

Alliance for Social Impact: Report Launch

Building Resilient Social Enterprises in Queensland

On Thursday 4 September 2025, The University of Queensland Business School's Alliance for Social Impact (ASI) Research Hub launched the findings of its major research project on "Building resilient social enterprises in Queensland". The project was proudly funded by the Department of Trade, Employment and Training (Queensland Government) and undertaken by an ASI team of social impact researchers.

The event was held at UQ Brisbane City and brought together a large group of social sector managers, policy planners and researchers committed to strengthening Queensland's social enterprise ecosystem. Professor Brent Ritchie, Head of UQ Business School, welcomed participants and highlighted the role of UQ's ASI Research Hub, which is a cross-disciplinary team of approximately 60 researchers working across multiple streams of social impact.

The keynote address was delivered by Sarah Haigh, Executive Director, Office of Social Impact (Queensland Treasury), who shared the Government's policy initiatives to enable social sector growth.

The study, led by Associate Professor Jay Weerawardena with Dr Josephine Previte, Associate Professor Sharlene Leroy-Dyer and Dr Srin Choudhury, examined the challenges social enterprises face in pursuing their mission and identified strategic capabilities that help them grow. Importantly, the report provides practical recommendations for both enterprise managers and policy planners. Research support was provided by Dr Kumudu Jayawardhana and Birri O'Dea

A highlight of the launch was a panel featuring three CEOs — Zoe Black (Happy Paws Happy Hearts), Annie Stonehouse (Lovewell Foundation and Lovewell Café) and Ryan Salzke (Vanguard Laundry) — who shared first-hand insights into how they have built capabilities to drive social impact.

Closing remarks by Professor Peter Popkowski-Leszczyc reinforced the importance of collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

