



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

UQ Research Culture Awards 2025

Celebrating UQ's thriving
research culture



Wednesday
10 September 2025

UQ Research Culture Awards 2025

INDIVIDUAL AWARD NOMINEES

Dr Andrea Belcher

Faculty of Science

Andrea drives key initiatives to support Faculty of Science researchers, including the BIRST program for industry engagement. She leads collaborations with the Strategic Partnerships and Major Initiatives teams, demonstrating a strategic mindset and clear understanding of researcher needs. Andrea's professional approach has grown research proposals faculty wide, encouraging new partnerships both externally and internally, and creating supportive environments that foster a collaborative research culture.

Associate Professor Monica Chien

UQ Business School

Monica is a leading expert in consumer behaviour and a committed advocate for responsible research practices. As Chair of the BEL LNR Ethics Review Panel, she enhances research support across the Faculty by guiding staff and HDRs and streamlining panel processes. Her dedication to ethical research and support initiatives has had a broad impact, making her highly deserving of recognition for her leadership and contributions to the research lifecycle.

Associate Professor Brett Ferguson

School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability

Brett's leadership during emergencies like Cyclone Alfred and the 2022 floods supported colleagues and safeguarded critical materials, while his work to implement safety and culture improvements in the John Hines building ensures lab compliance and effective workspaces. As Plant Science Discipline Lead, Brett champions facility upgrades to foster increased collaboration and generously mentors students after supervisor departures, demonstrating his commitment to excellence and integrity in plant research.

Associate Professor Ruth Knibbe

School of Mechanical and Mining Engineering

Ruth established a collegial support network for academic women in Engineering and IT, addressing systemic challenges like underrepresentation and career barriers. She advocates for gender equity across all levels while generously mentoring early career researchers and students. Ruth's leadership and dedication foster inclusion and growth, creating lasting impact in her school, faculty and broader academic community through systematic support initiatives.

Professor Jason Pole

Queensland Digital Health Centre (QDHeC)

Jason's strategic leadership of QDHeC has fostered partnerships, secured significant funding, and built a thriving multidisciplinary centre. He champions inclusive research culture through mentorship programs and actively spotlighting HDRs and EMCAs. Recognised with CHSR Mentor of the Year awards, his impact on researcher development and digital health leadership is profound.

Cristina Risco

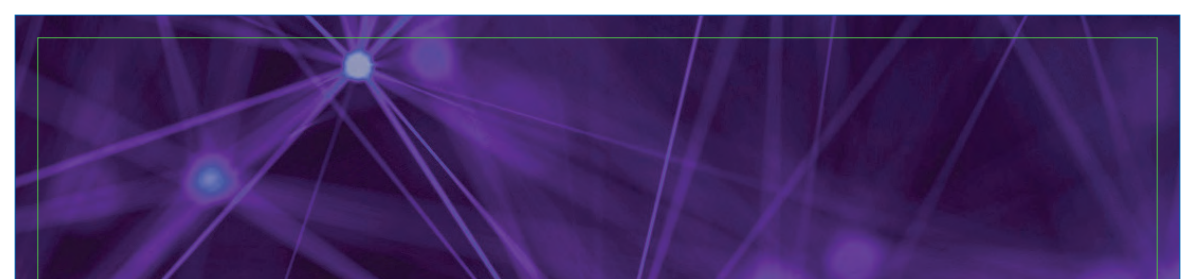
Research Office

Cristina exemplifies the highest standards of research administration support through her exceptional knowledge, professionalism and commitment to her role. Her deep institutional insight, calm approach and strong sense of responsibility consistently contribute to a positive and effective research culture. Navigating complex processes with clarity and care, her respectful, people-centred approach fosters a collegial and supportive environment, strengthening our collective impact.

Nicole McDonald

Queensland Digital Health Centre (QDHeC)

Nicole leads QDHeC's Project Management Office, managing and mentoring project managers to ensure high-quality research delivery. By embedding a culture of strategic



thinking and continuous improvement, she ensures QDHeC projects adhere to robust governance and management practices and are aligned with UQ best practice principles. Nicole's leadership creates systematic approaches to project excellence while continuously developing project management capabilities across the research centre.

Kimberley Nunes

Faculty of Architecture, Engineering and Information Technology

Kimberley has consistently delivered outstanding end-to-end research support over many years. Her behind-the-scenes work to streamline processes and prepare materials enables reviewers to focus entirely on the substance of an application and provide more detailed and complete feedback as a result. Kim's dedication to creating efficient, supportive environments is essential; significantly enhancing the researcher experience and contributing to a more equitable and inclusive research culture at all levels.

