



## Leading research staff in Australia Day Honours

University of South Australia Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd has congratulated leading members of the University community on their Australia Day honours.

Among the many friends, alumni and staff of the University honoured on Australia Day are Professor Sharad Kumar, Professor Robert Vink, and Kelvin Trimper who were each awarded a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM).

**Professor Sharad Kumar AM** joined UniSA in 2014 and was co-founder and inaugural co-director of the [Centre for Cancer Biology \(CCB\)](#), an alliance between the University of South Australia and SA Pathology. He was recognised for his significant service to medical research in the field of cancer and cell biology, as a researcher and author, educator and advocate, mentor and educator.



**Professor Robert Vink AM**, who also joined the University in 2014 as the Pro Vice Chancellor of Health Sciences, has a distinguished research career focussed on the field of brain trauma. He was recognised with an AM, for his researcher, publications, and teaching and mentoring to new generations of researchers and students in the field.



A key player in the development of the Mawson Lakes community, **Kelvin Trimper AM** is a Fellow of the University of South Australia and was recognised with an AM for his significant service to horticulture and the promotion of gardening, to urban development, and to the community of Salisbury.

UniSA graduate and national political identity **Meg Lees AO** was recognised for distinguished service to the Parliament of Australia and the people of South Australia.

Trained as a physical education teacher in New South Wales, Ms Lees undertook her Bachelor of Education In Service with UniSA's former South Australian College of Advanced Education. She was a federal Senator for South Australia from 1990 until 2005 and she led the Australian Democrats party from 1997 to 2001. The Democrats was one of Australia's most successful minor parties and frequently held the balance of power in the Senate until 2004.



Ms Lees' AO recognises her achievements in legislative reform, particularly in environmental protection and for negotiating reforms in the newly introduced Goods and Services Tax in 1999. This controversial legislation split the Democrats and she parted company with them in 2002, but she remained in the Senate until 2005.

After retiring from politics, Ms Lees was Chief Executive Officer of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of South Australia and Northern Territory for three years, and then worked as a para-legal specialising in compensation claims for victims of crime. She is currently on the board of Operation Flinders Foundation and chair of their Environment Committee.

Professor Lloyd says he believes it is important to acknowledge the spirit of enterprise, community and contribution that the Australia Day Awards represent each year.

"The character of a community, a university, a state, or indeed a nation is forged by the individual contributions of men and women who dedicate the intellect, business sense, compassion, or inquiry to a particular purpose.

"I am extremely proud of all of those in our UniSA community, and there are many, who have been recognised for their career contributions to building smarter, happier, healthier and more sustainable communities."

View the full list of UniSA alumni who received honours [here](#).



[Back to Alumni News](#)

[Postgraduate Study](#) | [Research Degrees](#) | [Alumni Giving](#) | [Career Services](#) | [Events](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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## Weaving a narrative from Australian stories

Royce Kurmelovs

**Bachelor of Laws and Journalism**

**Author, Hachette Australia Books**

**Freelance Journalist, BBC World Service; Adelaide Review; VICE Australia**

In the few years since graduating, Royce Kurmelovs has added titles to his resume that include journalist, author and media advisor to Nick Xenophon. With the release of his latest book *Rogue Nation* exploring the return of Pauline Hanson and populism in Australia, Kurmelovs is also starting to be recognised as a keen social commentator.

While it has been a difficult route at times, on meeting Kurmelovs you can understand why he has been so successful. Ask him and he claims his success is one part audaciousness and two parts arrogance, however it is clear a sharp mind and passion for his craft are the unmistakeable catalysts.



“Someone on Twitter described journalism as ‘running over a series of burning bridges’ – you end up here but you’re never quite sure how you did it,” Royce jokes while lamenting the difficulties posed by being thrown into the world of freelance journalism straight out of university. You can sense a war within as he tries to define the joys and struggle of working in an industry disrupted by technology.

“I graduated into a flat job market,” he said. “The year before me there was one cadetship at the ABC that a friend of mine got, but there were something like 1000 applicants.” But then he adds, “I’m paid to hang out with people, learn stuff and then write about it. It doesn’t always pay very well but it is the best job in the world.” It is clear that he has found his calling.

