

Sydney School of
Entrepreneurship
Annual Report

A large, solid yellow circle is positioned on the right side of the cover, partially overlapping the text '2019' and '2020'.

2019
2020

Sydney School of Entrepreneurship (SSE) is a leading provider of entrepreneurial education, services and support, driving innovation and entrepreneurship across New South Wales and around the world.

Welcome to our growing community of truly interdisciplinary, diverse and globally connected innovators.



A NSW Government initiative



Education Partners

*In this report,
explore how SSE is:*

Building community

- Introducing our growing, talented team
- Meet our board, committees and advisory board
- Hear from our inspiring Brains Trust



Building essential skills

- Supporting student success with Units of Study and short courses
- Inspiring new entrepreneurs and innovators with our Discovery program
- Unlocking global opportunities with our Virtual Internship Program
- New programs to grow entrepreneurial mindsets and lift innovation capabilities

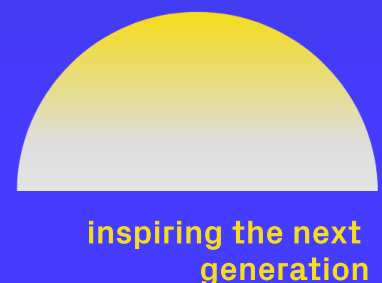


Building the future

See how we're supporting a diverse mix of inspiring individuals and organisations.

- Secondary schools and tertiary institutions
- Regional communities
- Women in business
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Businesses, government and the entrepreneurship ecosystem

creating high-
growth businesses





CEO AND CHAIR MESSAGE

In a year of immense change, the skills of entrepreneurship and innovation are needed more than ever to help upskill the community and support the recovery of the state.

SSE has risen to the challenges of these unprecedented times, working across diverse locations and institutions to equip individuals and organisations with the tools and mindset they need to forge their path forward.

Together with our colleagues, stakeholders, community, students and others across the ecosystem, we stand united in our commitment to improving opportunity for all.

True to its core mission, SSE continues to grow entrepreneurial capabilities and innovative mindsets, inspiring hundreds of people every semester. We've helped upskill more than 14,000 participants since 2017 and built a growing network of collaborative connections across the state and beyond our borders.

More than 200 students from 11 New South Wales universities and TAFE NSW joined our short courses this year; over 7000 participants enrolled in our Virtual Internship Program, helping to grow the entrepreneurial pipeline; and over 70 students participated in our inaugural Discovery program, developing innovative solutions to real-world problems.

In a dramatically changed learning environment, prioritising the student experience and creating an exceptional learner journey were key to our success this year. Our reimagined virtual Units of Study provided an immersive online environment and our expert facilitation team, including talented SSE alumni, delivered an enhanced personal experience for all students. This approach increased completions in our final S1 2020 unit of study by nearly 20% on our all-time average.

Programs such as SSE's Virtual Internship Program (VIP) continued to deliver impact across the breadth and depth of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, helping to grow startup talent and inspiring innovative problem solving.

Nearly all (93%) of those who completed VIP said that they had been inspired to take the first steps in creating their own business or working within a newly-established firm.

The success of this partnership with the Sydney Startup Hub not only shows what is possible through collaboration but demonstrates the strength of the state's startup ecosystem.

Work is already underway to deliver new programs that continue our mission to uplift skills capability and drive the next generation of entrepreneurship. We are working hard to make opportunity accessible to even more people, including high-school students, intrapreneurs, career-changers, those impacted by COVID-19 and regional communities.

Diversity is the bedrock of great innovation and SSE remains committed to building opportunities for under-represented groups.

In 2019, we collaborated on a number of events to boost female participation in entrepreneurship and innovation and more than half of our short course students were women. We also continue to advance our strategy to work with First Nations communities to build greater opportunities for Aboriginal people across the state.

As 2019 came to a close, we said farewell to our founding Chair Emeritus Professor Mark Wainwright, who made an immense contribution to the success of our organisation and inspired a broad network of SSE advocates. We were very lucky to have Mark as our inaugural Chair and would like to thank him for his dedication, hard work and commitment to SSE.

