

Melbourne Medical School

Sustainability, Climate & Health Strategy | 2025-2030



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



Table of Contents

Forward..... 3

Background..... 4

 Purpose 5

 Vision..... 5

Strategy..... 6

 Education..... 6

 Discovery and Research 8

 Community and Global (Engagement)..... 10

 Place and Operations..... 13

Forward

It is with great optimism and a deep sense of responsibility that we present the inaugural Melbourne Medical School Sustainability, Climate and Health Strategy 2025-2030. As leaders in health education and research, we recognise our future prosperity and wellbeing are intrinsically linked to the health of our planet. Addressing the urgent challenges posed by climate change requires a concerted effort across all sectors, and the medical community has a vital role to play in fostering resilience, reducing environmental impact, and advocating for practices and policies that promote planetary and human health.

We aim to inspire and equip present and future students, our medical colleagues and leaders of the profession with the skills and expertise to contribute meaningfully to a world where health is increasingly impacted by our changing climate. We believe that we have an ethical responsibility to practice within environmental boundaries.

Developed through extensive consultation and in close alignment with the Melbourne Medical School's Advancing Medicine Strategy, this Strategy reaffirms our vision to lead society's health transformation through education, innovation and advocacy with a sustainability and climate health lens. It provides a framework to guide and accelerate our response to the increasing challenges of a changing climate, environmental degradation and finite resources. In addition, it sets out a roadmap to pursue the opportunities for our graduates, staff, researchers and communities to develop expertise and leadership in building resilient, sustainable health systems and communities.

Informed by the University's Sustainability Charter and the wisdom of First Nations people, the strategy embodies our commitment to integrating sustainability into our core purpose which is to transform the health of communities through educating future healthcare professionals, advancing innovative research, and engaging with local and international partners.

This Strategy has been enriched by the thoughtful contributions of the Melbourne Medical School student community, whose advocacy—particularly through the Planetary Health Report Card—has played a pivotal role in ensuring its goals and actions reflect the values and priorities of the next generation of medical leaders.

By committing to environmentally responsible practices and pioneering solutions that mitigate climate risks, we aim to lead by example and inspire widespread action in the healthcare sector. We aim to collaborate and partner widely to ensure that we meet our goals and exceed our expectations. Together, we can shape a healthier, more sustainable future—one that benefits our local communities, the global population and the entire planet.

This Strategy recognises our responsibility to future generations, and we thank you for your support in this vital endeavour.



Sarath Ranganathan

Professor Sarath Ranganathan
FAHMS MBChB MRCP FRCPH FRACP PhD FThorSoc ATSF

Head, Melbourne Medical School



Eugenie Kayak

Professor Eugenie Kayak
FANZCA, MBBS, MPH, MSc, GAICD

Enterprise Professor Sustainable Healthcare,
Melbourne Medical School

Background

In an interconnected world where borders are fading and global warming is increasing, the Melbourne Medical School (MMS) has developed a Sustainability, Climate and Health Strategy to help deliver world-class sustainable healthcare to communities to meet the expected global health challenges arising from climate change.

The strategy aims to develop and equip our community of students, practitioners, graduates, researchers, leaders and advocates to lead by example and contribute meaningfully to a sustainable, climate resilient future. Through the delivery of a strategic framework, we will help to transform health and healthcare through the development of equitable, sustainable, climate-resilient communities and health systems.

Sustainability, climate change and health are of increasing importance to our students, graduates, researchers, staff and affiliated health institutions. We all have an important role to play to minimise the health sector's own significant environmental footprint which produces more than 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. We are committed to equipping our communities to adapt to both present and future health challenges from climate change, which we believe is the biggest threat to global health this century.

Importantly, a more nuanced understanding can be gained through the lens of First Nations people, who have acted as careful custodians of Country for millennia, demonstrating resilience and adaptability in the face of environmental changes and technological advances. Central to Aboriginal worldviews is the belief that physical health of Country is fundamentally interconnected to the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of its people. In this respect, sustainability transcends resource management, emphasising reciprocal relationships with healthy land and environments for present and future generations.

