commitment to excellence
The Go8 was incorporated in 1999 and its Directorate is based in Australia’s capital city, Canberra. The Directorate is focussed on, and is a leader in, influencing the development and delivery of long-term sustainable national higher education and research policy, and in developing International alliances.

Our aim: to lead

The Group of Eight (Go8) is proud to represent Australia’s leading research Universities. At the Go8 both our research and our teaching deliver global impact.

Our eight Universities educate more than 23% of Australia’s undergraduate students, and one in three International students who choose to study in Australia come to a Go8 University. One in 12 of our students is a research student compared with one in 30 for the rest of the sector.

We celebrate excellence, welcoming quality students who become quality graduates, and importantly the leaders of tomorrow, both in Australia and overseas.

We have, for example, educated 79% of the Australian-educated Chief Executives of our nation’s top companies. We have educated every Australian Prime Minister educated in Australia, and every High Court Judge since the High Court first sat in 1903. 81% of Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of Australia’s Federal Public Service attended a Go8 University, as did 83% of Australia’s Ambassadors and High Commissioners educated in Australia.

We have also educated every Nobel Prize winner educated at an Australian University, while many of our International alumni are visible leaders in their careers around the world.

We have the long traditions of being Australia’s first, and still premier, group of Universities. We consider ourselves elite but not elitist and while we embrace our long traditions as a valued and valuable foundation, we do not lean on them to deliver us a viable future – rather we have a culture of embracing change.

We ensure we lead; in research we account for two thirds of all research funding to Australian Universities, and each year we spend some $6 Billion on research – more than $2 Billion of which is spent on Medical and Health Services research. We also take the lead in national education policy debate and we take pride in our high world rankings, consistently the highest in Australia.

The Go8 is proud to make a strong contribution to Australia’s economy. We directly support 50,000 jobs and are a major export industry with overseas earnings of $2.2 Billion in 2014. That year we generated income of $12 Billion, 43% of sector earnings.

Our aim is clearly defined. To lead, and to ensure our teaching and research deliver global impact.

Vicki Thomson
Chief Executive
The Group of Eight Universities (Go8)

comprises Australia’s eight leading research Universities – The University of Melbourne, The Australian National University, The University of Sydney, The University of Queensland, The University of Western Australia, The University of Adelaide, Monash University and UNSW Australia.

I am pleased and proud to have been appointed Chair of Australia’s Group of Eight Universities (Go8). The Go8 has members in each mainland State and the Australian Capital Territory, and the commitment to excellence from our universities is unparalleled in Australia.

It is an exciting time to lead this premier group of research intensive universities. With world rankings consistently placing our Go8 universities as the highest ranked Australian universities, and with seven of our members in the world’s top 100, the Go8 has been perfectly positioned to take a lead position in the Australian Government’s priority policy direction to drive innovation for economic growth.

It is at Go8 universities that the quality students we enrol have the opportunity to learn and grow into quality graduates, while experiencing the benefits of a research-rich environment that receives two thirds of Australia’s University research funding.

It is at Go8 universities that students are embedded in institutions which together spend some $6 Billion a year on research; 99% of that research rated as world class or above, and much of it with global significance.

Our encouragement of innovation and entrepreneurship and the programs the Go8 delivers to assist commercialisation, means we currently deliver 80% of the sector’s commercialisation, and two-thirds of its start-ups. We also derive income from industry collaboration that is twice that of the rest of the Australian sector combined.

From this environment of enlightened commitment to both teaching and research, the Go8 prospers across its many disciplines; as proud of its commitment to the humanities and arts as to the sciences.

It is at Go8 universities also where an emphasis on equity and philanthropy both flourish. The Go8 believes equity starts at student enrolment rather than ends there, and our nourishment of students who require extra support means the Go8 delivers better outcomes to them in terms of retention and success than other Australian Universities.

Our emphasis on philanthropy, to further enrich what we can offer our students and our researchers is determined, and our members are proud of their expanding efforts in this area.