Straight out of school Kurmelovs managed to get his foot in the door selling features to *The Guardian*, followed quickly by Al Jazeera and the BBC. He has since gone on to write for organisations as diverse as VICE, Adelaide Review and CNN.

A lucky break in the form of a KYD Copyright mentorship program with Gideon Haigh opened another door.

“This work with Gideon was integral because from that I produced a 14,000 word story about what would happen when the car industry closes.”

Titled *Petrol, Sweat and Whiskey: What Killing the Car Industry Means for Adelaide's Working Class North* explored the closure of Holden’s manufacturing plants.

Shortly after writing the piece Kurmelovs attended the Salisbury Writers Festival where he attracted the attention of Sophie Hamley, non-fiction publisher at Hachette Australia Books.

“I didn’t want to go in and pitch but how often are you in a room with someone from the book industry? So if what I had written on the car industry might be turned into a book and she handed me her card which was really surprising. Then I had to go write the thing!”

*The Death of Holden: The end of an Australian dream* explores the end of car manufacturing in Australia.

“While it was centred on Holden it was really about deindustrialisation and what happens when you shut down this huge industrial process across two states, what happens to the workers and the people who depend on it. It’s brutal to be honest.”

A month after the book was published, Nick Xenophon helped launch it and offered Kurmelovs a job as a media advisor.

“Working for Nick was an education. It taught me what the other side of politics looks like, how it works and how everyone in politics is flawed but are really just trying to do their best.”

Within five months Kurmelovs was commissioned again by Hatchett Australia, this time to explore the return of Pauline Hanson and populism. He decided to gamble on himself once again.

*Rogue Nation* was released in November 2017. While the book places Pauline Hanson and One Nation at its centre, Kurmelovs explores a larger narrative about the events in Australian politics that set up her return to power.

“Pauline Hanson hasn’t changed. She’s exactly who she was in 1996 but the environment around her has changed.

“She’s back in parliament sure, but what does that mean? If you take the camera back a bit, zoom out and look at what’s happening across Australia, across parliament, you see a situation where minor parties and independents in every state and federal parliament hold power.

“You start to explore populism – what it means because basically all these independents are populists.

“It’s also tying in with what is going on in the world. There is a big divide between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’, which is growing. Everyone focuses on Trump as if he were the only possible outcome from a global populist revolt. But Trump is just the American version.

“Of course it’s also happening in Australia. We tend to think that somehow we’re immune to what’s happening in the rest of the world. We’re not.”

On what inspired his passion for writing, Kurmelovs cites the sudden death of a family friend when he was 18 and the time he spent in America on a scholarship to work at Lonely Planet and the San Francisco Bay Guardian.

“A friend of mine summed it up perfectly. Americans have this amazing ability to package their story into a narrative. That’s their culture. You’ll talk with a construction worker and he’ll tell you these stories like he’s a poet.

“It’s not the same here. It’s the ‘my home is my castle’ thing – we stay home and we’re suspicious of outsiders. So part of my project in journalism is trying to coax out those Australian stories, the way they tell them in America. To structure Australian lives into a narrative so they can see that they belong to something bigger.

“The people I write about are always surprised to see their lives laid bare in a story because Australians tend to be unaware of the narrative going on around them and their part in it and how it makes them respond and react to things. Often they’re really surprised, sometimes they’re defensive.

“My next big project is another book, this one will be on Perth after the mining boom. I’ve already got a couple of ideas for two more after that.”

Visit [Royce Kurmelov's profile](#) on Hachette Australia.



[Back to Alumni News](#)

## A career in alchemy - turning silver to gold



### Katrina Webb

#### Bachelor of Physiotherapy

#### Director, Silver 2 Gold High Performance Solutions

When Katrina Webb graduated from UniSA she couldn't have imagined the path her career would take. From winning gold at the Paralympic Games to running her own leadership business and finding a second home in Nepal, Katrina's journey has become an inspiration to thousands.

As part of an athletic family, sport was always going to play an important role in Katrina's life. But, she was aware that there was something different about her – a mild weakness on her right side that she worked hard to overcome to gain a netball scholarship to the Australian Institute of Sport.

This opportunity was a dream come true, but it was also where she discovered that the weakness was caused by a mild form of cerebral palsy. Unsure of what would happen next, Katrina was quickly sought after for the 1996 Atlanta Paralympic Games where she won two gold and a silver medal, and went on to win four more medals at the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Paralympic Games.