As we continue to drive the evolution of SSE, we are delighted to have such strong support from you—our ecosystem partners, collaborators, advisors and champions.

This year has demonstrated that building resilience and adaptability are more important than ever. As we continue to move forward in uncertain times, we look forward to finding innovative solutions to new problems and amplifying our collective impact together.



Emeritus Professor Annabelle Duncan
Chair of the SSE Board



Dr Sarah Jones
Chief Executive Officer

Building community



From the leaders on our boards and committees, to our talented team, accomplished Brains Trust and inspiring alumni,
our community drives everything we do.

Meet the diverse people driving
growth, innovation and entrepreneurship in NSW.

Meet the SSE team

Our dynamic team brings ideas, energy and drive to work each day.



Dr Sarah Jones
Chief Executive Officer



John Butt
Director, Finance



Frances Lee
Director, Operations



Emily Chang
Director, Entrepreneurship



Max Halden
Senior Marketing and
Communications Advisor



Lynn Erkens
Senior Operations Officer,
Policy, Projects and
Administration



Krithika Ramakrishnan
Information and Business
Systems Support Officer



Lucas Hakewill
Growth Program Lead



Charis Lee
Senior Marketing Officer



Nada van Kempen
Project Coordinator



Xenia Pridmore
Project Officer



Marketing and
Communications



Operations



Entrepreneurship

Our newest team members

Meet the recent recruits who are helping us to shape the future of entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship



"I believe entrepreneurship empowers people to embrace change and the possibility of a better future."

Emily Chang

Director, Entrepreneurship

"I see entrepreneurship as a creative endeavour. You create, test, and shape something completely new."

Lucas Hakewill

Growth Program Lead



"I was attracted to working for an organisation that's got a startup feel with a great bunch of people who are not afraid of tackling the implementation of the next idea/program."

Frances Lee

Director, Operations

"I'm excited to be working with a talented and passionate team and contributing to the growth of innovation and entrepreneurship in NSW."

Krithika Ramakrishnan
Information and Business
Systems Support Officer



Operations

Board and Committee

Thanks to our Board, Committee and Advisory Board for their support, guidance and leadership throughout the year.



**Emeritus Professor
Annabelle Duncan**
Independent Director and Chair

In 2020, we welcomed **Emeritus Professor Annabelle Duncan** as SSE's new Chair of Board.

We also welcomed **Zoe Williams** and **David Caspari** as members of AFRC.



**Associate Professor
Paul Martin**
Independent Director



Fiona Pak-Poy
Independent Director
and Chair of AFRC



Ms Liane Gawne
Director-Government
Nominee



**Professor Brigid
Heywood**
Member Representative
Director



**Professor Glenn
Wightwick**
Member Representative
Director



Tze Masters
Independent Director
and AFRC member



Zoe Williams
AFRC member



David Caspari
AFRC member

We would also like to thank outgoing board and committee members



**Emeritus Professor
Mark Wainwright AM**
Former Chair and
Independent Director



John Rohan
Independent Director



Raji Ambikairajah
Independent Director



Denise Kirkpatrick
Member Representative

THANK YOU

Advisory Board



Nicole Cook

Chair of the Advisory Board



Amanda Johnston-Pell

Chief Marketing Officer & Co-Chief
Customer Officer of IBM AU & NZ



Andrea Culligan

Partner at Deloitte Private,
business consultant, coach
and speaker



Dr Dave Kennedy

Managing Director of
drdavekennedy.com Pty Ltd



Dr Michael Molinari

Managing Director,
Australia of IP Group



Helen Rule

Vice-Chairman and former
CEO of the Imatech Group of
Companies



Jillian Kilby

Founder and Director of The
Infrastructure Collaborative
Founder of entrepreneur hub
The Exchange Dubbo



Martin Rogers

Chief Investment Officer and
co-Principal of KTM Ventures
Innovation Fund



Nicola Hazell

Founding Director at
SheStarts and
BlueChilli/Head of Diversity
and Impact

WELCOME



Maryam Tabari

Patent and Trademark
Attorney at Chrysiliou IP

Welcome to the newest member of
our Advisory Board, Maryam Tabari

Maryam brings a wealth of
experience working in the university
commercialisation sector to SSE

