

# THE HUNTING GROUND AUSTRALIA PROJECT



FINAL PROGRESS REPORT – JULY 2023

# CONTENTS

<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>THEORY OF CHANGE</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>CAMPAIGN STREAMS</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>THE CAMPAIGN</b>	<b>06</b>
1. CAMPUS SCREENINGS	06
2. STUDENT SURVEY	08
3. POLICIES, PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES	10
4. CONSENT & SEXUAL ETHICS TRAINING	12
5. SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING	13
6. MEDIA GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEETS	14
7. COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNING	15
8. EVALUATION	15
<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>22</b>
THEME 1. CHANGING MINDS	22
THEME 2. BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE	25
THEME 3. INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE	26
<b>SUPPORT</b>	<b>30</b>

## ACRONYMS

<b>AHRCentre</b>	Australian Human Rights Centre, UNSW
<b>Commission</b>	Australian Human Rights Commission
<b>EROC Australia</b>	End Rape on Campus Australia
<b>FSF</b>	Full Stop Foundation
<b>NSSS</b>	National Student Safety Survey
<b>NUS</b>	National Union of Students
<b>TEQSA</b>	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
<b>THGAP</b>	The Hunting Ground Australia Project
<b>UA</b>	Universities Australia

## INTRODUCTION

*The Hunting Ground* Australia Project (THGAP) was launched at the 2015 Good Pitch Australia event at the Sydney Opera House on 16 September 2015.

The impact campaign, which ran until the end of 2018, was focused on the critically acclaimed US feature-length documentary *The Hunting Ground*, by Oscar-nominated filmmakers Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering. The film chronicles the personal stories of students who reported sexual assault on campus, and the failure of a number of American universities to respond effectively and appropriately to these reports.

This is the Final Progress Report on THGAP, documenting the campaign and its continuing impact.

## IMPACT TEAM

The THGAP campaign was led by a small impact team:

- Allison Henry (THGAP Campaign Director)
- Mary Macrae (Shark Island Institute – THGAP Impact Producer)
- Anna Kaplan (Madman Entertainment – THGAP Campus Screenings Producer)
- Isabella Wright and Tamar Simons (Madman Entertainment – THGAP Campus Screenings Assistants)
- Amy Ziering (Producer, *The Hunting Ground*) – international consultant to the project.

## IMPACT CAMPAIGN PARTNERS

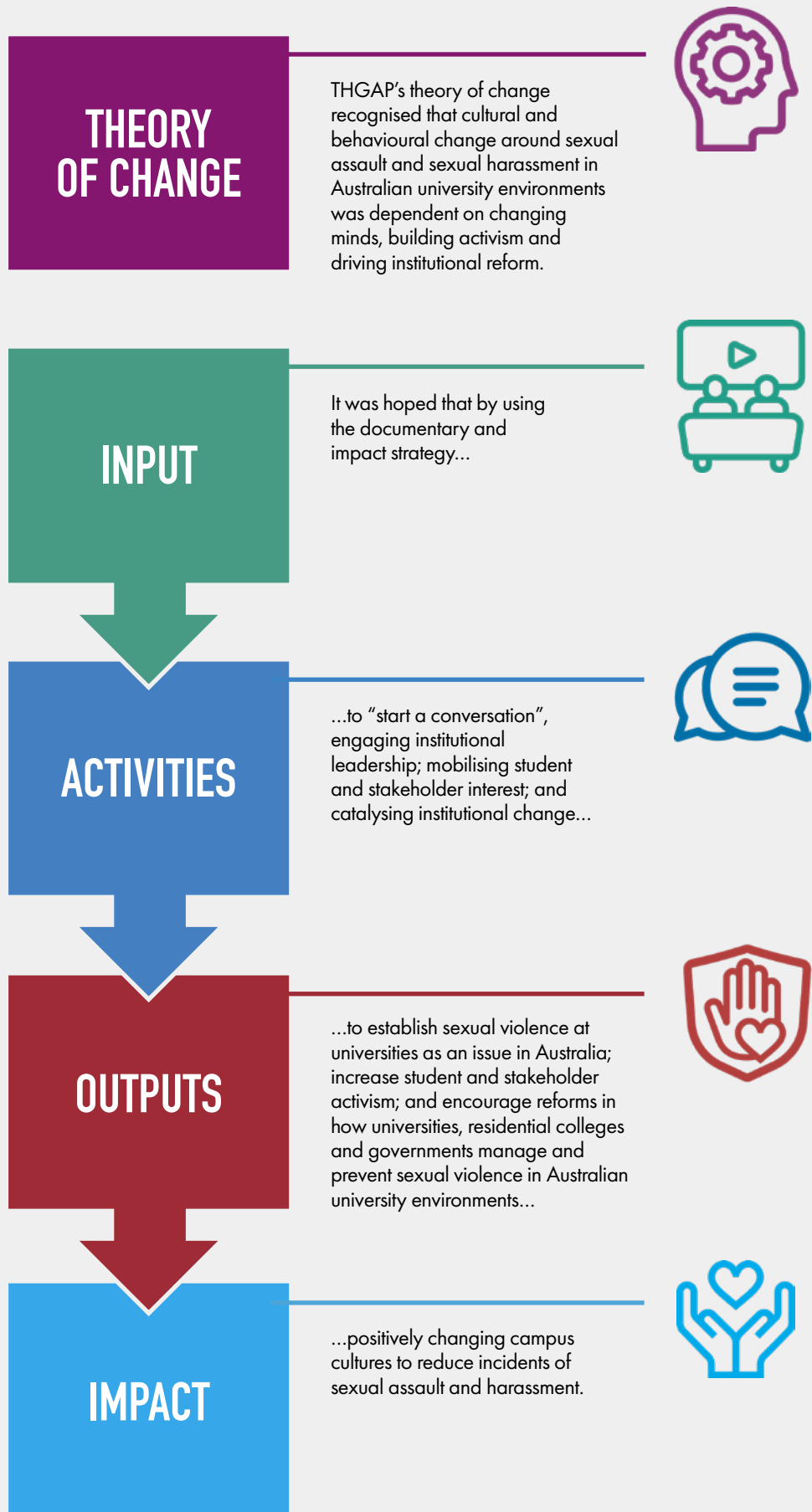
The key impact campaign partners included:

- Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW Sydney
- Full Stop Foundation
- National Union of Students
- End Rape on Campus Australia
- Fair Agenda

The project was also supported by a broad range of collaborating partners and funders including Shark Island Institute, Documentary Australia, The Caledonia Foundation and Madman Entertainment.











# THEORY OF CHANGE





# CAMPAIGN STREAMS

As the project developed, eight campaign streams emerged.

1	CAMPUS SCREENINGS	
2	STUDENT SURVEY	
3	POLICIES, PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES	
4	CONSENT & SEXUAL ETHICS TRAINING	
5	SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING	
6	MEDIA GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEETS	
7	COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNING	
8	EVALUATION	

## 1. CAMPUS SCREENINGS

The aim of our national campus screening program, which launched in February 2016, was to proactively engage the entire university sector in a discussion about campus sexual violence in an Australian context.

The screenings were supported by a range of impact materials, including a Discussion Guide and Action Toolkit.

We collaborated with Madman Entertainment, Universities Australia, the National Union of Students and individual Women's Officers on campus, to coordinate the screenings. And we had key stakeholders working in the space, such as sexual assault services and police, participate in Q&A panels after each screening.

The campus screening program was very effective in raising awareness and encouraging activism amongst students.

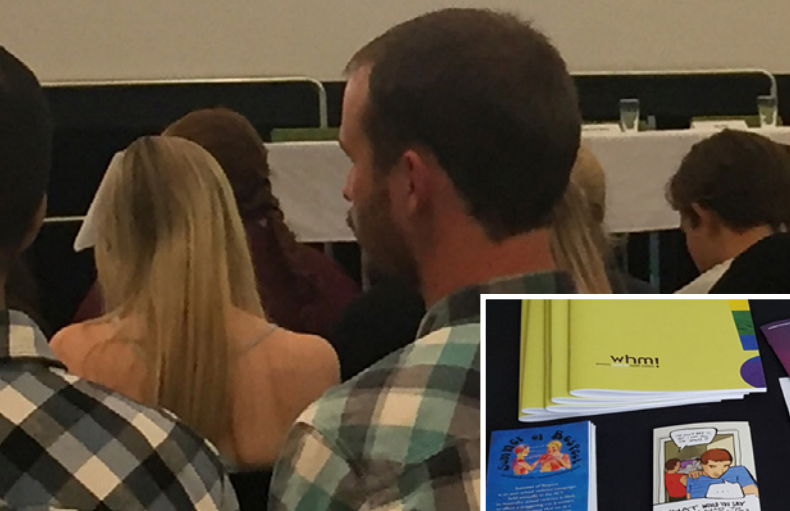




TRIGGER WARNING: THE SUBJECT OF THIS FILM IS SEXUAL ASSAULT ON U.S. CAMPUSES: SOME SURVIVORS DISCLOSE WHAT HAPPENED AND HOW IT HAS AFFECTED THEM.

