


IMPACT REPORT

2025



Innovation
Central Brisbane

A collaboration led by  CISCO

FOUNDATION PARTNERS



PART OF THE

NIIN National
Industry
Innovation
Network

The QUT community acknowledges that our university stands on
Aboriginal lands, the country of the Turrbal and Yugara people,
lands that were never ceded.

We pay our respects to their elders - past, present and emerging - and
thank them for their wisdom, forbearance and spirit of sharing.
We respectfully recognise the role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander people play within the university and in the wider community.
We celebrate that the lands on which we study and work have
always been places of learning, research and engagement.

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Innovation Central Brisbane

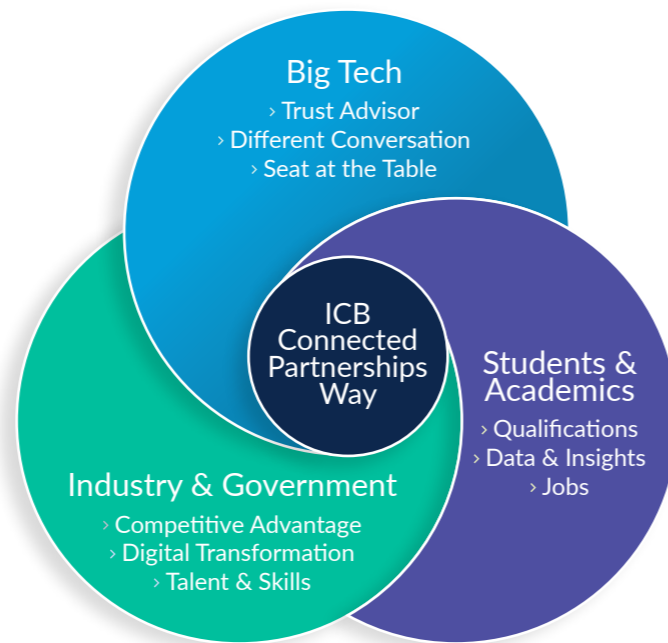
Innovation Central Brisbane (ICB), co-founded in 2022 by Cisco and Queensland University of Technology, is an innovation lab located at QUT's Gardens Point campus in the heart of Australia's next Olympic city, Brisbane.

As a founding member and the Queensland lead of Cisco's National Industry Innovation Network (NIIN), ICB is part of an Australia-wide network of Innovation Centrals providing access to a national platform of universities and industry partners enabling knowledge sharing and collaboration on digital innovation at scale.