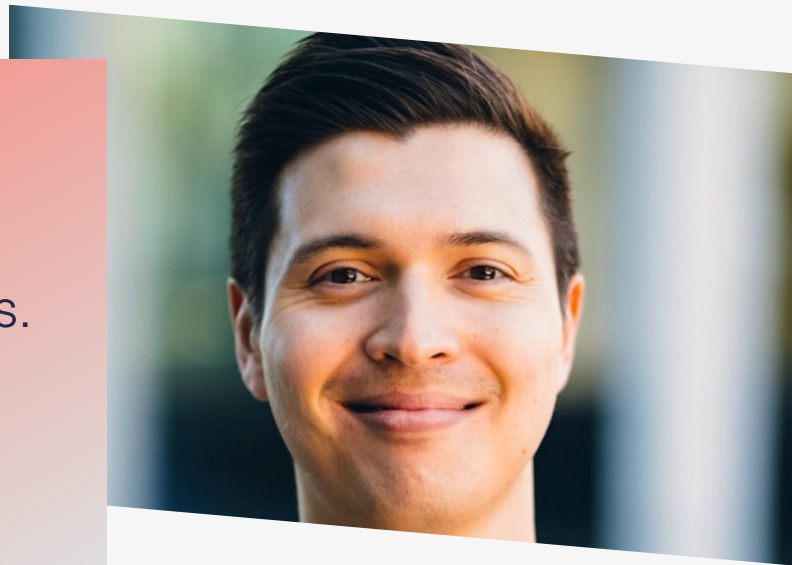
Our community

SSE is where Australia's innovation community come to inspire the next generation. Hear more from our leading experts and alumni.

[James Alexander](#) is co-founder of seed fund and startup program Galileo Ventures and joined SSE as an Entrepreneur Facilitator for our Structuring for Success Unit of Study and SSE's inaugural Discovery program.

He's helped countless startups take the next step and gave us some of his best insights in an Expert Advice video on our YouTube channel.

“Take many small steps, often. It's not about big leaps of knowledge or overnight success. It's about progressing yourself towards a goal every day.”



[Sophie Musumeci](#) is a leadership and business strategist and the CEO and founder of Real Entrepreneur Women.

Sophie has been involved in our programs since 2019, joining us during our Shark Tank-style pitch sessions and now as an Entrepreneur Facilitator for our Discovery program.



“I've seen my fair share of life's ups, downs and curve balls. But it's how we bounce back from them that actually makes us who we are.”



Watch these Expert Advice videos on our YouTube channel

“My advice for people very early in this journey is just get started on something. Take one step forward.”

Scott McKeon

SSE alum who met his cofounder while studying one of our units. Scott's startup Espresso Displays raised over \$500,000 this year.



“Have a thick skin. Be tech savvy. And make sure you have a supportive and solid network.”

Mandi Gunsberger

Founder and SSE facilitator, who offered her advice to students after the disruption of COVID-19



“I met some wonderful people through the program. It is a network I really value and feel confident to reach out to.”

Novela Corda

TAFE student and SSE alum who was inspired by SSE to take the next step with her startup, Key Into Australia.



Get more insights and advice from our amazing Brains Trust, alumni and community at sse.edu.au/stories

Building essential skills



In a rapidly changing world, building resilience, creativity and an entrepreneurial mindset are key to **continued growth and sustainable success.**

See how we're helping **develop a culture of life-long learning** and boosting the capacity of our participants and community across a range of industries.

Units of study and short courses

Our Units of Study and short courses are the start of an innovation journey. Designed in collaboration with the 11 NSW universities and TAFE NSW, our units give participants highly sought-after skills in innovation, design thinking, problem solving, collaboration, networking and entrepreneurship.

In 2019-2020, 212 students completed SSE's Units of Study.