During this time Katrina was also completing a Bachelor of Physiotherapy and working with her mentor Marc Colquhoun to set herself up as a business and make the most of her athletics career.

"Shortly after I finished competing I got married and we have since had three boys, so this made coming out of athleticism an easier shift than other athletes' experience," said Katrina.

"My boys helped me switch paths again and taught me how to become selfless."

A recent inductee to the SA Sport Hall of Fame, Katrina now uses her story to inspire others to make positive change in their lives.

"I have discovered that you don't need a disability to feel that there is something different about you, like you're not sure where you fit. You end up trying so hard to be something that you're not – and that's just hard work.



"Teaching people to be their true self – their authentic self, is the most important part of my work now. It is powerful for me because I've lived through it and when I accepted myself and became the Katrina Webb I wanted to be and loved every bit of, all of these doors opened."

Katrina's business has now grown to include her Silver 2 Gold leadership training workshops and an annual conference, the 'newday summit' which brings local and international perspectives together to inspire leadership for the greater good. She also leads the Adelaide Crows Women FIT for Leadership program, works as a public speaker and provides wellbeing and resilience training at SAHMRI.

In her work, Katrina uses the principles she learnt from working with a sports psychologist to get back to a gold winning level of performance for the 2004 Paralympic Games.

"As a professional athlete, winning gold in Atlanta and then losing it in Sydney was one of my hardest life lessons.

"All the work I poured into winning gold again at the Athens Games, has become the heart of what I do in leadership – helping people turn their own silver moments into gold.

"It is fascinating to me that generally people may only see a psychologist when they're burnt out, suffered a trauma, or struggling with a mental health problem, because as an athlete we use psychology to get the very best out of ourselves.

"While psychology is focused on identifying, treating, and preventing mental illness, it is also about finding your best self and I think this is often overlooked.

"I try to pass these lessons on and I engage psychologists in my programs to give people the tools they need to be resilient and authentic, to live with purpose and in a way they want to be remembered, and to put their values into action."

Over the past 10 years, Katrina has also had some unique opportunities to further grow her leadership training and business on a global scale.



"There have been these amazing moments in my career. I was the first torchbearer to enter the stadium at the Sydney Paralympic Games opening ceremony. In 2006 the International Paralympic Committee asked me to speak at the UN International Year of Sport and Physical Education in New York alongside Roger Federer and they have since asked me to be their ambassador on several occasions.

"This year I had the chance to speak at the Global Transformation Forum alongside Usain Bolt and Sir Richard Branson. And another opportunity opened up when I was chosen to be one of 100 leaders to join the inaugural CSC Leaders initiative in London and Mumbai.

"Through CSC I met Dr Tshering Lama, who was Director of Child Reach Nepal at the time. He is truly one of the most inspiring and generous people I have ever met and takes every opportunity to improve the lives of people in Nepal.

"Together we do a lot of work running programs in Nepal to help people, particularly children at risk of trafficking. Trafficking is a huge global problem and once your eyes are opened to it, like mine have been in Nepal, you just have to do something about it.

"We do a lot of work over there to try to intervene through education. Nelson Mandela said 'education is the best weapon we can all have in life' and research shows it is key to keeping kids safe.



"I also sit on the Crows Children's Foundation Board and for part of this work I have been leading treks in Nepal to Everest Base Camp. The last two treks have helped raised \$90,000 for children in Australia and Nepal.

"So, now that my work is leading to more and more international requests, I've realised that I'm doing something right.

"I would like to see the newday Summit reach an international audience and have that wonderful ripple effect that gets people influencing more and more people to use their leadership to help others and forge human connections.

"When you look at the mental health problems we currently face, it's a really worrying place. We have disconnected from people, which is a real vulnerability for developing a mental illness and we have also disconnected from what really matters to us. If I can help people to connect with and find their true self – then I know I'm doing my best work."

When asked what one piece of advice Katrina could offer from her leadership work she emphasised the importance of understanding what values and goals are most important.

"One of my steepest learning curves was saying yes to everything because I love to help people. I was doing quantity not quality and any strength when taken to the extreme becomes a weakness.