IF THE CONTENT OF THIS FILM DISTRESSES YOU AND YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE, HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN AND MEN AT:

1800 RESPECT  
[WWW.1800RESPECT.ORG.AU](http://WWW.1800RESPECT.ORG.AU)





## 2. STUDENT SURVEY

We had identified the absence of data as a major gap at the outset of the project, so with the Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW, we instigated a pilot survey to be run by the Australian Human Rights Commission. Subsequently, the peak body Universities Australia contributed funding to extend the survey nationally.

In 2016, 30,000 students from 39 universities across Australia participated in the first national survey on the prevalence of, and responses to, sexual assault and sexual harassment in university settings. The survey results – along with first-hand testimony from a record number of submissions – were published in the Commission’s 2017 *Change the Course* report.

The landmark *Change the Course* report increased community awareness, led to widespread media and political interest and, ultimately, to regulatory action by the national higher education regulator, TEQSA.



Sex Discrimination Commissioner *Kate Jenkins*, THGAP Campaign Director *Allison Henry* and AHRCentre’s Professor *Andrea Durbach* at the launch of *Change the Course*, 1 August 2017





**30,000+**  
students  
responded

**39** Australian  
universities  
represented

[www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport)



One in five (**21%**)  
students were  
sexually harassed.

[www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport)



**Women were  
three times as  
likely as men**  
to have been  
sexually assaulted.

**Women were  
almost twice as  
likely as men**  
to have been  
sexually harassed.

[www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport)



**1.6%** of  
students were  
sexually  
assaulted.

[www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport)



**51%** of  
students who  
were sexually  
assaulted  
knew some  
or all of the  
perpetrators.

[www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport)



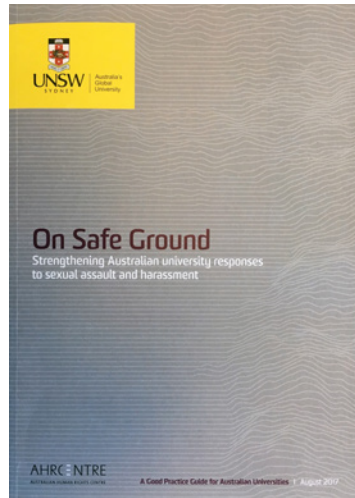
**87%** of students  
who were sexually  
assaulted at  
university did not  
make a formal  
report or complaint  
to their university.

[www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport)





## 3. POLICIES, PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES



THGAP commissioned the Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW, led by Professor Andrea Durbach, to undertake a major research study. The Centre analysed the *Change the Course* survey data and undertook extensive comparative international research to develop a model protocol and policy framework for use and adaptation across Australia's university sector.

The Centre's good practice guide, *On Safe Ground*, was released in August 2017 and included 18 recommendations on institutional responses, reporting protocols, student support services and prevention strategies.



The launch of *On Safe Ground* at the Australian Human Rights Centre, University of New South Wales, 3 August 2017