27%
REGIONAL

51%
FEMALE

52%
NON-BUSINESS
DISCIPLINES

Student statistics for FY2019-20

Alumni profile: Jacob Lescove-Uduwalage, Unicornshift



"I went from having no mentors to having a group of about 20 or so coaches and mentors who I can reach out to for advice and support"

Ahead of joining SSE's Activation course, Jacob Lescove-Uduwalage was asked to bring an idea for a potential business to work on.

While volunteering for a community organisation in Campbelltown, Jacob realised he could help local traffic controllers navigate a fragmented industry and find well-paid work.

Bringing the kernel of the idea to SSE, he left with a co-founder, a plan and a network of mentors that could help him start a successful business.

The University of New England student is now working on scaling up his on-demand labour marketplace UnicornShift, with the help of the methods he learned and contacts he made at SSE.

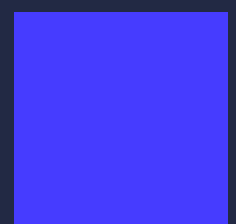
**2019-20
UNITS OF
STUDY**

Innovation for
Value Creation
and Growth



Ideation

Activation



Structuring
for Success

Alumni Profile: Sophie Klecha

2020 has been a year of surprises for Sophie Klecha - as it has for most of us.

Now entering her final year of a combined Business and Innovation & Entrepreneurship degree at the University of Newcastle, she has had to pivot to find work in an uncertain environment after some promising work opportunities were cancelled by COVID.



“Being from a rural town, people just think that getting into innovation and entrepreneurship is unachievable, but it’s not.”

Sophie, who is majoring in digital marketing, has found that studying at SSE gives her an edge in a competitive graduate market.

“SSE helped me cement and apply my knowledge in a practical setting,” she says. “It teaches you the kind of creative, user-focused mindset that is absolutely essential in marketing and product development.”

With an open mind and a wealth of innovation skills at her disposal, Sophie is ready to take on whatever the rest of 2020 (and beyond) throws at her.

Adapting our units in 2020

In response to the global pandemic in 2020, SSE accelerated implementation of its new digital-first strategy and brought its learning activities fully online.

Drawing on our world-class expertise, SSE redesigned its Units of Study to better accommodate geographically dispersed audiences across the state and provide impactful learning opportunities to upskill and reskill in these challenging times.

Our reimagined units focus on meaningful interactions in an online environment that immerse participants in the world of innovation and applied entrepreneurship.

Designed to give students greater flexibility in uncertain times, our new online delivery combines on-demand learning and activities, regular contact with fellow learners from across the state, and engaged support from the expert SSE team.

Students can now access our courses from anywhere with a computer and internet connection, providing greater access to the skills they need to start a venture, change the world and build a thriving career.

Discovery

Discovery is SSE's innovation program, tailored to the needs of forward-thinking educators and businesses to rapidly upskill staff, students or community members.

Discovery builds capacity in creativity, design thinking, communication and entrepreneurship. Our team of expert facilitators and mentors equip participants with the skills and mindset they need to think differently and to develop innovative solutions to complex problems.

The program can be deployed to fit the needs of any organisation, helping boost staff skills, enhance student learning or solve a real problem.



Discovery in action *Macquarie University* *Bachelor of Arts students*

As part of Macquarie University's reimagined Bachelor of Arts, the SSE Discovery program helped to embed entrepreneurship skills into the curriculum for both first-year and third-year capstone students, as a fully online virtual experience.

Launched in Session 1 2020 and run again as an intensive program during the university's Winter break, the program taught valuable employability skills, startup experience and helped students to foster pathways toward igniting or growing their own small businesses.



Discovery facilitation team

Led by our Director, Entrepreneurship Emily Chang, Discovery is designed and taught by a diverse range of expert practitioners. Our team employs the latest in entrepreneurial learning techniques to deliver impactful outcomes and support participant success.



"I think the key skill is to be ever-changing. The skill of figuring out what you actually need to learn is a hard one but one that is necessary for the fast-changing world."

Daniel Smith

SSE Entrepreneur Facilitator, alumni and serial entrepreneur

Daniel is a serial entrepreneur, founding a drone startup called Skylark Solutions and a sustainable online coffee retailer called Monkey Brew, among other projects.

