

**Welcome address by Professor Ian Jacobs, annual UNSW Town and Gown event, UNSW Sydney, 25 October 2016.**

*Welcoming attendees to the annual UNSW Town and Gown event in 2016, Professor Jacobs spoke the need for universities to be servants of society, and detailed his views on generosity in partnerships as exemplified by UNSW's links with other organisations.*

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to this year's Town and Gown event and to have such a stellar group of distinguished guests from state and federal parliament, from business and industry, from banking, health, and law, from NGOs, public bodies, sports, cultural and heritage organisations and many other fields as well as alumni, supporters, members of UNSW Council, of our Foundation Board and of University Advisory Committees as well of course as our stellar staff and students. The talent in this room is extraordinary and says a lot about Sydney and NSW as well as UNSW.

Last year I told you about the Battle of St Scholastica which was precipitated by poor quality wine at an Oxford University Town and Gown event in 1355. It resulted in a running battle with the townspeople, who fired arrows maiming and killing scores of academics. Notably the Chancellor had to resign. This year fast forwarding 500 years to 1841 I would like to bring to your attention the riots in New Haven between city officials and Yale University students which after several stabbings led to the militia preparing canons to fire at the university - fortunately the bombardment was stopped by the police. But sadly on that occasion it was the President and Vice Chancellor who went. Just to be clear I am reasonably confident about the quality of the wine and I am definitely not encouraging violence - or even throwing food.

Last year was my first Town and Gown event at UNSW and was truly memorable for me, partly for that reason and partly because on that night we launched the UNSW 2025 Strategy. A year later implementation of the Strategy is well under way: Council have approved \$3-billion of investment over the next ten years and that will allow us to do some extraordinarily ambitious things.

The Strategy is about people, people, people exemplified by our \$1.4-billion investment in recruiting over 1,000 outstanding researchers in a worldwide campaign that's now under way. Our educational offerings will be transformed, personalised to student needs, and digitized, to expand our reach and give students more flexibility through inspired learning experiences. Our commercial activity with business and industry will increase dramatically to over \$300-million a year as we apply our ideas and discoveries. We are taking bold steps to expand our contribution to social justice, equity and diversity, and thought leadership. And our Grand Challenges program is under way, focusing initially on two of the most crucial issues of our time: climate change, and migration and refugees.

With these initiatives and others, UNSW is set to become Australia's global university -

excelling in research and teaching, with a reputation for social justice, thought leadership and global impact. By 2025 we will be in the top 50 of over 25,000 universities worldwide. I have no doubt we'll get there - but we can't do it alone. Because at the heart of any great achievement of scale lies one absolutely essential ingredient – partnership. And tonight, partnership and generosity in partnership is the theme of our Town and Gown - we are acknowledging and celebrating UNSW's commitment to partnership as a hallmark of how we operate.

It is often said we live in the age of the individual, we also live in an age of great collaborations. Behind almost every significant step forward, behind every name linked to this new invention or that advance, there are teams who bring those ideas to full bloom, into the useful mainstream. As Bill Gates observed, "Software innovation, like almost every other kind of innovation, requires the ability to collaborate and share ideas with other people." In other words, partnership.

The best partnerships take very good ideas and transform them into new opportunities, open them up to new interpretations and new applications, and generate new, innovative ways to solve the many problems that arise. There's a wise old African proverb that says, "If you want to go *fast*, go alone. If you want to go *far*, go with others." And within that too is something that goes beyond the idea of partnership, and extends to generosity.

'Generosity in partnership' is a core ethos of what we're about at UNSW.

I believe that the great universities of the 21st century will like UNSW be a servant of their society. Our core mission at UNSW is not only to educate and to advance knowledge through research, but equally to advance the quality of life of those around us, in a spirit of generosity - in the local community, on the national canvas, and around the world – helping to improve lives and increase opportunities for success and fulfillment in life.

I'm enormously proud of the many wonderful examples of partnership the UNSW community has been part of this year, and I want to mention just some of them:

- Our partnership with other universities, exemplified by the award to UNSW of three Australian Research Council Centres of Excellence totaling \$91m in areas crucial for the future of humanity: Climate Change, Ageing and Quantum Computing,
- Our partnership with government, with CBA and with Telstra – in the exciting new \$70m company for commercialisation of quantum computing. I am delighted that David Whiteing, Group Executive CBA who has played such a key role in our partnership with the bank is here tonight.
- It's not all about big money. Our partnership with Matraville High School involves our School of Education working with staff and pupils to transform what was a struggling school in our community - to give its young people greater opportunities. We had an Steering Ctte meeting today involving members
- Our partnership through ASPIRE the UNSW led-organisation links over 50 of the most

deprived schools in NSW to give young people hope and aspirations for their future and encourage them to seek a higher education.

- Our partnership with our wonderful UNSW Alumni, in so many ways - exemplified this year by an exciting Alumni entrepreneurship event in San Francisco and by numerous generous donations for scholarships, research and education.
- Our national partnership through the Energy Transition Leadership Forum with the Australian Conservation Foundation and 17 prominent Australians, to produce a blueprint for Australia to become carbon neutral by 2050 which will be presented to government and published next month.
- Our partnership with the NSW government and 11 other universities to establish this year the NSW School of Entrepreneurship, in which our new DVC Enterprise Professor Brian Boyle has played a key role.
- Our new partnerships with businesses such as KPMG involving leadership, defence and student internships; with CBA in financial aspects of cybersecurity; and on IT with TATA consulting.
- Our partnership with some of the most deprived communities in the world, in for example Gulu in Northern Uganda where we are working with dedicated Ugandan colleagues to support an amazing new university emerging from the devastation of years of civil war.
- Our partnership in Sydney through our new Academic Health Science Partnership with two other universities – UTS and WSU – three LHDs and six medical research institutes to advance healthcare in our city by linking research, education and clinical care in innovative new ways.

There are many other examples of the exemplary way in which UNSW staff, students, alumni and supporters progress the mantra of generosity in partnership – and during this dinner you will be hearing in more detail from four outstanding people about four wonderful examples of partnership the excitement of our TORCH initiative in partnership with China; our new GLAM+ Alliance bringing together cultural organisations across Sydney; the Respect.Now.Always initiative, aimed at sexual harassment and violence; and our major new partnership with Arizona State University and Kings College London – the PLuS Alliance.

We are all the better for collaborations like these; for *partnerships*. The best partnerships provide added value for all, encourage our sense of discovery, provide opportunities to improve lives and give us a collective sense of pride in our work. Good partnerships open up possibilities, new ways of seeing the world, and that aligns with what great universities are about – being part of a community that gives our own lives meaning, while changing and improving the lives of others.

I feel a terrific sense of pride looking around this room knowing just how much each and every one of you does for UNSW to make that possible. I thank you for coming tonight and for your generous support and partnership with UNSW.

The truly great universities of the 21st century will not be those that look inward for their own glory. Rather they will be universities that can proudly say they are servants of their society - UNSW is and will be one of them. Working together in true partnership I know we can achieve great things and I thank you all for your part in making our ambitions and dreams come true.