Dr Martin Schweinberger

School of Languages and Cultures

As a CI of the Language Data Commons of Australia, Martin is advancing infrastructure and training that embeds responsible research practices in language data analysis. Through his open, collaborative and media-engaged approach, Martin has not only advanced the conversation around responsible research but has built resources and communities to make it accessible and sustainable.

Dr Elham Assadi Soumeh

School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability

Ellie brings dedication to her teaching in Animal Nutrition and Production while mentoring postgraduate students through impactful research projects in poultry and pig production. She consistently provides personalised guidance, and her role in fostering student growth and success through academic support has enriched the research environment within the School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability.

Associate Professor Ya-Yen Sun

UQ School of Business

Ya-Yen Sun's pioneering work on tourism emissions has evidenced the rapid rise in tourism-related emissions and significantly advanced tourism decarbonisation. Through key international partnerships with the United Nations World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission her work has improved emissions measurement and mitigation over the short, medium, and long term and provided governments with data-driven tools and strategies to align tourism development with climate goals.

Dr Adrienne Young

Child Health Research Centre

Adrienne has rapidly become a thought-leader and practical advocate in health consumer engagement, with a seamless ability to innovatively engage with stakeholders to synthesise complex, clinical research ideas into clear, impactful project outcomes. As part of the RBWH How Good Was Your Meal? Project, an app was implemented through a genuine and rigorous co-design process to collect and visualise patient feedback on hospital meals in real time, creating data-driven food improvements for all patients.

Professor Zuduo Zheng

School of Civil Engineering

Through his work to promote research reproducibility, Professor Zheng exemplifies UQ's core values of Truth and Integrity, reinforcing our role as custodians of public trust in research. Zuduo has consistently advanced a culture of openness and integrity by embedding reproducibility into his research, teaching and leadership. In doing so he has helped cultivate a research culture grounded in transparency, rigour and openness – benefiting both the academic community and society.

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TEAM AWARD NOMINEES

Advancing UQ Maturity in Indigenous Data Sovereignty Practices

School of the Environment and UQ Library

Through their extensive and selfless work to embed Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDSov) into UQ's research culture, this outstanding team are driving change in how we work together with Indigenous partners. Their work in scrutinising our current systems and supporting processes has seeded long-term shifts in how research at UQ can be conducted with greater respect, reciprocity and responsibility, moving UQ closer to a fit-for-purpose research ecosystem that enables Indigenous research.

Consumer Involvement in Research Working Group (CIRWG)

Frazer Institute and UQ Centre for Clinical Research

CIRWG ensures health consumer voices are embedded within health and medical research through their strategic academic leadership and professional support. They nurture co-design and equal partnerships, with impact evidenced by prestigious awards including the Women in Technology Consumer Strength Champion Award. CIRWG fosters a research culture where consumer involvement is encouraged, supported and prioritised through systematic engagement and capacity-building activities.

Embedding Indigenous Research Protocols

Institute for Social Science Research

This team exemplifies responsible research through their commitment to Indigenous Data Sovereignty, community-led protocols and ethical engagement. Their work advances shared decision-making between Indigenous peoples and government, producing open-access transparency resources. By embedding Indigenous research protocols in ISSR's Reconciliation Action Plan and mentoring colleagues across faculties, they shape a research culture grounded in respect, accountability and Indigenous leadership.

HMBS Research Contract Managers Research Office

This team consistently upholds the highest research management standards, and their proactive, collegial approach provided vital support for the HMBS merger and Research Office restructure. Delivering targeted training and practical guidance, they strengthen contracting capabilities and create more efficient, supportive environments for research teams, and their collaborative approach is delivering long-term benefits in research governance and partnership management.

Human Studies Unit (HSU) Institute for Molecular Bioscience

Coordinating numerous, complex research activities, including the PCTG high-throughput genomics laboratory, HSU provides outstanding research and governance support to researchers both at UQ and across Australia. The HSU team actively promotes women's advancement in STEM through dedicated mentorship programs and an inclusive work culture, bridging research-to-practice gaps by fostering industry partnerships and building community engagement through public lectures and educational programs.