Having studied all four of SSE's 2019 Units of Study as a student at the University of Newcastle, Dan joined SSE as Entrepreneur Facilitator in the Discovery program to help students like him start their own ventures. He will join the team full-time as Innovation Program Lead in October 2020.

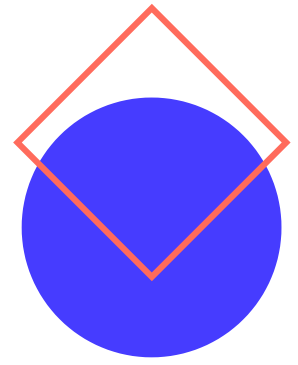
Hear what some of our Macquarie Discovery students had to say about the program ...

"The program motivates you to make the world a better place, while also making such a great accomplishment achievable through small, practical steps" – Yara M.

"After learning the critical mindset of an entrepreneur, I will be able to implement those concepts into the next three and a half years of my degree" – Susie G.

Virtual Startup Internship Program

Launched in July 2019, SSE's Virtual Internship Program is helping thousands of students from NSW and around the world to develop the practical skills they need to work in a startup (or launch their own!).



1,000+
signups in
the first six
weeks

7,000+
participants in
the first year

10,000+
participants
to date

SSE partnered with the Sydney Startup Hub to deliver our first Virtual Startup Internship Project on the InsideSherpa platform (recently rebranded to Forage).

Participants undertake specific work-related tasks at three NSW fast-growth companies and supports them to develop innovative solutions. Hands-on activities include improving the customer experience for early stage startup Vennu, creating scaleable marketing ideas for social venture Home Care Heroes or creating a great pitch for venture-funded Longtail UX.

Of participants who have completed the program:

- 93% say that the program has inspired them to take the first steps in creating their own business or work within a newly established firm.
- 86% feel that the program has improved their employability prospects.
- 64% note that the program helped develop teamwork and collaboration skills.



Building the future



SSE is committed to helping diverse individuals and cohorts create their own future with a range of new **professional development programs and learning activities.**

We collaboratively partner with leading organisations from a range of industries to equip participants with **the entrepreneurial skills, approaches and mindsets they need** to take the next step.

Virtual Industry Placement Program and Catalyst

We're developing new programs as part of a suite of innovation offerings for growing organisations seeking to attract and develop talent.



The **Virtual Industry Placement Program (VIPP)** is connecting leading companies with talented interns to solve real-world problems.

Our hands-on, work-integrated learning experience immerses virtual interns in real organisations to tackle problems, tasks, scenarios and projects that make a meaningful contribution to business opportunities and real-world challenges.

Education sponsors give students the opportunity to develop transferable skills and boost employability, while corporate sponsors get borderless access to a pipeline of talent while generating new ideas at scale.

Catalyst is a comprehensive accelerated program, bringing together elements of Discovery and VIPP for an immersive applied learning experience like no other.

Catalyst accelerates professional development and elevates career readiness with customised education and placement components. Students put newly developed skills into practice immediately, supported by expert mentoring and facilitator engagement through our vibrant online portal.

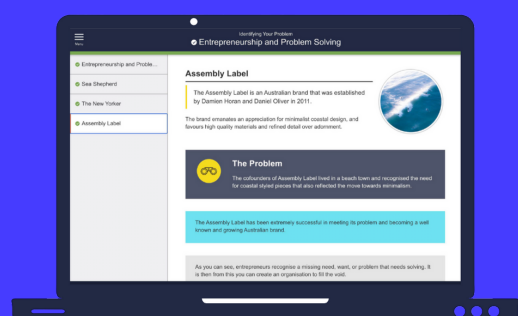
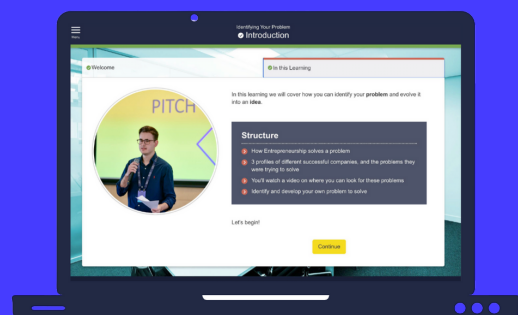
The program can be combined with tailored events, industry-specific networking opportunities and targeted materials as required to ensure maximum impact and value.

