



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

# UQ Pro Bono Centre Strategic Plan

2018 - 2021





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# Overview

This is the second long-term plan for the UQ Pro Bono Centre following its inaugural 2014 – 2017 Strategic Plan. Like its predecessor, this Strategic Plan is the culmination of many discussions with stakeholders about where the Centre has come from, what it has achieved, and where it ought to focus its efforts in future. We thank the many stakeholders whose views and ideas have informed the development of this high level document.

This strategic planning process has affirmed the continuing relevance of the Centre's Mission Statement and Purpose to guide its work over the next four years. The Centre will continue to drive student pro bono activities across its various programmatic divisions. A commitment to quality and excellence in student pro bono underpins the work of the four programme areas, namely the Pro Bono Roster; the Manning St Project; the Law Education & Outreach Program and the Barrister Assistance Team. From 2018 – 2021 the Centre will also renew its commitment to sustainability.

Importantly, the Centre recognises that within a large institution, an effective strategic plan is one that complements broader law school and university goals to ensure strategic institutional alignment. The articulated goals for this Plan are organised in 'clusters' similar to the University-wide strategic themes (teaching & learning, research, engagement) with additional clusters specific to the Centre's activities.

## Our values

The UQ Pro Bono Centre values and actively promotes:

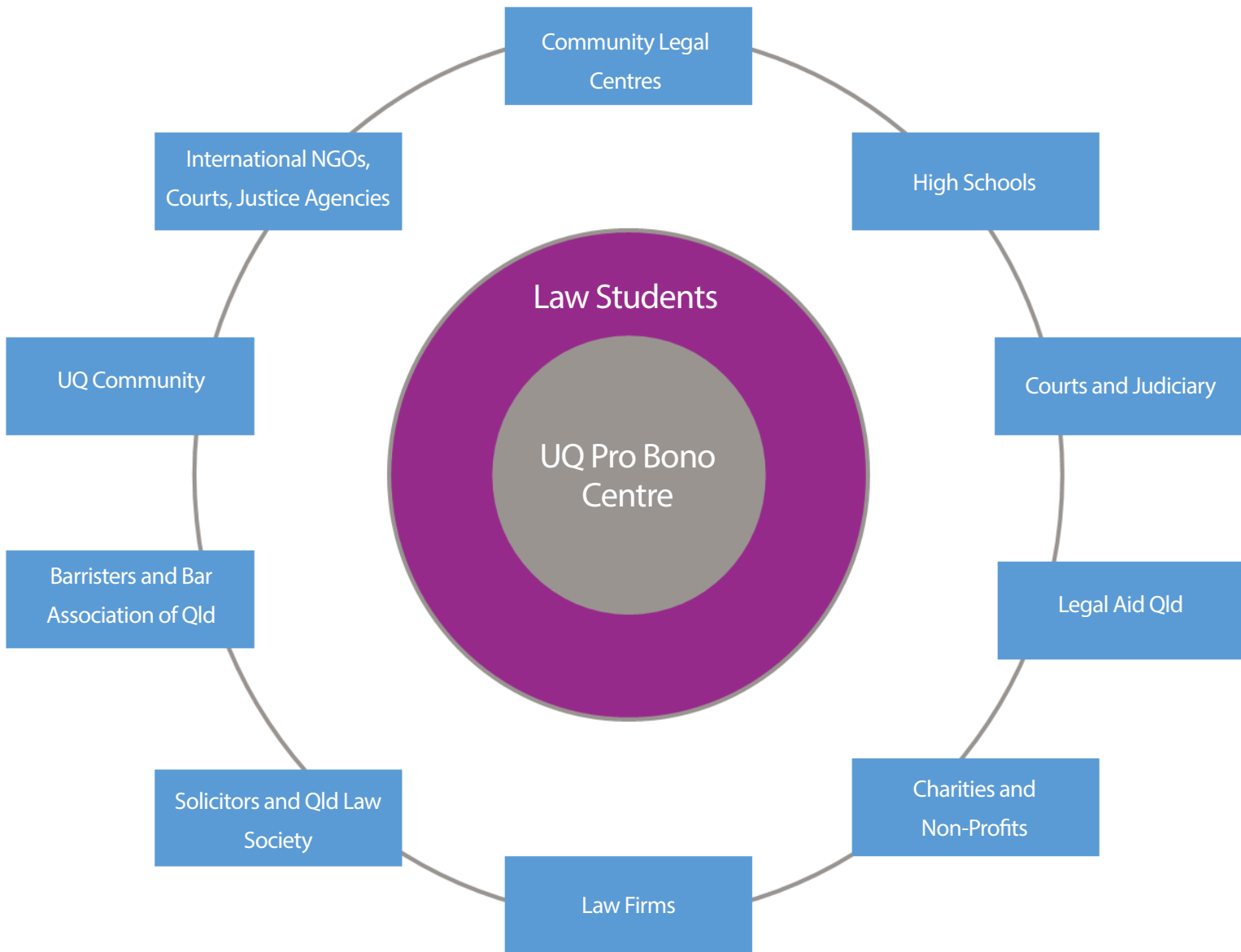
**Service:** Learning through service.

**Fairness:** Supporting access to justice and the creation of a fair society.

**Inclusion:** Encouraging the participation of law students from all backgrounds.

**Partnerships:** Working collaboratively with all stakeholders.





## Our mission

The UQ Pro Bono Centre will be a nationally recognised leader in the development, promotion and provision of student pro bono legal work. We will inspire students to understand the value and importance of access to justice, and to graduate from law school with a lifelong professional commitment to pro bono legal service.



