



The Association  
of Commonwealth  
Universities

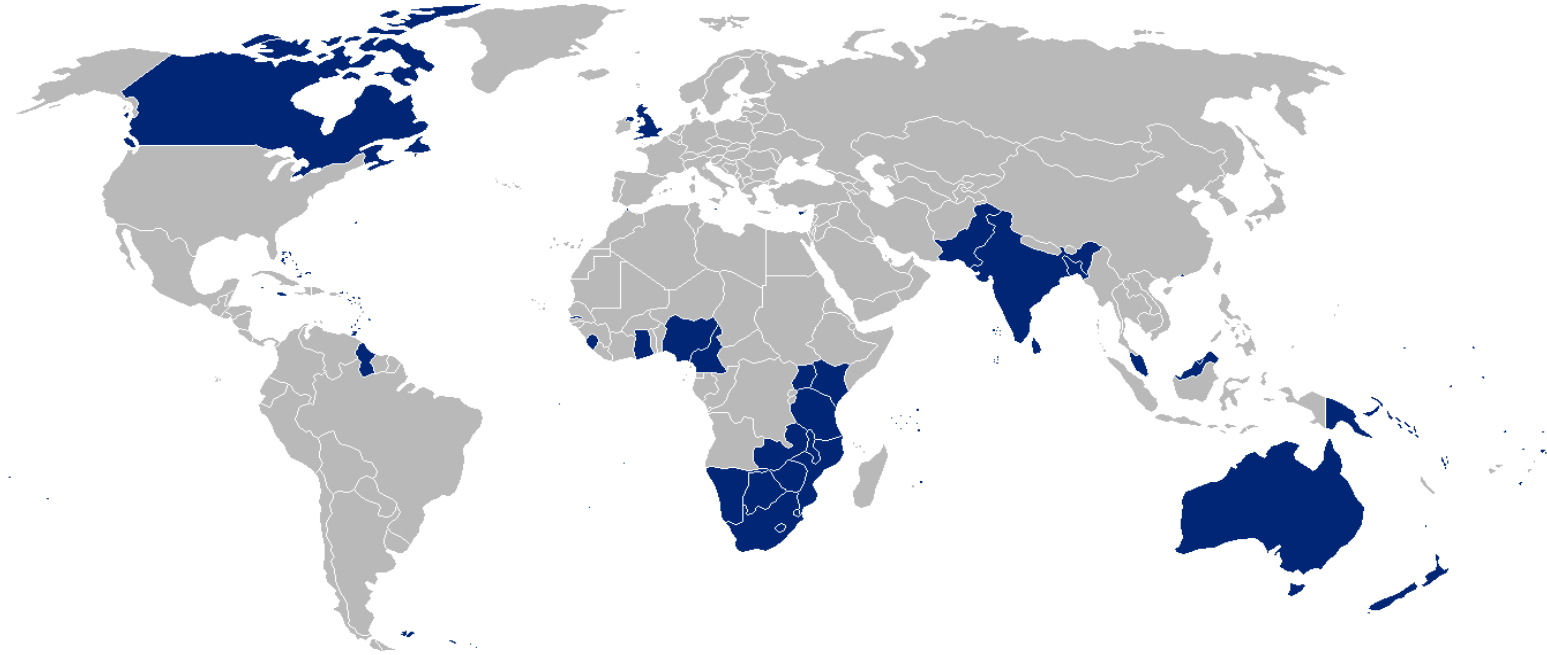
**THE ACU: BUILDING A BETTER WORLD  
THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Association of Indian  
Universities Annual Meeting  
2023**

**For the lives we can lead**



# THE ACU: A GLOBAL NETWORK OF 500 UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH



**Est. 1913**

**60+ years'**

expertise managing major  
government scholarship schemes

**£700k** Annual awards in  
grants and scholarships

**500+** member universities; **66%** in low and middle income  
countries; **including most** of the world's small states



Queen Elizabeth  
Commonwealth  
Scholarships



# OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **SHAPING POLICY:** To champion the power of higher education to improve lives
- **STRENGTHENING CAPACITY:** To support the long-term vitality of universities
- **CONVENING THE SECTOR:** To engage and connect universities across borders, and promote collaboration among them
- **SEEDING CHANGE:** To deliver educational opportunities that make a positive and lasting difference
- **BEING A WORLD-CLASS ORGANISATION**