# THE CAMPAIGN

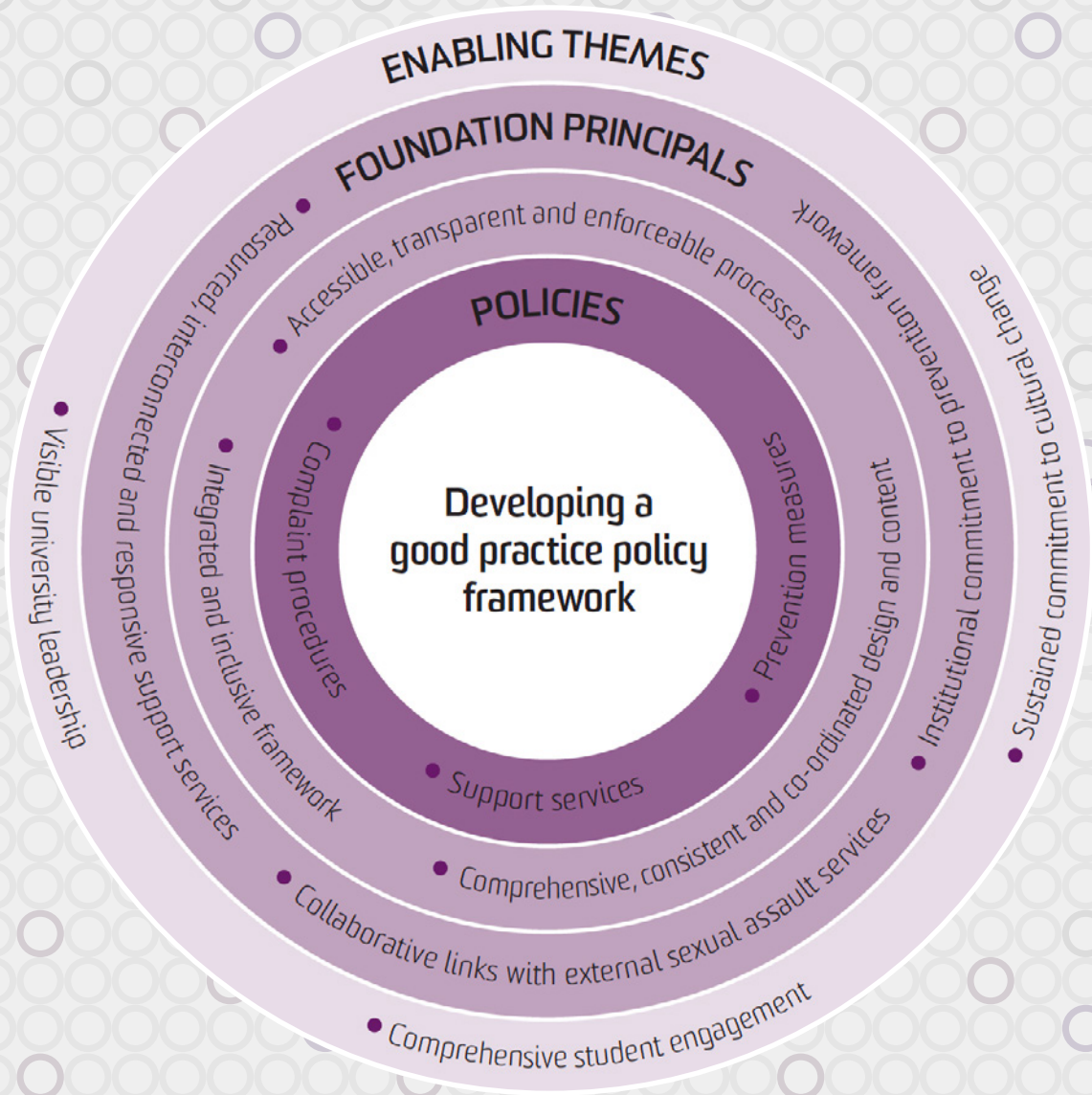
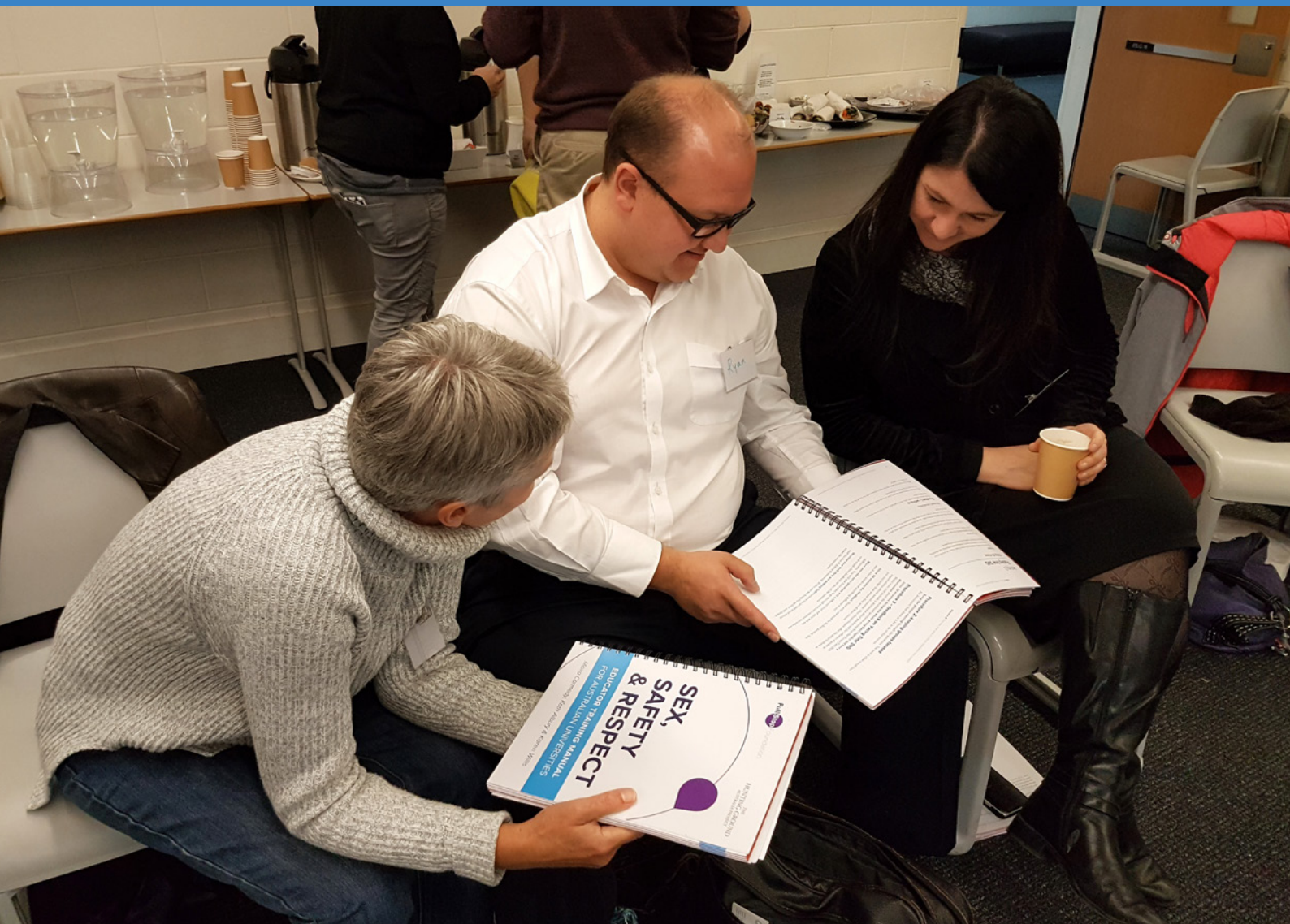