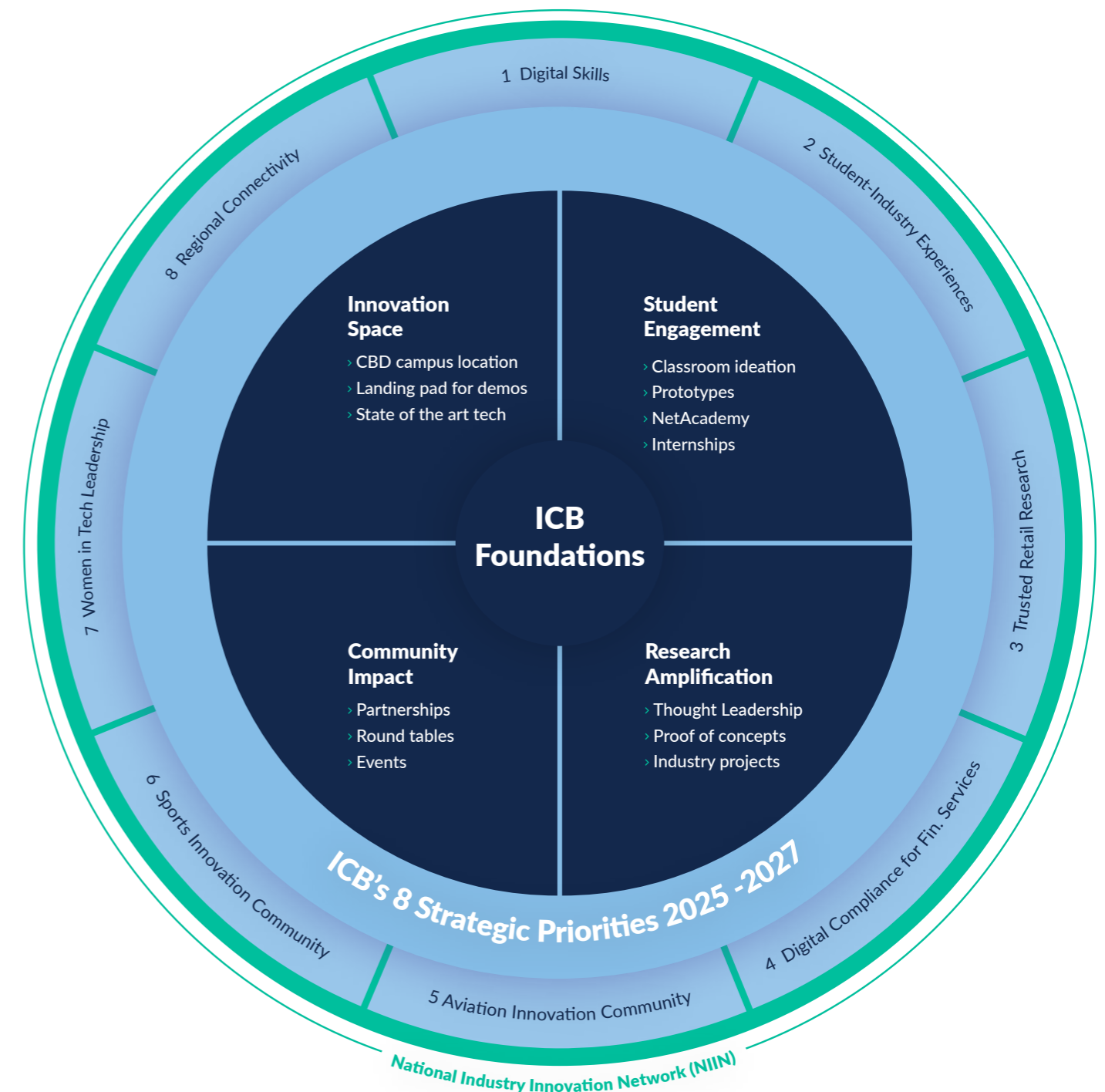
ICB's purpose is to accelerate Australia's digital transformation success and build digital skills for a thriving economy.

We do this by providing space for an innovation sandpit, access to technology, talent and a global community, and expert ideation facilitation to accelerate collaboration and innovation.

At ICB, industry and government work in connected partnership with big tech, researchers and students to explore innovation opportunities, build rapid prototypes, and design technology solutions that solve real-world problems.



Innovation Central Brisbane's Strategic Model



Vision

To be a globally recognised leader in connected partnerships that accelerate innovation, build digital skills, and create opportunities for shaping Australia's future.

Mission

To create a thriving innovation ecosystem built on connected partnerships as an active member of the National Industry Innovation Network (NIIN), to propel Australia forward through jobs, digital skills, and innovation success.

National Industry Innovation Network

The National Industry Innovation Network (NIIN) is one of the largest industry-university innovation ecosystems in Australia. Established in 2020 and anchored by globally leading technology company Cisco, the NIIN is a collective of universities, industry, and technology partners driven by one goal: to realise digital opportunities that benefit the lives of all Australians. Through its network of Innovation Centrals, Research Chairs, Specialised Centres, and Alliances, the NIIN fosters collaborations that accelerate innovation, develop digital skills, and create transformative opportunities to solve problems of national significance at scale.

The NIIN Footprint

- 11 University Partnerships
- 300+ Students engaged
- Cyber Security Alliance
- 5 Specialised Centres
- 250+ Industry Projects
- Health Alliance
- 7 Innovation Centrals
- 7 Research chairs
- Skills and Talent Development



ADELAIDE

- Flinders University
- THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE
- Innovation Central Adelaide
- Digital Health Research Chair
- Cisco-Flinders Digital Health Design Lab
- Networking Academy

BRISBANE

- QUT
- THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
- Innovation Central Brisbane
- Trust, Retail & Logistics Research Chair
- Securing Future Networks Chair
- UQ Centre for Future Networks
- Networking Academy