This Sustainability, Climate and Health Strategy ("Strategy") has been developed in alignment with the MMS Advancing Medicine Strategic Plan 2025-2030, the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences' Advancing Health 2030 Strategic Plan, and The University of Melbourne's Advancing Melbourne 2030 Strategy, Sustainability Plan 2030 and Sustainability Charter.

The **University's Sustainability Charter** recognises the Earth is a finite environment and that achieving a sustainable Earth requires global values and actions that are ecologically sound, socially just and economically viable. The University of Melbourne has a social responsibility to lead, engage and to set international standards for developing an ecologically sustainable community whilst integrating Indigenous knowledge and participation into achieving long-term sustainability commitments.

In adhering to the Charter's commitments, this Strategy will ensure the MMS, as the University's largest School, plays its part in honouring the University's motto: '*postera crescām laude*', to grow in the esteem of future generations. We will do this by ensuring our actions contribute to future health and wellbeing, whilst not adding to the overall environmental, social, and financial burdens.

This Strategy has been guided by recommendations from staff and students, the 2023-2024 MMS Planetary Health Report Card (PHRC), a MMS Sustainable Healthcare and Climate Health prioritisation scoping survey, Department stakeholder engagement, and our collaborating partnership with the University's Climate CATCH (Collaborative Action for Transformative Change in Health and Healthcare) Lab.

Over the next 5 years, pivotal national policy developments in the fields of sustainable healthcare and climate health are expected with: Australia's National Health and Climate Strategy currently being implemented, the Australian Commission of Safety and Quality in Health Care's (ACSQHC) Environmentally Sustainable and Climate Resilient Healthcare Module piloting near completion, and the Australian Medical Council's (AMC) recent addition of standards that cover environmental health and sustainable healthcare principles for medical graduates.

The MMS envisages a sustainable healthcare system that provides high quality care today, without compromising the health or healthcare, of present and future generations. Whilst sustainability can cover many aspects, the focus of this Strategy is environmental sustainability in relation to healthcare and the associated health risks of a rapidly changing climate.

Incorporating environmentally sustainable principles into healthcare will transform how care is delivered to ensure better patient, community, environment and financial outcomes. Importantly, the fundamental principles of clinical sustainable healthcare prioritise primary and preventative care, patient empowerment, and effective, efficient, high-quality, evidence-based care. They also include the development of pathways and transformative systems change to reduce unnecessary product use and wasteful or inefficient practices, whilst working to prevent adverse healthcare needs from arising.

In conclusion, there are many and widespread benefits to be gained through the implementation of this Strategy.

Purpose and Vision of the Melbourne Medical School Sustainability, Climate and Health Strategy 2025-2030

Purpose: Lead education, research, innovation, engagement and ways of practice for students, health professionals, academics, researchers, policymakers and affiliated institutions to build healthy communities, supported by an equitable, sustainable, resilient, high-quality, environmentally sustainable health system.

Vision: Students, educators, researchers, and practitioners are equipped to lead the development of equitable, sustainable, climate resilient communities and health systems.

Through the strategic foundations of:

- » **Education** - Leading education in sustainable healthcare and climate health.
- » **Discovery and Research** - Building sustainable healthcare and climate health research capacity.
- » **Community and Global (Engagement)** - Building internal and external collaborations and communities of practice to lead and influence.
- » **Place and Operations** - Working to mitigate the environmental footprint of our own events, activities, research and facilities.



Education

Leading education in sustainable healthcare and climate health

Our students are deeply concerned about the health impacts of climate change and healthcare's environmental impact, including carbon emissions, that contribute to adverse health outcomes. The MMS recognises the need to equip current and future health practitioners with the skills to practice in communities impacted by climate change and environmental degradation. Whilst these skills are taught through various points in the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree, the MMS's 2024 Planetary Health Report Card score indicated the need for prioritisation and resources for planetary health and sustainable healthcare education in the coming years.

The MMS will strive to integrate further planetary health and sustainable healthcare education into the MD degree in addition to becoming a recognised postgraduate professional development education expert provider in sustainable healthcare and climate health. Equipping our students with the skills, knowledge and attributes to make a positive contribution in responding to climate change and its impact on the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve.