Image from On Safe Ground.

## 4. CONSENT & SEXUAL ETHICS TRAINING

THGAP collaborated with experts at the Full Stop Foundation to adapt existing training programs around healthy relationships, sexual ethics and consent to the Australian university context. The Full Stop Foundation subsequently delivered their workshops at universities and residential colleges across Australia.





## 5. SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING

THGAP partnered with digital campaigning organisation Fair Agenda to survey the more than 230 residential colleges across Australia about their provision of sexual violence prevention training to their staff and students. Fair Agenda collated and published responses from residential colleges on their website from 2016 to 2020, employing the results to generate media coverage.

Fair Agenda's campaigning was highly effective in driving improvements in residential college training programs, particularly in the utilisation of expert sexual assault services in providing that training.



FAIR  
AGENDA



University residences should be doing everything possible to stop sexual violence on campus

I AGREE

RESULTS

DETAILED RESULTS

THE ISSUE

THE SURVEY

GET INVOLVED

### The Survey

Fair Agenda is an independent community organisation made up of 36,000 Australians campaigning for a fair and equal future. We believe that no matter where you study, you should be able to trust that everything possible is being done to provide you with a safe learning environment.

In light of increasing reports of sexual violence at Australian universities, many Fair Agenda members expressed concerns about student safety on campuses.

Recognising that training in the prevention of sexual violence is one of the critical interventions needed to improve student safety, Fair Agenda sought to ensure all residences were investing in this important area of prevention. But there was very little information about where it was being provided.

So, since 2016, Fair Agenda has been contacting all residences in Australia with an annual survey to obtain information on what, if any, training each residence planned on providing for students and staff.

The survey questions were developed in consultation with sexual violence service experts, with an aim to provide transparency for parents and students around what training is provided to students in each residence. You can find the results of that survey under the 'Results' section.



## 6. MEDIA GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEETS

On the eve of the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports in August 2017 we anticipated a significant increase in media attention around the issue of campus sexual violence. THGAP collaborated with journalist Nina Furnell and the Full Stop Foundation to produce three media factsheets.