## Commonwealth Charter: Values



1. **Democracy**
2. Human rights
3. International peace and security
4. Tolerance, respect and understanding
5. Freedom of Expression
6. Separation of Powers
7. Rule of Law
8. Good Governance
9. Sustainable Development
10. Protecting the Environment
11. Access to Health, **Education**, Food and Shelter
12. Gender Equality
13. Importance of Young People in the Commonwealth
14. Recognition of the Needs of Small States
15. Recognition of the Needs of Vulnerable States
16. The Role of **Civil Society**

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# A COMMONWEALTH OF OPPORTUNITY

- Vibrant voluntary network of 56 **developing and developed countries** across 6 continents with a combined population of 2.4 billion, of which more than 60% is aged 29 or under;
- **Uniquely diverse:** Commonwealth member nations are among the world's **largest and smallest**
- 24 members are Small Island Developing States
- One of the few **international networks** not based on geography, defence, or economic status
- A **common language and systems** offer a natural advantage
- **ACU only representative voice** for higher education- Engage Commonwealth Governments, **influence and shape policy** with and for our members
- Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting- **taking place in Samoa 2024**





# HOW WE WORK WITH MEMBER UNIVERSITIES



## **Policy representation, profile and platform**

Use accredited status to champion higher education and offer platform for ACU members within global policy forums and profile through media



## **Capacity through collaboration**

Through networks and communities, leverage strengths of global network to support on strategic priority areas and share expertise and resource. ACU measures benchmarking tool for members



## **Partnerships and programmes**

Secure support and investment from strategic partners, governments and funders to deliver capacity strengthening programmes and mobility opportunities

# SPOTLIGHT ON INDIA

- **159 members (incl. 5 Founding members)**
- **2 Council members**
  - Professor Shalini Bharat, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
  - Professor Sandeep Sancheti, Marwadi University
- **3 Regional Committee members**
  - Professor C Raj Kumar, OP Jindal Global University
  - Professor Balvinder Shukla, Amity University
  - Lt Gen Dr MD Venkatesh, Manipal Academy of HE



The Association  
of Commonwealth  
Universities

# PARTNERS



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITIES  
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES BUREAU



The Commonwealth



Australian Government



Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy



ARUA  
African Research  
Universities Alliance



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING



COMMONWEALTH

Enterprise and Investment Council



Centre for Environment  
Fisheries & Aquaculture  
Science



AUF  
AGENCE UNIVERSITAIRE  
DE LA FRANCOPHONIE



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

# PROGRAMMES

Blue Charter Fellowships



COMMONWEALTH  
FUTURES  
CLIMATE  
RESEARCH  
COHORT

circle



Long-term EU-AU Research  
and Innovation Partnership  
for Food and Nutrition Security  
and Sustainable Agriculture



pebl  
PARTNERSHIP FOR ENHANCED  
AND BLENDED LEARNING

OCEAN COUNTRY  
PARTNERSHIP  
PROGRAMME  
SCHOLARSHIPS

NEW: COMMONWEALTH VIRTUAL  
EXCHANGE - AN INTERCULTURAL  
LEARNING PROGRAMME

# ACU GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

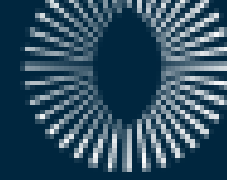
We award **GBP 700k** in grants and scholarships annually to university staff and students to promote **international mobility** and **collaboration between members**.

- **ACU Fellowships** (academic and professional staff)
- **Early Career Grants** (researcher training, conferences)
- **Summer School** (student grants)
- **Virtual Mobility Project Grants**



The Association  
of Commonwealth  
Universities





The Association  
of Commonwealth  
Universities

# ACU India Roundtables

A series of events bringing universities together from India, and across the Commonwealth, to discuss issues critical to higher education in the country. The Roundtables will focus on the themes of student exchange and mobility, sustainable & equitable partnerships, and digitalisation & the future of work.