The MMS will also work to engage and collaborate across its Departments and with other Schools within the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS), to advance sustainable healthcare and climate health teaching and learning. We will continue to foster our Climate CATCH Lab partnership and the development of a leading Sustainability in Quality Improvement (SusQI) education program.

Through provision of comprehensive sustainable healthcare and climate health teaching and learning avenues for students, graduates, practitioners and researchers, the MMS will become an internationally renowned medical school for those seeking sustainable healthcare and climate health education.



Education

Leading education in sustainable healthcare and climate health

Strategic goals	Actions
Imbue students with the values of healthcare sustainability and an understanding of climate health impacts locally and globally.	» Ensure our students are equipped to contribute professionally and meet the health and healthcare challenges from a rapidly warming world in which resources are finite.
Include sustainable healthcare and climate health education in the MD core curriculum.	» Map current MD curriculum against related AMC standards. » Review global best practice integration of sustainability and climate health related pathophysiology teaching and learning into MD curriculum. » Resource MD curriculum updates incorporating co-design principles involving students and other stakeholders. » Support incorporation of sustainable healthcare and climate health principles into educational activities delivered at our clinical schools.
Expand sustainable healthcare, climate health and planetary health MD Discovery pathways.	» Foster MD Discovery pathways for sustainable healthcare and climate health including supervisor support networks and databases. » Track and benchmark sustainable healthcare and climate health MD Discovery pathways. » Coordinate support resources for related Research and Clinical Scholar Discovery pathways.
The MMS Planetary Health Report Card Curriculum score rates highly alongside international counterparts.	» Support MMS students to complete the annual Planetary Health Report Card for Medicine. » Work to integrate recommendations from the annual Planetary Health Report Card.
Students engaged in the best sustainable healthcare and climate health research and clinical practice.	» Build on links with our partner organisations and honorary staff to provide excellent educational experiences, providing our students with access to renowned sustainable healthcare and climate health leaders and organisations.
Contribute to the generation of new knowledge in sustainable healthcare and climate health education through educational research and scholarship.	» Ensure our learning and teaching incorporates and builds on research findings, experience and understanding. » Develop proposals for new programs, electives, exchanges and other initiatives to provide inspiring sustainable healthcare and climate health educational opportunities and leadership development for students. » Collaborate with Indigenous communities in co-designing and developing culturally specific education avenues. » Ensure education avenues are applicable to rural and remote practices and communities.
Expand sustainable healthcare and climate health postgraduate education avenues (including professional development programs).	» Develop and deliver sustainability and climate health postgraduate teaching and learning opportunities (subjects and courses). » Maintain recognition as an established SusQI Beacon Site by the UK based Centre for Sustainable Healthcare.
Integrate environmental sustainability and climate health principles in existing and new postgraduate courses and workshops across MMS.	» Include environmental sustainability and climate health considerations as standing agenda items for all education committees to facilitate incorporation of relevant content into education programs, including leadership programs.
Foster and improve sustainable healthcare and climate health knowledge and literacy through education events across MMS and MDHS.	» Provide regular education opportunities and symposiums for MMS students, researchers, staff and wider community. » Continue coordination of the quarterly University of Melbourne Sustainable Healthcare Grand Rounds.
Incorporate sustainable healthcare and climate health education into the clinical training of affiliated health services.	» Co-develop resources and pathways to support inclusion of sustainable healthcare and climate health education into pre-vocational training.

Discovery and Research

Building sustainable healthcare and climate health research capacity and influence to drive health system transformation and support climate resilient communities

Through supporting innovative discovery and research pathways, the MMS will, with its collaborating partners, lead transformational research to drive sustainable practices across health systems, whilst fostering knowledge and expertise to support and care for patients and communities impacted by our rapidly changing climate.

MMS will continue to be a recognised partner in leading multi-disciplinary sustainable healthcare and climate health research programs in collaboration with the Climate CATCH Lab, the University's Healthcare Carbon Lab (HCL), Melbourne Climate Futures, the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and its Schools and other partners.