Distributed widely by the campaign and our partners, the factsheets continue to be utilised by victim-survivors and student representatives as they prepare for media interviews. The factsheets have also assisted in encouraging journalists to more respectfully approach and report on the issue of sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities.



### A FACTSHEET FOR JOURNALISTS

**“A key factor which impacts on a person’s capacity to recover from sexual assault are the attitudes they hear on first disclosure. Journalists can play a key role in helping to shape what those community attitudes are.”**

Karen Willis, Executive Officer of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia

survivors to experience backlash including judgemental or victim-blaming comments, ostracism, and harassment. Often they will also experience unsolicited disclosure from other survivors. These factors can exacerbate existing trauma and may deter those survivors from speaking further to media.

In the past some survivors have also felt that their stories were exploited, particularly if their own objectives were ignored or if their experiences were sensationalised.

When reporting on sexual assault it is important for journalists to understand the various sensitivities and concerns involved.

When reporting on sexual assault within university communities journalists frequently seek out the voices, perspectives and experiences of victim-survivors. For some survivors, the media can provide a powerful platform to tell their stories and drive change. Journalists also play a crucial role in shaping community attitudes towards sexual assault.

However, speaking to the media also carries risks for survivors. It is not uncommon for public



### A FACTSHEET FOR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student representatives are important stakeholders in public debates about sexual assault within university communities

We know that student representatives are often called on to give comment to media or to facilitate connection with other students, including victim-survivors. At times this can be challenging and knowing your rights is important.

Learning to work with media also has its benefits. Media can be powerful allies in promoting student led initiatives and drawing public attention to issues within your community, including sexual assault. This factsheet is designed to provide tips and insights into working safely and constructively with media.

#### Fielding media requests about sexual assault

Sexual assault can be a very difficult topic for many people to speak about, and not all student representatives feel comfortable or willing to speak about this subject. Do not feel obliged to respond

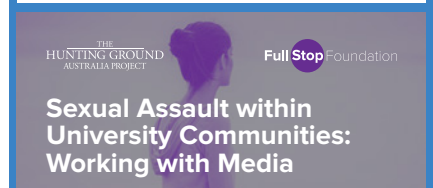
to media requests if you do not wish to. Letting a journalist know if you are unable to comment helps the journalist plan, and means they will be less likely to persist in contacting you for the story.

#### What do I say if a journalist asks to speak to survivors?

Student representatives – particularly Women’s Officers – are regularly contacted by members of the media wishing to speak to victim-survivors of sexual assault. Depending on how the request is made, this can be experienced as intrusive or insensitive for some student representatives. Here are some tips for dealing with this scenario:

**Assess the situation.** Did the journalist directly ask for a survivor’s contact details or offer to leave their own to be handed along? The nature of sexual assault is that it robs a person of power and control, and confidentiality is often a key concern. Therefore, never hand out the private information of a victim-survivor.

Instead, if appropriate, offer to take the journalist’s details to pass along to any victim-survivors who have expressed an interest in doing media.



### A FACTSHEET FOR VICTIM-SURVIVORS

For some people who have experienced sexual assault, sharing their story with the media can be a potentially cathartic or empowering experience. The media can also serve as a powerful vehicle for change.

But media stories also carry risks and it is not always possible to control every element of a story.

If you are contemplating speaking to the media, and you wish to talk that decision over with someone first you can speak to a confidential counsellor any time on [1800 572 224](tel:1800-572-224).

This factsheet will also provide some general information about the media process.

**“The media can be a powerful vehicle for change. Survivor voices matter and deserve to be heard and respected.”**

Karen Willis, Executive Officer of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia

#### When deciding to do media

**What is my objective in speaking to media? What do I hope to achieve?**

Survivors who are contemplating sharing their story with the media often wish to do so to highlight a particular issue or push for a particular outcome.

Every survivor is different and all will have different motivations and objectives in speaking to media.

Some of the common objectives include: wanting to prevent sexual violence by raising awareness about the issue; challenging victim-blaming attitudes; highlighting barriers to reporting; expressing concerns around the judicial system or low conviction rates; holding a perpetrator to account; pushing for primary prevention and consent education; breaking down silences and stigma; and empowering other survivors to come forward and seek support.

It can be helpful to take some time to reflect on what your objectives are. Having clarity around your goals can also help you identify what your expectations are, and whether they are realistic.