## Our purpose

To create diverse and meaningful opportunities for students to participate in the delivery of pro bono legal work.



# Thematic priorities for 2018-2021

## 1. Increase our work in areas of justice with First Australians

The Centre will strengthen its connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal organisations.

## 2. Strengthen RRR connections

The Centre will strengthen connections with rural, regional and remote (RRR) practitioners and organisations in Queensland, including by sharing knowledge and resources.

## 3. Asia-Pacific initiatives

The Centre will focus on supporting the rule of law in the Pacific. It will seek to build peer alliances between law students in the Asia-Pacific region to learn together about their shared future professional careers in the law.

## 4. Storytelling justice

The Centre will build the capacity of law students to tell stories of justice and empowerment by fostering skills in ethical and effective storytelling.

## 5. Climate conscious

The Centre will support pro bono initiatives that address the climate crisis and which make the connection between climate change and justice.





## What we will do

### Pro bono legal work (Service and Engagement)

The Centre will continue to offer diverse and flexible pro bono activities to UQ students. Students will participate in a variety of pro bono work including casework, legal research, community legal education, law reform and policy. With a specific focus on 2018 – 2021 thematic priorities, the Centre will negotiate opportunities with many stakeholders including law firms, barristers, solicitors, CLCs, charities and community organisations.

- Goal 1.1 Sustain the number of student pro bono activities across all programmatic divisions, with an increase in 2018 – 2021 thematic priorities.
- Goal 1.2 Ensure high quality student pro bono through every programmatic division of the Centre's work.
- Goal 1.3 Grow the Centre's involvement in and support regional (Asia-Pacific) and international pro bono tasks.
- Goal 1.4 Scale up the Law Outreach & Education Program to include flexible delivery of online modules.



## Clinical Legal Education (Teaching and Learning)

The Centre's elective law course, Clinical Legal Education (CLE) program, will continue as a centrepiece of the undergraduate Law School curriculum. Our clinical educators will engage in high quality teaching and supervision. CLE Program will be sustainably-funded and will address areas of unmet legal need in the community.

- Goal 2.1 Maintain high quality teaching and supervision through the CLE Program.
- Goal 2.2 Secure financial support to supplement the cost of CLE Program by 30% over four years.
- Goal 2.3 Establish and pilot the development of an Australia/PNG Law Student Exchange.
- Goal 2.4 Increase the profile of CLE Program as an elective within the Law School.

## Profile and Advocacy (Impact)

The Centre will consolidate its profile as a national leader of student pro bono legal work. It will build the capacity of law students to tell stories of justice and empowerment. When appropriate, the Centre will advocate publicly on matters relating to access to justice, pro bono legal services and clinical legal education.

- Goal 3.1 Contribute to national and international debates about pro bono work.
- Goal 3.2 Strengthen sector and student capacity in storytelling and effective advocacy.
- Goal 3.3 Support the Law School to start a reconciliation journey consistent with the UQ Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).





## Governance and Sustainability

The Centre will model good practice in its governance and operations and will draw on the collective wisdom of its Advisory Board in delivering its 2018 – 2021 Strategic Plan. The Centre will maintain its commitment to environmental sustainability through legal work. It will use its resources responsibly, and with minimum impact on the environment.

- Goal 5.1 Utilise the experience of Advisory Board members to drive strategic projects over the 2018 – 2021 Strategic Plan.
- Goal 5.2 Promote good governance through accountability, sound financial and human resource management.
- Goal 5.3 A Centre committed to environmental sustainability, including through legal work.

## Research (Discovery)

The Centre will encourage student research and publications generated through their involvement in pro bono activities. The Centre will facilitate links between academia and the legal assistance sector through collaborative research in areas relating to access to justice and pro bono.

- Goal 4.1 Strengthen links between academia and the legal assistance sector through collaborative research.
- Goal 4.2 Maintain high ethical standards for research conducted through the Centre.
- Goal 4.3 Support the publication of student-authored scholarship arising from pro bono activities.



# Definition of pro bono work

The UQ Pro Bono Centre adopts the definition used by the Australian Pro Bono Centre for the purposes of its activities:

Pro bono means the provision of legal services which will enhance access to justice for disadvantaged or marginalised persons or organisations and/or promote the public interest.

1. The provision of legal assistance for free or at a substantially reduced fee to:—
  - a. individuals who can demonstrate a need for legal assistance but cannot access the legal system without incurring significant financial hardship; or
  - b. individuals or organisations whose matter raises an issue of public interest which would not otherwise be pursued; or
  - c. charities or other non-profit organisations which work on behalf of low income or disadvantaged members of the community or for the public good;
2. Conducting law reform and policy work on issues affecting low income or disadvantaged members of the community, or on issues of public interest;
3. Participating in the provision of free community legal education on issues affecting low income or disadvantaged members of the community or on issues of public interest; or
4. Providing a lawyer on secondment at a community organisation (including a community legal organisation) or at a referral service provider such as a Public Interest Law Clearing House.

The following is NOT regarded as pro bono work for the purposes of this statement:

1. Giving legal assistance to any person for free or at a reduced fee without reference to whether he/she can afford it or whether it raises an issue of public interest.
2. Free first consultations with clients who are otherwise billed at a firm's normal rates;
3. Contingency fee arrangements or other speculative work which is undertaken with a commercial expectation of a fee;
4. The sponsorship of cultural and sporting events, work undertaken for business development and other marketing opportunities; or
5. Time spent by lawyers sitting on the board of a community organisation (including a community legal organisation) or a charity.





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