With our collaborating partners, MMS will also continue to work with local, state and national government bodies in sustainable healthcare and climate health research and evidence-based briefs for policy impact.

Promoting acceptance and showcasing integration of climate change, sustainability and related health considerations into research proposals and projects, is important to MMS, within the University, and externally.



Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre surgeons Dr Hayden Snow and Dr Jaime Duffield and colleagues during a trial of reusable gowns and drapes in theatre. Courtesy of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Discovery and Research

Building sustainable healthcare and climate health research capacity and influence to drive health system transformation and support climate resilient communities

Strategic goals	Actions
Lead and participate in cross-cutting flagship sustainable healthcare and climate health research programs to redefine and address local and global health problems.	» Foster opportunities and participation in student research projects related to sustainable healthcare and climate health. » Strengthen and translate our sustainable healthcare and climate health research to support the MDHS Faculty Impact Domains through transforming healthcare to decarbonise, whilst prioritising prevention and health equity. » Develop research avenues and resources to identify and support sustainable healthcare and climate health research projects, including through the Climate CATCH Lab, inter- and multi-Faculty, health service and industry collaborations.
Celebrate success and draw internal and external attention to the MMS's achievements in the areas of research and discovery.	» Showcase and support an annual Student Sustainable Healthcare Research Program. » Expand sustainable healthcare and climate health research communication networks, including student participation. » Engage regularly with the MMS Research Committee.
Measure and promote sustainable healthcare and climate health research projects and impact.	» Utilise the University's Impact Tracker to measure sustainable healthcare and climate health research activities. » Develop databases to identify and track existing projects and opportunities for sustainable healthcare and climate health research.
Translate sustainable healthcare and climate health research and knowledge to better clinical and community outcomes.	» Build and strengthen research partnerships between our healthcare partners and industry to integrate sustainable healthcare principles and climate health resilience into the provision of healthcare.
Co-design impactful research with, and for, Indigenous communities and partners within and outside the University.	» Create opportunities to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into sustainability and climate health research projects. » Foster avenues for climate health research to positively contribute to the lives and wellbeing of Indigenous communities.
Respond to emerging government policy and community imperatives in setting research priorities and approaches.	» Collaborate with government bodies to develop evidence-based policy briefs, strategies and guidelines to translate research for better clinical and community outcomes.
Act as an incubator for innovative, forward-looking research and funding opportunities to build sustainable healthcare and climate health research capacity.	» Seek opportunities to scale up and leverage our innovative translational research through pilot funding, incubator and social venture schemes. » Encourage related research grant applications. » Co-lead and support a cross-Faculty sustainable healthcare research and implementation priority setting workshop, and pilot projects. » Work with the University's Research, Innovation and Commercialisation (RIC) team.
Increase research collaboration internally and with government, industry and community partners to develop real-world sustainability and climate health solutions.	» Foster collaborative research initiatives within the MMS, MDHS, cross-faculty and external clinical partners and communities to co-design translational research for real world integration of healthcare sustainable models of care, practices and products and climate resilient communities. » Enable stronger relationships with, and inclusive of, our honorary staff to support innovative, quality sustainable healthcare and climate health research.

Community and Global (Engagement)

Building internal and external collaborations and communities of practice to lead and influence local, Indigenous and global health outcomes

The MMS will build on its expertise and partnerships to engage and work with communities, both local and global, to foster research, practice, education and policy approaches for sustainable healthcare, climate health, and climate resilient, sustainable communities. Transforming local, Indigenous and global health outcomes whilst developing our precincts to lead sustainable healthcare and climate health innovation and practices.

Strong partnerships and collaborations already exist and are continuing to be strengthened with our affiliated health institutions, industry partners, Melbourne Academic Centre for Health (MACH), Federal Department of Health and Aged Care, National Health, Sustainability and Climate Unit, Victorian Department of Health, Climate Health Victoria, Safer Care Victoria, Sustainability Victoria, World Health Organization, Alliance for Transformative Action for Climate and Health (ATACH), Centre for Sustainable Healthcare (UK), and others.