## 7. COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNING

Following the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, THGAP team continued to collaborate with our key campaign partners: the NUS, EROC Australia and Fair Agenda, as well as student representatives across university campuses, jointly advocated to Australia's political leadership for the establishment of an independent expert led Taskforce to track, assess and publicly report on university efforts to prevent and improve responses to sexual violence.

In 2018 the four groups met with both the Australian Education Minister Senator Simon Birmingham and Opposition Education Minister Tanya Plibersek: below.



## 8. EVALUATION

The final element of THGAP's impact strategy was our project evaluation, completed in 2023.



# TIMELINE

**27 FEB 2015**

*The Hunting Ground* premieres in the United States.

**JUN 2015**

*The Hunting Ground* screens at the Sydney Film Festival.

**2011**

NUS *Talk About It* survey released.

**2011**

**2015**

**MAY 2015**

Initial research and project design undertaken by THGAP and the AHR Centre



# TIMELINE

**AUG 2015**

THGAP commissions the AHRCentre to implement the *Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*.

**OCT 2015**

THGAP commissions the FSF to adapt existing ethics and consent training programs to the Australian university context.

**OCT 2015**

The AHRCentre and the Commission discuss the possible scope and nature of the student survey, then commence discussions with UA with a view to surveying across all 39 Australian universities.

**2015**

**16 SEP 2015**

Good Pitch<sup>2</sup> Australia at Sydney Opera House.

**18 NOV 2015**

University staff previews of *The Hunting Ground* commence.

**SEP-OCT 2015**

Initial discussions between THGAP and UA regarding campus screenings.

# TIMELINE

**FEB 2016**

Seed funding agreement between THGAP and the Commission for survey finalised.

**2 FEB 2016**

Launch of 2015 NUS *Talk About It* survey.

**22 FEB 2016**

Campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground* at Australian universities commence.

**4 MAR 2016**

FSF training materials completed.

**23 AUG 2016**

Launch of Commission's *University Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*.

**2016**

**FEB 2016**

All 39 universities agree to participate in, and contribute funding to, the national university student survey of sexual assault and sexual harassment to be conducted by the Commission.

**SEP 2016**

Fair Agenda launches first university residential survey.

**FEB 2016**

The AHRCentre and the Commission establish a working group to assist with drafting the survey instrument.

**21 SEP-9 DEC 2016**

The Commission conducts the national student survey at all 39 universities in three waves.



# TIMELINE

**JAN 2017**

EROC Australia's *Connecting the dots: Understanding sexual assault in university communities* released.

**APR 2017**

The Caledonia Foundation awarded Philanthropy Australia's 2017 Gender Wise Philanthropy Award for Good Pitch's THGAP.

**1 AUG 2017**

The Commission's national report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities, *Change the Course*, released.

**3 AUG 2017**

AHRCentre's good practice report on strengthening Australian university responses to sexual assault and harassment project, *On Safe Ground*, released.

**4 AUG 2017**

TEQSA media release 'Sector guidance to ensure safe campuses' issued.

**2017**

**JUN 2017**

THGAP releases its *Action Toolkit*.

**OCT 2017**

Fair Agenda's second university residence survey commences.

**21 JUN 2017**

*The Hunting Ground* screens on ABC2.

**DEC 2017**

The Commission's *Audit of university responses to Change the Course report – Audit 2017* published

# TIMELINE

**8 JAN 2018**

TEQSA's *Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety* published.

**1 AUG 2018**

The Commission's *Audit of university responses to the Change the Course report Snapshot of Progress: August 2018* published.

**26 FEB 2018**

EROC Australia's *The Red Zone Report* released.

**1 AUG 2018**

*Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships* – by UA, National Tertiary Education Union, Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Incorporated & Australian Council of Graduate Research – released.

**2018**

**4 JUN 2018**

TEQSA announces that, in response to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities, wellbeing and safety standards will be assessed during all higher education renewal applications.

**OCT 2018**

Fair Agenda's third university residence survey commences.

**20 JUL 2018**

UA's *Guidelines for University Responses to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment* released.



# TIMELINE

**25 JAN 2019**

TEQSA's Report to the Minister for Education: Higher education sector response to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment: An overview of Australian higher education provider responses to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment published.

**9 JUL 2020**

TEQSA's Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector published.

**14 MAY 2019**

The Commission's Change the Course – 18 month milestone published.

**SEP–NOV 2021**

Social Research Centre in partnership with RMIT's Associate Professor Anastasia Powell of RMIT University undertake second student survey.

