



COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION

The CASE Asia-Pacific Leadership Award recognises CASE member institution heads, presidents, chancellors, system heads, or other campus chief executive officers for outstanding efforts in promoting and supporting education and institutional advancement. Overall, nominees must demonstrate the ability to actively support advancement, create a vision and inspire others, establish a positive image for their institution while leading it to higher levels of success, increase their institution's stature in the community, and encourage innovation among employees.

Citation for 2020 CASE Asia-Pacific Leadership Award Recipient

Professor Paul Wellings CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, University of Wollongong

Professor Paul Wellings has three outstanding qualities – vision, leadership and commitment. In institutional advancement, he pursues this vision with clarity, integrity and optimism, as he has a profound understanding of the strategic role that advancement plays in institutional achievement.

Professor Wellings is a long-term supporter of the advancement profession and has been deeply involved. He has pioneered the role of advancement in tertiary education for newer universities, provided personal philanthropic support and supported policy structures at the national level.

As Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University from 2002-2012, during a period of significant growth in the United Kingdom's higher education sector, Professor Wellings understood how philanthropy could drive institutional achievement when he became involved in a task force chaired by Sir Eric Thomas, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol. This task force, appointed by the British Government, authored the influential Thomas Report on voluntary giving to higher education.

Bringing his knowledge and understanding of advancement to the University of Wollongong, he recognised that the University too had the potential to be strengthened through the professional and systematic framework of advancement. He strengthened the Alumni Team, creating opportunities for offshore engagement, and included strategic alumni relations as a goal within the university-wide strategic plan. Alumni is now one of the fastest growing areas with an annual growth of 8%.

He initiated an avenue for USA-based alumni to give to the University by establishing the UOW USA Foundation. He regularly supports affinity groups to raise funds for student equity scholarships, engaging and giving alumni the opportunities to stay connected and contribute to the University.

Professor Wellings has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to philanthropy, beginning very early in his tenure when the University received its largest gift of AUD 7 million from the Abbott Foundation for the Early Start Initiative. Though he inherited the Early Start proposal from his predecessor, it was his support and effective implementation that raised the profile of Early Start, inspiring the Abbott Foundation to continue to provide support beyond the original commitment.

With a donor-centric approach, Professor Wellings regularly engages with donors, making time available and travelling great distance to strategise bespoke philanthropic programmes that also align with the University's strategic priorities.

His ability to build trust, respect and goodwill with donors is evident in some of the most noteworthy gifts, including the gift from the McKinnon Walker Trust, where the allocation of the annual funds from the endowment are at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor to support new programmes and opportunities for the University. In a world where donor-directed gifts are becoming more complex and focused, the donors gave a vote of confidence in Professor Wellings' leadership.

More recently, Professor Wellings strategically led the University's transformative gift of AUD 50 million from the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation. From the very beginning of discussions with the Ramsay Centre, he outlined a distinctive vision for the Bachelor of Arts Western Civilisation, illustrating his understanding of working with donor intent and strategic alignment within the University.

Professor Wellings is a highly visible leader to the University community from an advancement perspective, at the end of 2020 raising AUD 100 million in philanthropic income during his tenure. He has an incredible ability to thread together the numerous moving parts to create a rich tapestry of organisational advancement. He takes the civic role of the University seriously. When the University excels, the community gains strength. Due to this deep sense of partnership, the University has had an increased ripple effect, adding weight to its institutional philanthropy.

In recognition of Professor Wellings' outstanding achievements in building a strong culture of advancement at the University of Wollongong and his inspiring leadership in aligning advancement with the University's strategic priorities, creating a regional university that is ambitious, enterprising and delivering high impact academic programmes and research, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education proudly presents Professor Paul Wellings with the CASE Asia-Pacific Leadership Award.