Inclusive Food System Transformation School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability

Embedding inclusion, diversity and equity at the heart of its research, this team uses a novel, locally-led approach to centre gender equality in their work to strengthen food security in Indonesia. Through robust capacity building and meaningful engagement with diverse, and often underrepresented stakeholders, they are empowering local communities through data and participatory systems thinking: informing policy dialogue to produce impactful research outcomes.



Language Technology and Data Analysis Laboratory (LADAL)

School of Languages and Culture

LADAL is a widely used digital platform supporting language-based research through open-access tools, tutorials and training. Known for its collaborative ethos and innovation, LADAL exemplifies academic leadership and technical excellence, providing support to linguists, educators and students. Through a commitment to transparency, accessibility and interdisciplinarity, LADAL shares computational methodologies to enable inclusive, high-impact research across the humanities and social sciences.

Queensland Animal Science Precinct (QASP)

Research Infrastructure

As a trusted research infrastructure partner, QASP underpins countless research projects across multiple UQ faculties by providing outstanding, collaborative support for large animal research. Consistently demonstrating unmatched professionalism, exceeding expectations and fostering excellence, their expert facilitation of the highest standards in animal care and compliance ensures research integrity and upholds UQ's outstanding reputation.

RADIANT

School of Public Health

RADIANT employs creative, consumer-led approaches to working with women and healthcare providers to co-create weight inclusive maternity care, exemplifying how genuine collaboration produces rigorous research. Utilising consumer investigators to ensure lived experience centres every research stage, their standout online photovoice study activated participants to share their experiences, enabling nationwide participation, empowering participants and influencing policy.

Research for Fair Cities: Sharing with Friends Co-Housing

ISSR and School of Architecture

Through a deep, respectful engagement with older women at risk of homelessness, this project exemplifies an inclusive research environment. Partnering exceptionally with the Sharing with Friends Foundation, and working pro bono for six months, these dedicated researchers demonstrated outstanding commitment to equity, accessibility and real-world impact. Their collaborative, creative approach has inspired huge confidence in community partners and opened new doors for inclusive housing solutions across Queensland.

Research Integrity Office and HaSS – BEL Research Integrity Advisors

During Integrity Week, 2025, this informal team delivered sessions targeting prevalent integrity issues around authorship and data management, providing an open and honest forum for panelists and attendees to share personal experiences. The real-world examples and advice provided empowered attendees to recognise poor research integrity, equipping them with tools to adequately respond if they found themselves in a difficult situation.

The South Asian Genes and Health in Australia (SAGHA)

Institute for Molecular Bioscience

The SAGHA team pioneers inclusive research to improve disease prevention in underdiagnosed groups, especially South Asians. Their MRFF-funded genomics cohort study – the first in Australia – advances understanding of genetics and heart disease. This team's dedication to equity and innovation highlights the vital contributions of diverse communities to science; helping to shape a more inclusive and effective healthcare future.

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TEAM AWARD NOMINEES

Substance Use and Mental Health Research

Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR)

Through extensive co-design and stakeholder consultation, this exemplary team centres lived-experience and underrepresented voices to address substance use, criminal justice and health inequities. Their exceptional commitment to inclusive practice and EDI-focused mentoring and training fosters a respectful and supportive research culture, and their “Nothing About Us Without Us” approach has shaped national policy and produced impactful, evidence-based insights.

Sustainable Mekong Rice Initiative

School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability

This outstanding team is transforming Vietnam’s Mekong Delta rice sector through an innovative, impact-focused approach to research and development across agronomy, postharvest technologies, value chain analysis and gender equity. Their deep engagement with local partners to co-design and deliver sustainable solutions is driving remarkable change and fostering a more resilient and equitable international research culture at UQ.

Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network

UQ Collaborative Research Platform

TERN coordinates nationally distributed instrumentation that supports terrestrial and coastal ecosystem and biodiversity monitoring. The UQ team skillfully builds, maintains and supports infrastructure to enable collaborative research, demonstrating a deep commitment to identifying research community needs. Their governance and coordination activities foster national and international partnerships, creating a collaborative ecosystem that significantly enhances interdisciplinary research culture at UQ.

