

# MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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## UTAS joins in strategic partnership to boost education tourism

The University of Tasmania has joined forces with Tasmania's tourism sector to significantly grow the state's share of the education tourism market in Australia.

UTAS and the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania signed today a Memorandum of Understanding at the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), signalling the start of a new high-level partnership between the two sectors.

"With the right partnerships, and the right policies in place, we can significantly lift our profile and standing in the Asia-Pacific region," UTAS Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said today. "This MoU with the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania is one such partnership."

Prof Rathjen said the potential economic benefits for UTAS and the state are substantial. Higher education is one of Australia's top export industries, and has for many years been among the top three export industries. It is the single largest export industry in Victoria.

To bolster Tasmania's ability to engage with Asia in the Asian Century the University has also partnered with the State Government in the establishment of a new institute. The new Asia Institute Tasmania is intended to significantly boost the state's engagement with, and cultural awareness of, the Asian region as a whole.

Furthermore, the University is in the process of finalising a draft strategic plan called *Engaged Globally*.

"With this plan we intend to take advantage of our reputation as a world leader in our thematic research areas and in teaching quality to position ourselves as a globally renowned university, to boost international engagement to deepen research and education relationships, to encourage growth and diversity among our student body and to ensure our graduates are globally adept," Prof Rathjen explained.

Part of the strategic plan sees the University working in conjunction with the Government and peak bodies such as the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania

to more than double the number of international students studying at UTAS to 8000 by 2018.

“The benefits of boosting our international student numbers will go well beyond direct economic contribution. International students also drive other sectors of the economy, the most obvious one, of course, being tourism.

“Working with our Tasmanian partners, the University of Tasmania can realise areas of potential for the Tasmanian economy while at the same time providing opportunities for international students to become part of the Tasmanian economy through employment and cultural engagement,” Prof Rathjen said.

“In return our island state is enriched by the diversity of experience, culture and thought that these students bring to us from around the globe.”

The MoU signed today commits the University of Tasmania and Tourism Industry Council Tasmania to work together on the following priorities:

- Advocating to the Tasmanian Government, tourism operators and the broader community the shared benefits of growing Tasmania’s share of the international student market.
- Developing shared policy positions on key opportunities to grow education tourism in Tasmania.
- Providing a high-level forum for university, tourism and government stakeholders, to work together on shared strategies to grow education tourism in Tasmania, particularly around co-operative marketing.
- Implement practical strategies within the Tasmanian tourism and hospitality industries to better engage with the international student market.

**Information released by:**

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