"It is important to work out what is important to you, where you want to spend your time, to learn how to say no to those things that are not aligned with your priorities and values.

"But also you need to learn to say yes to those things that are, those things that probably make you feel a bit uncomfortable and nervous, because deep down you know they are the things that have the most riding on them."

For more Silver 2 Gold tips – visit [katrinawebb.com.au](http://katrinawebb.com.au).

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[Back to Alumni News](#)

## Steering a new direction in online education

Tom Steer

Master of Business Information Systems

UniSA Online Executive Director

More than 1.5 million Australians have studied their university degree online over the past 10 years – and this number is steadily increasing. As a new year begins, many of us will be taking some time to reflect on our career, and the year just gone – it's a common time to identify professional development opportunities to learn new skills to land that next big role. Studying an online degree is not only an opportunity to upskill, it's also often the only choice for busy adults who need to juggle work, life and family commitments.

UniSA Online Executive Director and UniSA alumnus, Tom Steer, is driving the University's new offering for online learners – a suite of 12, 100% online undergraduate degrees for students to Study On Demand – anywhere, and anytime.



Previously Chief of Staff at global IT giant, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Tom is no stranger to the University. He led the development of the joint UniSA HP Innovation and Collaboration Centre, as well as the highly successful Bachelor of Information Technology (Enterprise Business Solutions) program, which included a 12-month paid internship at HP (now DXC Technology).

### You often compare UniSA Online to a start-up – what are some of the similarities?

I think the major similarities with a start-up are focus and culture. Start-ups are very clear about why they exist. At UniSA Online, our purpose is to create exciting futures through online learning – we're 100% focused on providing the best experience and outcomes for our students.

One of the unique things about UniSA Online is that all of our academics, educational designers, student support, student recruitment, and marketing staff are all under one roof – this has been extremely important in fostering a collaborative and innovative culture that encourages the team to test new ideas, solutions and strategies.

In saying this, the big difference from a start-up however is that this is core business for UniSA – online education is not a new concept for the University. In fact, we've been delivering high quality online education for more than 25 years – and the existing expertise we have in each discipline area has been paramount in developing these degrees.

### What kind of exciting innovations are we seeing from UniSA Online?

Time is a precious commodity for working adults – and we had this top of mind when building our degrees. Students watch short videos rather than long lectures and complete interactive activities as part of their studies, which they can complete anywhere, any time, and on any device. It's completely different to traditional ways of learning.

Graduates will come out with the skill and knowledge that industry are telling us they need – but we've also paid particular attention to ensuring students develop transferrable skills like communication, project management and teamwork skills in an online environment.

UniSA Online is all about designing smarter ways of learning - it's not a case of shoehorning face-to-face degrees into an online format. We've built and redeveloped more than 200 courses, which have been designed exclusively for online learning – and we've delivered a brand new interactive online environment, where students will be able to track and monitor their progress.

As part of our delivery, we're also offering four terms per year, which means students can study two courses per term, and still finish in three years - so it's quite achievable. They can also get credit for relevant work experience to help them obtain their degree even sooner.

### Can you please tell us about the extra support that a UniSA Online student should expect to receive?

We've recruited a team of Student Advisers, who provide personalised advice and support, whether it's helping students enrol, developing study plans or helping the students access the full range of University support services. Our Student Advisors act as a study buddy for our students from enrolment to graduation.

We're also building learning analytics and educational development research into these new degrees, which is really exciting for us, especially as we'll be able to proactively engage, and reach out to students who need support and guidance.

### What's on the horizon for UniSA Online?

We were excited to welcome our very first cohort of students recently on 8 January. We know student expectations are high – and we're committed to ensuring every student gets what they need to succeed. We'll continue to innovate, to explore new technologies and platforms, and use our learnings to refine and improve the online student experience.

While I was working at HP, we decided to partner with UniSA because of the University's openness to collaborate, its practical focus as well as its innovative culture. At UniSA Online we've worked closely with industry to ensure our degrees meet current and future workforce needs, while developing the skills and attributes that will give graduates a point of difference in their career – and this will continue to be a focus for us moving forward. We look forward to strengthening our existing industry relationships and building new partnerships.