CANBERRA

- UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
- Innovation Central Canberra
- Critical Infrastructure Research Chair
- Networking Academy

MELBOURNE

- RMIT
- LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
- Innovation Central Melbourne
- IoT & AI Research Chair
- Centre for AI and IoT
- Cisco-RMIT Health Transformation Lab
- Networking Academy

PERTH

- Curtin University
- Innovation Central Perth
- Networking Academy

SINGAPORE

- Curtin Singapore
- Innovation Central Singapore
- Networking Academy

SUNSHINE COAST

- UniSC
- Digital Health & Ageing Research Chair
- UniSC Health Productivity Lab
- Networking Academy

SYDNEY

- UTS
- Innovation Central Sydney
- Renewable Technology and Sustainability Chair
- Networking Academy

2025 IMPACT

2400+ Students Engaged
1750+ Visitors to ICB

Industries Engaged



Government



Retail



Education



Sport



Healthcare

2900+
Email & LinkedIn Subscribers

10 Digital prototypes built

489
New LinkedIn Followers

93,000+
Impressions

2,500+
Reactions

5
Workshops

2
Hackathons

2
Cisco Guest Lectures

56
Events



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Student Engagement Highlights



Sports Innovation ProtoComp

Our 2025 Sport Innovation ProtoComp brought together 25 QUT students for a three-month innovation journey delivered in partnership with QUT Sport. Working closely with industry and government mentors, students developed digital solutions to improve participation, accessibility and engagement across Queensland's sporting landscape as the state prepares for Brisbane 2032. The program strengthened capability, connection and hands-on learning, giving students a real opportunity to shape the future of sport.



MasterTech at Cisco Live

Three QUT students, Kailah Rushton, Long Le and Jasdev Bedi, represented ICB in this year's MasterTech challenge, a national competition facilitated by the National Industry Innovation Network and sponsored by Coles Group. After ideating from ICB, the students travelled to Cisco Live Melbourne where they developed prototypes live on the NIIN stand and pitched their concepts on stage. Guided by Cisco and Coles mentors, the experience strengthened their industry connections and showcased the depth of talent emerging from ICB's student programs.



Team ReVRlution

Emerging from the Semester 1 Sport Innovation ProtoComp, Team ReVRlution continued their momentum with an immersive VR solution designed to support greater participation and inclusivity in sport for wheelchair users. Since completing the program, the team has showcased their prototype at Cisco Live Melbourne and demonstrated it to the Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Hon Timothy Mander.

Classroom to Boardroom

ICB collaborated with Unit Coordinators of QUT Business School's first-year Future Enterprise Unit to engage 2280 students to develop innovative solutions addressing real-world technology challenges for industry partners Motor Accident Insurance Commission and Mater Foundation. Cisco provided the technology 'feasibility' guest lectures and students pitched their solutions to the industry partners.



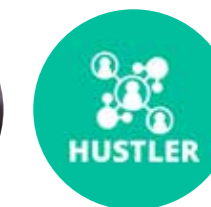
Cisco Girls in ICT Day

Cisco Girls in ICT Day opens doors for young women to explore future pathways in technology. This year, we hosted 60 students from six Queensland schools at QUT for a hands-on cyber security challenge led by Cisco's Brisbane female team and supported by QUT High School Engagement. The experience sparked confidence, curiosity, and new possibilities, with many students leaving inspired to see themselves in tech.



NTT Early Careers Program

ICB partnered with NTT DATA to create new pathways for QUT students through its 2025 Early Careers Program. Of the 11 applicants invited to NTT's assessment centre, 10 were from QUT, and four were ultimately successful, with two interns and two graduates offered roles for 2026. It was a standout outcome that highlights the strength of ICB's talent community and the growing opportunities available through industry collaboration.



Industry & Research Highlights



Industry Highlights

QLD Cisco Impact Report Launch

We proudly supported the launch of the Cisco Queensland impact report, a deep dive into Cisco's commitment to digital skills, cyber security, health innovation and smart infrastructure across Queensland. The event brought together 100 leaders from across government, academia, and industry at Queensland Parliament to spotlight the role of partnerships in accelerating inclusive and innovation.