The Go8 is a welcoming group of universities. Its results and its culture are why being Chair is such an honour.

Dr Michael Spence
Chair
The Go8 has forged, and nurtures as a matter of importance, strong alliances around the world.

It is a signatory to the globally prestigious Hefei Statement which ensures we join with equally elite University groupings in the US, Canada, UK, Europe, Asia, Hong Kong, China and Japan to work cooperatively across a wide range of areas. [https://go8.edu.au/article/hefei-statement-10-characteristics-contemporary-research-universities](https://go8.edu.au/article/hefei-statement-10-characteristics-contemporary-research-universities)

Individually the Go8 also has a wide range of robust International relationships:

- in China with the prestigious C9 Group, and China Scholarship Council
- in Brazil where we have an active student exchange
- in Chile where we cooperate on a range of programs including Masters and PhD scholarships
- with France where we place Australian interns in French companies operating in Australia
- with Germany where we have academic exchange as part of a joint research cooperation project.

The Go8 is proud of its reputation for accepting quality students and delivering quality graduates.

Our eight Universities educate over 358,000 students, 26% of the Australian total.

This includes some 85,000 onshore International students from 156 countries, with one in three of Australia’s international onshore students choosing to study at a Go8 University.

Importantly Go8 student success and retention rates are above the Australian average, ensuring that a higher percentage of students will graduate from a Go8 University.

In 2015 the Go8 graduated some 92,000 students.

The Go8 educates more than 64% of Australia’s medical, dentistry and veterinary graduates and more than 40% of Australia’s engineering and science students.

Go8 students come from a wide range of backgrounds. More than one-third of students, at all levels of study, are the first in their family to attend University.

One in five Go8 undergraduates are from a low socio economic background or from a regional or remote home location.

In postgraduate education Go8 Universities enrol one third of all postgraduate students, and almost half of all students in higher degrees by research.

Go8 Universities award 53% of all doctorates in Australia.
The Go8 comprises Australia’s leading research Universities.

Each year the Go8 spends more than $6 Billion on research, of which more than $2 Billion is spent on globally significant Medical and Health Services research. The Go8 conducted seven of the 10 (three in partnership) best research projects for 2014 as judged by Australia’s National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). We receive more than 60% of NHMRC funding.

We account for two-thirds of all research funding to Australian Universities, and in 2014 we received $2.5 Billion. The Go8 attracts the highest levels of industry and competitive grant funding for research. Our income from industry research is twice that of the rest of the sector combined.

In the most recent “Excellence in Research for Australia” (ERA) quality evaluation of research in Australian Universities, it was found that Go8 Universities’ “well above world class standard” proportion of assessed fields is twice as high as the rest of the sector.

The Go8 is also an active participant in 82% of Australia’s Cooperative Research Centres.

In 2014 we had more than 30,000 research students and over half of all research completions in Australia were from a Go8 University. Our research students comprise one in 12 of our students compared with one in 30 for the rest of the sector.

As a group we are strong on commercialisation and collaboration. We have 80% of the sector’s commercialisation income and the latest available statistics show the Go8 holding 70% of the national share of patent or plant breeder rights and setting up 62% of the start-up companies.

Go8 Universities are consistently the highest ranked Australian Universities in world rankings.

In 2015/16 all Go8 Universities are ranked in the top 200 institutions worldwide in:

- the Academic Ranking of World Universities from Shanghai Jiao Tong University (ARWU) which has four Go8 Universities in the top 100.
- the Times Higher Education World Rankings (THES) which has five Go8 Universities in the top 100.
- the QS World University Rankings (QS) which has seven of the eight Go8 Universities in its top 100.

The QS World University Rankings by subject rate all Go8 law schools in the top 100, with six in the top 50 and four in the top 20.

All Go8 Universities are in the QS top 100 for medicine, psychology and education.

All Go8 Universities have at least one field of engineering in the top 100.