We have ambitious goals to be recognised as the best online education provider in Australia. By 2020, UniSA Online will offer 20 undergraduate online degrees – with our sights set on expanding our offerings to overseas students. There's been a tremendous amount of work that has got us to where we are today – but our story is only just getting started.

[Unisaonline.edu.au](https://unisaonline.edu.au)



[Back to Alumni News](#)

[Postgraduate Study](#) | [Research Degrees](#) | [Alumni Giving](#) | [Career Services](#) | [Events](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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## Youth development journey aboard *STS Young Endeavour*

Qasem Bahmanzadah

**Bachelor of Aviation**

Youth Ambassador, Australian Refugee Association

Victoria Zawko

**Bachelor of Sustainable Environments (Honours)**

Aviation graduate and Youth Ambassador, Qasem Bahmanzadah, recently swapped the skies for the seas on a once-in-a-lifetime voyage to challenge himself and develop his character. As did UniSA alumna, Victoria Zawko, who gained more confidence in her leadership abilities while learning the ropes aboard the *STS Young Endeavour* - made possible through a UniSA Cowan Young Endeavour Grant.

The **Young Endeavour** Youth Scheme provides 24 young Australians aged 16-23 the unique opportunity to sail the coast of Australia aboard the tall ship, *STS Young Endeavour* (with nine specially trained Royal Australian Navy crew) to increase their self-awareness, develop teamwork and leadership skills and create a strong sense of community responsibility.

Twenty-one year old Qasem was born in the war torn Afghanistan and had to flee to Pakistan at the age of six. Since arriving in Australia at the age of eleven, he has excelled in his studies, been a passionate volunteer and is heavily involved with community groups including the Australian Refugee Association where he is a Youth Ambassador.

"I am very grateful for the opportunities I've received from the Government and the Australian people. One day I hope to give something back to this beautiful country," says Qasem.



While no stranger to youth development programs, Qasem said he got a lot out of his *Young Endeavour* experience.

"The biggest challenge for me was learning to step back and let others have a go.

"Despite all the challenges, like being sleep deprived, you do get a lot out of it. Challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them makes life meaningful. It's through these challenges that we can change for the better.

"I'd definitely recommend it to any young people who want to develop their characters."

Each voyage, youth live and work with a diverse range of people from across Australia. They are encouraged to pursue personal and team goals and challenges in an unfamiliar environment as they learn to sail a square-rigged tall ship.

Skills learnt include; how to navigate, keep watch, cook in the galley, take the helm and climb 35 metre mast to work aloft,

setting and furling sails.

UniSA Sustainable Environments graduate, Victoria Zawko, always had a keen interest in the ocean environment so receiving UniSA's Cowan Young Endeavour Grant in 2017 was the perfect experience for her.

"When I heard about the Grant I was so excited because this was an opportunity for me to experience something new that I'd always been interested in up close and personal, while having fun and making friends and connections," says Victoria.

"During the voyage I gained a lot more confidence in my leadership abilities. My skills were put to the test and I learnt a lot about myself and how I react in stressful and intense situations, and I like to think I came out better for it.

"Without the support provided through the Cowan Young Endeavour Grant I never would have had this experience. I cannot express how much I appreciate the opportunity I was given and the people who made it possible.

"The Grant gave me the opportunity to expand my horizons (both figuratively and literally) and learn how to work together with virtual strangers in a challenging environment.

"I think any student that is given the same opportunity I was given will learn a lot about themselves, their limits, and how to push past them.

"I've been applying many of the lessons I learnt while on the voyage to both my personal and university life, and hope to carry them with me well into my professional life."



### UniSA's Cowan Young Endeavour Grant

Full-time students studying at the University of South Australia also have the opportunity to embark upon their own sailing adventure through the Cowan Young Endeavour Grant. For further information about the Grant please [click here](#).

This fantastic opportunity for young people to develop their character is only made possible through the generous financial support provided by Cowan family. If you would like to explore your options to support students please contact:

**Darren Carbin**

Advancement Officer (Corporate and Named Scholarships)

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## Australian tech entrepreneur creativity a recipe for success

Nick McNaughton

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

**CEO, ANU Connect Ventures**

Almost three decades of working at the coal-face of commercialising promising technology has given Nick McNaughton, CEO of ANU Connect Ventures, a front row seat to the extraordinary changes we experience today thanks to the innovations generated by bright minds.