SSEQuad

Welcome to SSEQuad, our new online education environment!

Developed in partnership with learning management company Guroo Producer, SSEQuad provides a seamless experience for students that can be customised to fit the needs of a broad range of clients.

SSEQuad is a creative, interactive learning environment that is easy to navigate, intuitive and allows for action-based learning. It will be deployed for all future SSE learning activities to provide the highest-quality student experience.



Supporting secondary schools

In 2020, we will roll out the first stage of our professional development Entrepreneurial Educator Program with the NSW Department of Education.

In this program, teachers from across NSW are given the unique opportunity to develop skills in creativity, problem-solving, adaptability and innovation, as they work on projects specific to them.

Through the program, teachers learn how to identify a problem, create new ideas, develop a solution and tell their story.

With the support of our expert facilitation team, teachers work together on an innovation project, and leave the program with entrepreneurial tools that they can apply in the classroom and pass on to their students.

We are also developing new programs to support high school students in 2020-21, partnering with Spark Festival to boost entrepreneurial education capabilities across the state and working with a number of schools in NSW to drive entrepreneurial education among their cohorts.



“[EEP was] such a great opportunity to build connections and networks. The learning modules were very valuable and a great step-by-step process into understanding the entrepreneurial mindset.

My entrepreneurial spark is lit, the fire has ignited, and it will continue to burn bright.”

Lauren Goritsas

**Entrepreneurial Educator Program
participant and teacher at
Sydney Secondary College**

Supporting regional audiences

SSE is Sydney in name only and we remain committed to boosting innovation across the state in regional and rural areas.

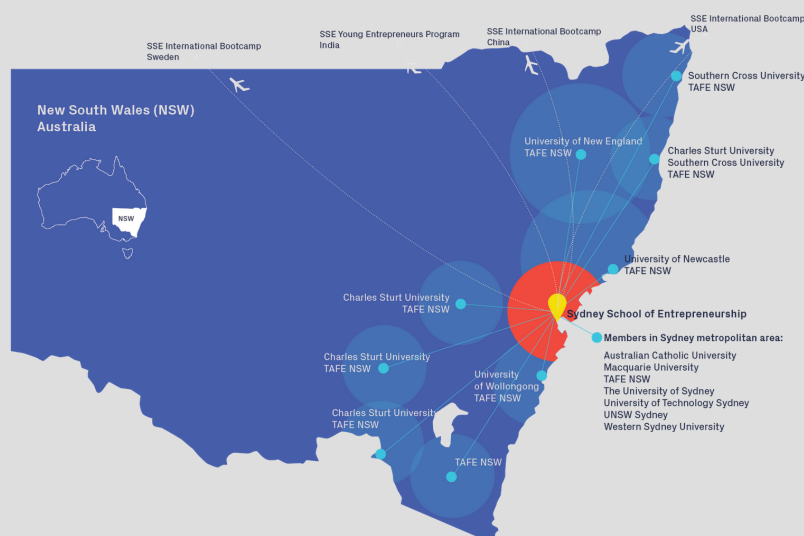


From left to right: Jillian Kilby (The Exchange), Emily Chang (SSE) and Hugh Taylor (UNE Smart Region Incubator)

In August 2020, SSE will partner with the University of New England's Smart Region Incubator and The Exchange in Dubbo to create a learning experience that supports development of digital capabilities for staff working across the NSW public sector.

Emily Chang (SSE) and Jillian Kilby (The Exchange) will design and deliver six-hour online facilitated workshops to support regionally-based public servants to better understand local customers' needs and design better, simpler ways of meeting their challenges.

Through these workshops, participants will gain a set of takeaway tools and direct experience in applying human-centred design methodology in their work and form a community of practice that can continue to support their learning and development.