Women of Cisco Top Female Talent

ICB partnered with Industry Fellow Nicole Hatherly to deliver the Women of Cisco Top Female Talent Program ANZ, bringing together 26 emerging female leaders from across Australia and New Zealand. The program combined a four-week Digital Skills for Impact and Influence Masterclass with a two-day hackathon at ICB, where teams developed digital prototypes responding to a future-focused trust challenge. Participants strengthened their confidence, leadership presence and digital capability, presenting their final concepts to the Cisco ANZ Vice President and senior leadership team.



Rivernet Showcase

In September, ICB delivered a showcase for our anchor partner, Rivernet Communications, in Canberra, bringing government, defence and industry leaders together to explore how secure, sovereign and automated infrastructure can strengthen Australia's AI and DevOps future. The session featured expert presentations on infrastructure-as-code, AI-driven observability and the role of Rivernet in supporting resilient communications for government and critical service providers.

Active Member of Queensland

ICB continued to contribute to Queensland's innovation community through active membership with Women in Digital and the Queensland Futures Institute (QFI). Throughout the year, ICB engaged with QFI's policy, innovation and leadership forums, connecting with business, government and academic leaders shaping Queensland's economic and digital future. These memberships strengthened ICB's presence across the state's innovation landscape and supported ongoing conversations about digital capability, emerging technologies and the opportunities ahead for Queensland.



Research Highlights

Trust Trends Report

Cisco Chair in Trusted Retail, Dr Nadine Ostern, released the 2025 Trust Trends, a white paper exploring how trust is formed, maintained, and sometimes eroded in everyday retail interactions. Drawing on Australian consumer insights, Trust Trends reveals how retailers can build fairness, care and confidence into digital touchpoints, offering a timely guide for leaders navigating the future of retail technology.



APRA CPS230 Digital Compliance Research

ICB launched the white paper, CPS 230: Digital Compliance and Observability, a collaboration between QUT, Cisco and Splunk that explores operational resilience in Australia's financial services sector. Developed by QUT Faculty of Business and Law's Professor Anna Huggins, Professor Mark Burdon, and PhD Candidate Imogen Forster. The paper brings new insights to industry at a critical time of regulatory change.



ICB Ecosystem

Innovation Central Brisbane (ICB) continues to thrive through partnerships across industry, government and academia. With Cisco and QUT as our founding partners, we work together to grow digital capability, empower students and professionals, and accelerate innovation across Queensland.

In 2025, ICB strengthened an engaged innovation ecosystem supported by program partners, industry mentors and our Sport Innovation Community of Influence. These collaborators expand opportunities for students, shape innovation challenges and support the development of impactful solutions.

ICB's 2025 Partners and Collaborators include:

- › Rivernet Communications: Engaged with ICB across activities exploring secure and resilient communications, including the Rivernet Showcase in Canberra.
- › NTT DATA: Collaborating through graduate and intern pathways and shared efforts to advance digital capability for the future of work.
- › QUT Sport: Partnering with ICB on the Sport Innovation ProtoComp and related initiatives that build participation, accessibility and student-led innovation.
- › Industry Fellow Nicole Hatherly: Leading the Digital Skills for Influence & Impact program and supporting women's leadership development.

As part of Cisco's National Industry Innovation Network (NIIN), ICB contributes to a nationwide collaboration connecting universities, industry and government to amplify impact and scale innovation across Australia.

Connected partnerships remain central to ICB's momentum, creating a community that grows digital skills, explores new innovation pathways and shapes a vibrant future for Queensland.



