  
Monash University

#### **Carbon Reduction**

The University of Queensland  
Federation University Australia  
University of Melbourne  
Charles Sturt University  
RMIT University

#### **Community Engagement**

La Trobe University  
The University of Queensland  
University of Technology Sydney

#### **Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change**

Griffith University  
University of Technology Sydney  
University of Waikato

#### **Facilities & Services**

The University of Queensland  
University of the Sunshine Coast  
La Trobe University

#### **Learning, Teaching & Skills**

University of Tasmania  
James Cook University  
University of Melbourne

#### **Student Engagement**

RMIT University  
Western Sydney University  
Victoria University of Wellington  
University of Tasmania  
University of Waikato

#### **Leadership**

La Trobe University – Prof. John Dewar  
Macquarie – Prof. Lesley Hughes  
RMIT – Prof. Paul Gough

#### **ACTS Award of Excellence – Staff**

The University of Adelaide - Ben Pike

University of Melbourne - Danielle Rostan-Herbert  
University of Technology Sydney - Daisy Amanaki

**ACTS Award of Excellence – Student**

University of Melbourne - Emily Newton  
University of Technology Sydney - Terese Corkish  
University of Tasmania - Thomas Crawford