The University's Climate CATCH Lab is a joint initiative of the School of Population and Global Health (MSPGH) and MMS, within the Faculty of MDHS, and Melbourne Climate Futures (MCF). The Climate CATCH Lab works to '*accelerate the University's climate and human health research, engagement and education for enhanced impact*' for '*climate-resilient, sustainable and equitable communities and health systems*'. The Lab's research/activity streams include (though are not limited to) sustainable healthcare, health impacts of climate change, international engagement and adaptation, and policy and politics.



Community and Global (Engagement)

Building internal and external collaborations and communities of practice to lead and influence local, Indigenous and global health outcomes

Strategic goals	Actions
Draw on and be guided by Indigenous knowledge and values.	» Consult and work with Indigenous communities to incorporate Indigenous leadership, knowledge and values into sustainability and climate health initiatives and research.
Develop sustainable healthcare and climate health initiatives within and across the MMS's Departments.	» Develop further MMS's networks and Communities of Practice. » Increase participation of staff and honorary appointments from MMS Departments in related community of practice networks.
Strengthen collaborations across the MDHS Faculty to further build sustainable healthcare and climate health activities and community of practice networks.	» Expand University of Melbourne's Sustainable Healthcare Grand Round engagement. » Continue support of the MDHS Sustainability Student Squad. » Continue Climate CATCH Lab, MCF, HCL and cross MDHS School collaboration. » Continue to contribute to the MACH Sustainability of Health Care and Research Community of Practice.
Support environmental sustainability initiatives at University of Melbourne affiliated health institutions (helping health facilities to address their own environmental footprint).	» Coordinate, support and expand University of Melbourne's annual Health Service Environmental Sustainability Healthcare Competition, including an annual showcase. » Encourage staff and students from affiliated health institutions to participate in MMS's networks and Communities of Practice. » Develop further research collaborations with our affiliated health institutions.
Engage meaningfully with our community, including our alumni. Strengthen the connections in and across our network of collaborators, particularly across our partner network, to maximise our sustainability impact and expertise for students, staff, partners and the broader community.	» Engage with the communities that we and our partners serve, understanding their needs and co-design solutions to the sustainable healthcare and climate health challenges they face. » Facilitate community sustainability, climate and health symposiums and showcases. » Forge strong relationships with the MMS's honorary staff. » Provide avenues and events to actively engage our alumni network. » Draw on the talents, experience and leadership of our alumni to teach and inspire others within our community, including our students.
Contribute to climate resilience and improved health outcomes for the populations the MMS serves.	» Engage thoughtfully with healthcare consumers - particularly populations more vulnerable to the health risks of climate change - to ensure MMS's research and education addresses their climate health risks. » Strengthen partnerships with Indigenous communities to design health research programs and formulate curricula to strengthen their climate resilience, whilst incorporating Indigenous sustainability values. » Engage our rural health communities to partner in the development of sustainable healthcare and climate health initiatives for their needs.
Articulate and promote the MMS's leading role locally, nationally, across the Asia Pacific region and globally.	» Nurture a community of students, educators, honorary staff, researchers and leaders that foster a sustainable, climate-resilient healthcare system. » Expand our engagement with governments, partners and community to advance health and wellbeing.
Contribute to public debate and policy in sustainable healthcare and climate health related areas.	» Support research translation and advocacy to influence sustainable healthcare and climate health policy. » Increase our advocacy and partnering activities with local, state and federal government.

Community and Global (Engagement)

Building internal and external collaborations and communities of practice to lead and influence local, Indigenous and global health outcomes

Strategic goals	Actions
Grow the international presence of our people and their contribution to the global challenges related to healthcare's environmental footprint and adverse climate health impact.	» Expose more of our students to global perspectives related to sustainable healthcare and climate health in their learning and research, enabling them to be part of the related growing international workforce. » Promote connections through stronger relationships with our global partner network to provide better opportunities for our people, and grow the number of tangible, accessible and meaningful opportunities for our students, academics and researchers to engage with the global health challenges related to healthcare's environmental footprint and adverse climate health impact.
Engage in collaborative global networks of respected partners to extend the impact and reach of our sustainable healthcare and climate health work.	» Develop a plan to strengthen and expand our international partnership networks with highly ranked faculties, institutions, industry leaders, governments and influential alumni. » Create international opportunities for our students, researchers, honorary staff, alumni and partners. » Enable stronger relationships with the MMS's honorary staff in related areas to extend the impact of our work. » Provide opportunities for our international network to engage with our people, platforms and places.