27 – 31 March 2023



# ACU SUMMER SCHOOLS

A forum for students from across the Commonwealth to discuss multidisciplinary issues of global importance to create a better future

## ACU Summer School 2023

- Host: **Stellenbosch University**
- Theme: **Truth and reconciliation** - from apartheid to transitional justice
- **40 students** from South Africa and the Commonwealth learning together



UNIVERSITEIT  
iYUNIVESITHI  
STELLENBOSCH  
UNIVERSITY



# COMMONWEALTH VIRTUAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

*Addressing global challenges through intercultural collaboration*

10 participating universities

50 UG students

8 weeks of learning

5 countries

Main programme  
designed by



In collaboration  
with



Participating  
universities



Sponsorship  
from

NORTHERN CONSORTIUM

A **mobility programme for members** that builds on member expertise and ACU's track record in delivering in-person and virtual summer schools.

- Employability and leadership skills
- Global challenges linked to SDGs
- Underrepresented groups - strong WP angle

# ACU MEASURES

A survey of **95 universities in 29 countries**, ACU Measures enables universities to **benchmark** and contextualise their own research activities, **learn and share best practice** from their peers in an anonymous and non-competitive way.

Designed in consultation with members the survey provides **rare insight into different types of research activities** and support structures that exist across the ACU's membership and provides unique insight into the higher education research landscape, on themes such as:

- gender equity
- research funding
- research support mechanisms
- institutional research strategies, and more

# ACU MEASURES – IN THE MEDIA

**\*Research** Professional News

## Commonwealth survey highlights research funding disparities

By Linda Nordling

Share [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [e](#)



University World News   
THE GLOBAL WINDOW ON HIGHER EDUCATION

GLOBAL

## Stark inequalities across Commonwealth research ecosystems

Nic Mitchell 17 February 2023

[Share](#) [Tweet](#) [Share 2](#)

Stark inequalities exist in the higher education research ecosystems across Commonwealth countries, with a new report revealing significant disparities in access to funding, research support systems and gender equity between universities in richer and lower-income nations.


The snapshot report was published by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) for its members on 14 February 2023 and follows the inaugural **ACU Measures Supporting Research Survey**, an online benchmarking service that took evidence from 95 universities in 29 countries from across (British) Commonwealth countries.

**fe news**

## Global ACU Measures Survey reveals stark inequalities in the higher education research landscape

FE News Editor  
February 15, 2023

0 Comments



Combined reach: 280,000

# MEASURES: SUPPORTING NETWORKS

- 1** a survey which is co-created by each network to identify the current issues and landscape relevant to each
- 2** a dynamic and practical tool which allows members to see how they benchmark against their peers
- 3** a data-set which will allow us to tell the story of the Commonwealth HE sector to a range of audiences

The findings shared with the Steering Committee's and Regional Committee's are just **the beginning of a conversation between the ACU and its members**

**What is causing these disparities?**

**What can Members do to help themselves**

**What can the ACU do to help its Members**

The answers to these questions are to be addressed by the ACU and our Members in conjunction with each other

Less frequent surveying will allow us to deliver quality outputs and effectively monitor and identify **positive changes over time**

# GET INVOLVED

- Participate in **ACU policy networks**
- Join ACU events to **network with members**
- Use the ACU network to **create new partnerships** and **access knowledge** and **benchmarking data**
- Join **communities of practice** for research staff and administrative staff
- **Attend and host** ACU Summer School
- **Represent the ACU** at global policy forums, including CHOGM Samoa 2024



**VISIT: [www.acu.ac.uk](http://www.acu.ac.uk)**

**EMAIL: [membership@acu.ac.uk](mailto:membership@acu.ac.uk)/[india@acu.ac.uk](mailto:india@acu.ac.uk)**

**FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: [@The\\_ACU](https://twitter.com/The_ACU)**

**READ OUR STRATEGY DOCUMENT:**

**[www.acu.ac.uk/about-us/acu-strategy-the-road-to-2030](http://www.acu.ac.uk/about-us/acu-strategy-the-road-to-2030)**



The Association  
of Commonwealth  
Universities