Supporting women

SSE is committed to supporting women in an area where they are often under-represented.

33%
**BUSINESSES
OWNED BY
WOMEN IN NSW***

51%
**WOMEN IN
SSE UNITS**

47%
**WOMEN IN SSE
VIRTUAL
INTERNSHIP**

**2019 NSW Women in Small Business Report*

In late 2019, we partnered with International Connector and the University of Technology Sydney for the Future of Women in Tech event.

Supported by the American Chamber of Commerce in Australia, the event helped co-design solutions to boost female participation in technology and entrepreneurship, which were shared at workshops around the country.

In 2020, we are continuing to design programs to empower female entrepreneurs.



“The confidence that SSE gave me really changed things for me. I think people underestimate themselves, but every person is capable of making change and SSE helped me to believe that for myself.”

Rose Lewis

WSU student and SSE alumni

Supporting the ecosystem

As the global pandemic and its economic impacts continue to massively disrupt traditional models in 2020, SSE is committed to supporting individuals and organisations within the ecosystem to adapt and thrive in times of immense change.

Emerging technologies like machine learning and artificial intelligence can help create resilient businesses and skills in these technologies are essential for resilient careers.

That's why, in July 2020, SSE is partnering with AI innovation experts David Goad and Steve Blunt to equip over 300 participants from Transport for NSW with the skills, mindset and capabilities they need to solve complex problems with these advanced technologies and approaches.

More new professional development and innovation capacity building programs will be coming online in 2020-21, including partnerships with NSW councils to support the growth of innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurial skills, as well as collaborations with our education and corporate partners.



“I hear the concern all the time that AI is replacing jobs and will create broad-based unemployment. It isn’t and it won’t.

What AI does is automate tasks. All of us, regardless of the job we do or how senior we are, have tasks that are automatable”

David Goad

AI expert and facilitator of SSE Innovation in AI masterclass sessions

Supporting the community

Our diverse community continues to grow as we collaborate and connect across the ecosystem.

This year, we launched the SSE Innovation Community on LinkedIn, which has already welcomed 200 alumni, experts, founders and educators.

We are also providing pathways for our alumni and students to gain practical experience and join our facilitation team, through an SSE facilitator training program currently in development.

Over the next year, we are focused on welcoming new cohorts through our professional development programs, including our micro-credentialled short courses, a new capstone program and Entrepreneurial Leadership Program.

And, as always, we look forward to celebrating the successes of our alumni and participants as they continue to make their mark on the world.



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



Liam Scanlan

Named one of the Top 50 People in E-Commerce 2020 and celebrating five years of his popular clothing brand Eat Your Water

Novela Corda

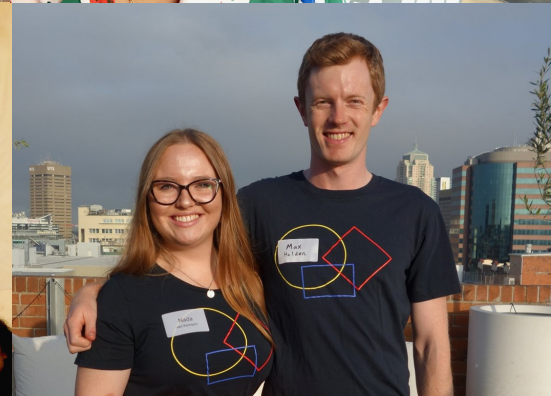
Launching her startup Key Into Australia to help international women living in Australia find work, meet others and navigate the ups and downs of settling in a new place.



Scott McKeon

Already raised over AUD\$500,000 and shipping the first Espresso Displays, after meeting his cofounder and developing the idea for his second screen business at SSE.

Like all of you, we are adapting how we work to drive innovation from across the state.



We are proud to be part of this diverse, growing community

THANK YOU

Get in touch

Email: info@sse.edu.au

Phone number: 02 8029 1999

Visit us at sse.edu.au

Follow us on social media @SSENSW



Building J
651-731 Harris Street
Ultimo NSW 2007
Australia

PO Box 791
Broadway NSW 2007