UQ at the UN International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development

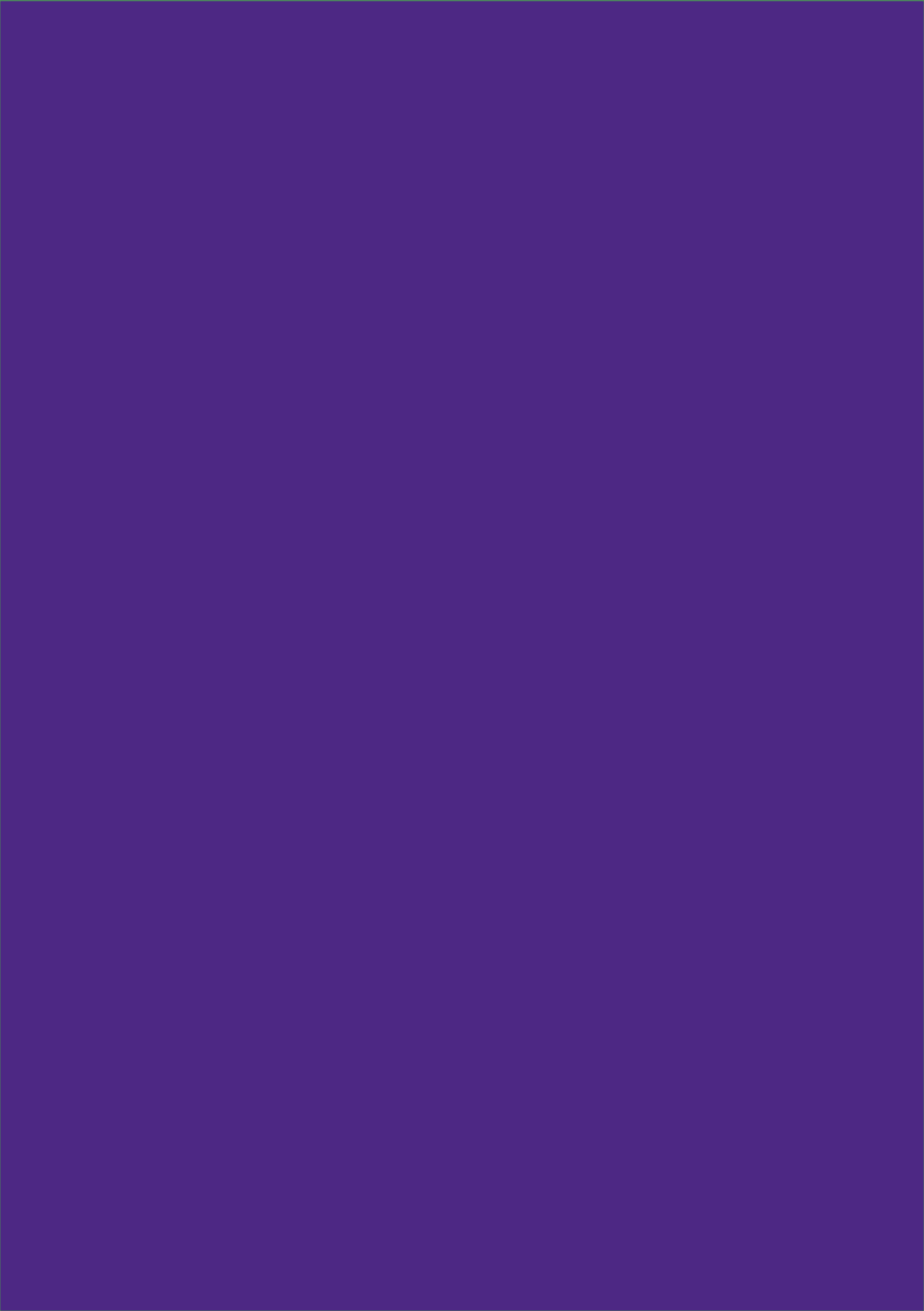
Energy Transition Network and School of Chemical Engineering

This cross-disciplinary team came together to convene a session highlighting the global challenges of moving to a cleaner energy system and demonstrate UQ’s capabilities in physical and social sciences for energy transition. The team’s engagement with the UN ESCAP Energy Division secured participation of key international collaborators in a panel discussion on how decisions need to be informed by research, and how research needs to be guided by the needs of individuals and communities impacted by the energy transition.

University of Queensland’s cLinical TRials cAbility (ULTRA)

Centre for Clinical Research

The Clinical Trials Centre created a multidisciplinary Think-Tank bringing together experts in trial design, statistics, health economics, and consumer involvement. Research teams receive tailored feedback to refine questions and ensure operational readiness, and team members continue as grant co-applicants to continue supporting trial development. This initiative promotes collaboration and capability building while cultivating shared learning, openness and strategic foresight contributing to a resilient research ecosystem.





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