Nick currently drives ANU Connect Ventures, a \$27 million fund to take promising research from the Australian National University, University of Canberra, Charles Sturt University and other Canberra based start-ups into the next phase of commercial viability. He is also a successful angel investor who is particularly interested in projects that offer the potential to answer some of society's biggest challenges.



"In Australia we have this incredibly creative and inventive pool of entrepreneurs who are great at coming up with ground breaking discoveries. Our challenge as a country is we are not so good at commercialising these inventions. We need to work on the commercialisation side of the equation," says Nick.

Nick started his career in the technology industry working for the software subsidiary of Apple Computer. He set up their Asia office.

"I would spend a couple of weeks each quarter in the US learning how the Americans sold technology. The US is the best in the world at marketing and selling technology – we have much to learn from them."

His second gig took him to the East Coast of the US where he was working for Allaire who created the popular web development tool 'ColdFusion' which took the world by storm in the late nineties.

On moving to Australia, Nick started to focus more of his time on angel investment – private financing to help promising business start-ups move their venture to the next stage and attract venture capitalists.

"In terms of angel investing, one of my most exciting projects is Windlab, a renewable energy technology developer in Canberra. They use a proprietary software algorithm to identify locations around the world to build Wind Farms. It's a great example of smart technology being used to provide new, clean energy. We just listed them on the ASX (WND).

In 2009 Nick also decided to undertake an MBA having wanted to do one for most of his professional life. After extensive research he chose UniSA due to the unique factors of the course including the ability to study online, part-time and complete his study within two years. He was also particularly impressed by the opportunity to foster international business experience.

"I chose UniSA because it allowed me to carry on working full-time but also include study projects in Denmark and China. I have been immensely happy with the program, the people I met and the outcomes of my studies.

"Australians are unique for their curious and inventive nature. In many ways we have had to be in order to survive. We live on an island and we are thus forced to be self-reliant, to travel and understand the cultures, languages and systems of our neighbours and allies in order to grow our concepts – this makes us incredibly worldly and open to learning and adapting.

"Through my work and studies I have travelled extensively which has encouraged my creativity and taught me innumerable skills. Each country presents different challenges for business due to different cultural and business norms. These experiences offer valuable chances to learn, so I would like to see more programs encouraging international experience for students and graduates."

As for the future of technology and opportunity in Australia, Nick believes the future is only getting brighter as we move from the technological age into an age of innovation.

"There has never been a better time in the history of humanity to become an entrepreneur. We need to encourage our students and graduates to do it - go start their own business or develop their ideas. The future of Australian employment and opportunity will be driven by these new discoveries and inventions."

Nick believes we will soon see huge advances, particularly in life sciences and artificial intelligence where there has been considerable global investment. However these advances pose new challenges.

"I truly believe that we will soon eradicate our greatest scourges – diseases like cancer, heart disease etc. It's no longer a matter of if, but when. But this does put immense pressure on our planet as we live longer, our population increases and we need more resources.

"The next big area for tech focus will certainly look at addressing these problems because they will need to. Things like food production, resource availability, water care and management, energy production etc.

"We must find better ways of living on this planet – so technology will play a critical role not just in how we take care of ourselves but also how we can live more sustainably."

Nick also sees the Australian Government's recent announcement about a space program opening many doors for business.

"Australia has already achieved incredible progress in this area on an international level and with this announcement we will see a new dawn for this industry soon.

"UniSA is already positioned well in this climate - in fact you are already a leader with your team of innovators who are world leaders in nanosatellites.

"Ultimately there are exciting times ahead but challenges as well – for our health, our environment and our children, but I think we are already tackling these problems well and we will see incredible changes in the years to come."

UniSA's Venture Catalyst encourages student entrepreneurship and the creation of local startups by providing funding for early-stage ventures founded by UniSA students and recent graduates.

This year, Venture Catalyst is introducing a new Social Enterprise stream alongside the existing program. Entrepreneurs who have an idea to tackle social problems or improve different communities are encouraged to apply.

Successful companies will also receive mentoring, support and working space in the Innovation and Collaboration Centre. For further information please visit: <http://icc.unisa.edu.au/venturecatalyst/>



[Back to Alumni News](#)