ICB Team



Prof. Sharon Christensen
Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law, QUT

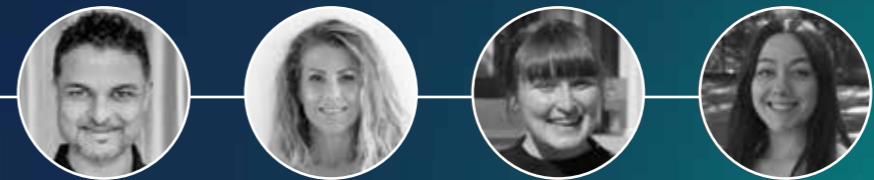
Prof. Cameron Newton
Deputy Dean, Faculty of Business and Law, QUT

Gemma Alker
Director ICB, QUT

Shangary Srikkantharajah
Director of Operations, Faculty of Business and Law, QUT

Crystal Cooke
Community Engagement Coordinator ICB, QUT

Laura Hurtado Lopez
Marketing and Student Engagement Coordinator ICB, QUT



Vibhor Pandey
Design Thinking Facilitator/HDR Intern, ICB, QUT

Nicole Hatherly
ICB Industry Fellow Brand True North

Katie McCord
Student Ambassador ICB, QUT

Kailah Rushton
Student Ambassador ICB, QUT

Cisco Activators



Reg Johnson
Director, Education and Strategic Industries, Australia and NZ, Cisco

Terry Weber
Regional Manager - QLD, NT & PNG Cisco

James Stewart
Program Manager Cisco

Ben Nicholls
Account Manager Cisco

Tim Bowden
Tech Solutions Architect Cisco

Katrina Edgar
Service Delivery Lead Cisco



Hannah Carr
Enterprise Account Executive Cisco

Maggie Morrison
QLD Account Manager Cisco

Sophie Buchanan
IoT Account Manager Cisco

Sam Lloyd-Green
Account Executive - Networking Cisco

Todd Lewis
Cybersecurity Specialist Cisco

QUT Activators



Nadine Ostern
Cisco Chair in Trusted Retail QUT

Emily Rosemond OLY
Director, Sport QUT

Paula Dootson
Associate Professor in Digital Economy, School of Management QUT

Anna Huggins
Professor, School of Law QUT

Mark Burdon
Professor, School of Law QUT

Imogen Forster
Research Assistant and PhD Candidate, School of Law QUT



Sarah Kelly OAM
Professor and Head of the Graduate School of Business QUT

Ellioroma Gardiner
Associate Professor, School of Management QUT

Ingrid Larkin
Associate Director, Work Integrated Learning, Faculty of Business and Law QUT

Jodie Pattinson
Corporate Partnership Manager QUT

Shannon Colville
Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Future Enterprise QUT

ICB Partners



Scott Kirk
Director Rivernet Communications

Gideon Street
Director Rivernet Communications

Michael Berndt
Director Rivernet Communications

Robert Thorne
Senior Sales Director NTT DATA

Magnus Ohlson
Principal Advisor NTT DATA

Elle Rowe
Senior Early Careers Manager NTT DATA

ICB Strategic Horizons

Horizon 1

2025

Scale ICB Regionally
Magnet for industry
partnerships.

Horizon 2

2027

Expand and Renew
National leader and
landing pad for innovation
in Australia and the NIIN.

Horizon 3

2032

Cisco House 2032
Cisco House at QUT
Gardens Point for the
Brisbane 2032 Olympic
and Paralympic Games.

Horizon 1

Building on the solid momentum generated over the past two years, the focus next phase is to scale ICB regionally across the NIIN and into Asia-Pacific Japan and China (APJC).

The Major Initiatives to help us achieve that include:



Scale

Expand

Elevate

Scale ICB engagement regionally across APJC

- 1 Grow Student Innovation Programs
- 2 NIIN roll out of Digital Skills for Impact and Influence Program
- 3 Partner with QUT Sport to Build Sport Innovation Community
- 4 Drive Impact of Anchor Partnerships

Expand Applied Research Innovation Initiatives

- 1 APRA CPS230 Digital Compliance for Financial Services
- 2 Aviation Innovation Community of Influence
- 3 Cisco Chair in Trusted Retail TX Series Return
- 4 Cyber Security Microcredential

Elevate ICB Activation on Campus

- 1 Co-Design and Feature Demonstrations
- 2 Advance fitout of Cisco Technology
- 3 Create additional collaboration spaces





Innovation Central Brisbane

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FOUNDATION PARTNERS



www.icentral.com.au/brisbane

Email

innovationcentral@qut.edu.au

Address

Innovation Central Brisbane
Ground Floor Library, Room V310
QUT Garden's Point
2 George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4001

CRICOS Number 00213J

PART OF THE

NIIN National
Industry
Innovation
Network