Place and Operations

Working to mitigate the environmental footprint of Melbourne Medical School events, activities, research, and facilities

As the largest University School, the way in which the MMS manages its operations and research practices plays an important role in realising the University's Sustainability Plan 2030 ('The Plan') goals. The Plan's roadmap includes the University to be certified carbon neutral by 2025 and have a climate positive status by 2030.

Through demonstration of its operations, the University is acting as an important catalyst to encourage equally ambitious climate action by others. The MMS is well placed to contribute, lead and influence this action, both within the University and more broadly, through its expertise, advocacy, actions, reputation and close ties with its affiliated institutions and partners.

Strategic goals	Actions
OVERALL Achieve carbon positive status by or before 2030 aligned to The University's Sustainability Plan 2030.	» Develop a MMS roadmap to achieve carbon neutrality. » Ensure all MMS operational and governance committees have a sustainability standing item and committee member representation/expertise. » Establish a designated staff role to coordinate sustainability policy and activity at the school or faculty level.
Events	Actions
Work towards MMS events being carbon neutral, with the specific goals: » 50% of School events carbon neutral by 2028. » MD Student Conference carbon neutral by, or before, 2028.	» Integrate the University's Sustainable Events Guide into the planning of all School events by 2028.
Activities	Actions
Reduce the MMS's travel carbon footprint.	» Identify and minimise low value air travel, whilst maintaining global connections in a low carbon way. » Ensure support for high quality video conferencing and immersive experience to facilitate remote connection.
Require sustainability standards for food and beverage purchasing and handling across all MMS activities.	» Develop and install a food and beverage sustainability guide for all School activities. » Promote food and beverage environmentally sustainable initiatives such as, meat-free or no red-meat days.
Ethical, sustainable procurement of goods (products) and services.	» Embed principles for ethical and sustainable consumption and service provision into operations and procurement practices aligned to the Sustainability Plan 2030 targets. » Work to reduce waste to landfill to 10 kg per person (as per Sustainability Plan 2030).

Place and Operations

Working to mitigate the environmental footprint of Melbourne Medical School events, activities, research, and facilities

Research	Actions
Policies to minimise the environmental footprint of MMS research activities.	» Develop MMS sustainability guidelines for research and innovation projects. » Adapt Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) protocols for research projects and activities.
Equip researchers with the knowledge and skills to integrate sustainability into research practices and proposals.	» Collaborate across MDHS to develop education pathways and tools for researchers to integrate sustainability principles into their projects. » Provide guidance and tools to assist Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) inclusion into MMS research proposals. » Work to mitigate the carbon footprint of clinical trials to advance research practices and funding proposals.
Majority of research laboratories engaged in a 'Green Lab Certification' initiative.	» Promote Green Lab Certification initiatives within MMS research labs.
Facilities	Actions
All new MMS capital building developments are of the highest possible energy efficient rating and all-electric.	» MMS commits to energy-efficient, all-electric design for all new capital building developments.
All MMS facilities are powered by renewable electricity by 2025 (aligned to the University's plan).	» MMS commits to renewable electricity to all sites by 2025 (aligned to the University's plan).
MMS works towards a date for facilities to no longer be supplied by methane gas.	» Develop a refurbishment plan to transition existing buildings to an all-electric power supply.
Recognition and support of greenspaces and biodiversity within MMS facilities.	» Develop a MMS greenspace plan aligned to the University Sustainability Plan 2030 for each campus to increase biodiversity by 2030.
Improved efficiency of water use.	» Decrease consumption of potable water in conjunction with the University Sustainability Plan 2030.





Melbourne Medical School
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
University of Melbourne

T: +(61 3) 8344 8049

E: mms-enquiries@unimelb.edu.au

W: <https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au>

CRICOS 00116K