**2019**

**2020–2022**

**6 FEB 2019**

UA's partnership with Our Watch and the Victorian Government to deliver Respect and Equality Program announced.

**16 AUG 2019**

UA announces next student survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment to run in 2020.

**27 OCT 2020**

The Commission's Change the Course – 3 year milestone published.

**22 FEB 2019**

TEQSA's Guidance Note: Grievance and Complaint Handling published.

**OCT 2019**

Fair Agenda's fourth university residence survey commences.

**23 MAR 2022**

2021 National Student Safety Survey results released.

## IMPACT THEME 1

### CHANGING MINDS

**Utilising the documentary to “start a conversation” and establish sexual violence at university environments as an issue in Australia**

THGAP’s screening program and impact campaign led to changes in audience knowledge and attitudes and significantly increased media reporting around campus sexual violence, which combined to shift sentiment amongst university leaders and political leaders.

Greater awareness and understanding in the university sector and broader community resulted in more open discussions around the issue of sexual assault and harassment in Australian university environments and recognition of the need for institutional changes to better manage and prevent campus sexual violence.

#### University of Queensland professor quits amid sexual assault investigation

By Jorge Branco  
27 March 2018 – 7:12am

A senior academic at Queensland’s largest university has quit a day before the organisation could finalise its investigation into an allegation he sexually assaulted a fellow staff member.

The man was suspended on March 16 as the University of Queensland asked him to respond to a report into the matter, before resigning a week later.

#### Women targeted in vile sex games by male students

FOR 24 hours women were targeted in a vile sex game. Now they are speaking out against the tradition at a Sydney university.

#### Vile Adelaide college student sex magazine exposed

first year university students. The most points are reserved for the sickest acts.

NATIONAL EDUCATION

#### Spike in calls to sex assault helplines as uni O-weeks begin

By Pallavi Singhal  
22 February 2018 – 5:10pm

A spike in calls to sexual assault helplines as Australian universities start orientation week activities has prompted student and advocacy groups to push for the establishment of an independent taskforce to monitor and publicly report on sexual violence on campuses.

“There’s always a distinct increase in calls during ‘O-Week,’” executive officer of Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia Karen Willis said.

JUNKEE. MUSIC POLITICS VIDEO UNI LIVING EVENTS ABOUT

CULTURE

#### “A National Crisis”: Advocacy Group Receives Over 100 Sexual Harassment Complaints In Three Days

By SAN LANGFORD 28 FEBRUARY 2018

39 SHARES

#### University of Newcastle students drink off genitals in hazing ritual

By Nick Bielby  
20 February 2018 – 7:13am

Footage depicting University of Newcastle students drinking alcohol off each other’s genitals, humiliating hazings of new college residents and games involving drinking vomit is a symptom of the culture “embedded” at the uni’s residences, an advocacy group targeting sexual violence says.





*“Building on decades of advocacy on Australian university campuses, the release in Australia of the American film The Hunting Ground dramatically raised awareness in the university sector and Australian community of sexual violence at universities. It led to acknowledgment by the universities of their responsibility to better prevent and respond to all forms of sexual violence at universities.”<sup>1</sup>*



1. Rosenthal, I. and Banks R., *An Initial Review of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response at the University of Tasmania*, March 2018, p.3.



# IMPACT





## IMPACT THEME 2

### BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

#### Increasing student and stakeholder activism around sexual violence in Australian university environments

Student leaders, survivors, sexual violence advocates and feminist activists have campaigned for decades to raise awareness of sexual violence in Australian universities, agitating for improved institutional responses. Alongside THGAP's impact campaign, with the resources available from THGAP, this activism increased exponentially. This heightened wave of student and stakeholder activism helped to make the case for universities and residential colleges to engage with the issue and acknowledge that the sexual violence is a significant issue in the Australian university sector.



Students and expert panelists, Network Of Women Students Australia screening 8 July 2016

***“The biggest impact of THGAP was bringing people together for the first time. We’d all been operating in silos, in isolation from one another. For the first time ever we had something concerted to rally around, and we had resources. We all of a sudden had the ability to meet, to come together around one particular issue, and actually work together as one functioning team instead of these disparate teams all over the country.”***

– Sharna Bremner, End Rape on Campus Australia

# IMPACT

## IMPACT THEME 3

### INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

**Encouraging reforms in how universities, residential colleges and governments manage and prevent sexual violence in Australian university environments**

Key activities pursued by the THGAP impact campaign contributed to increased institutional, political and media awareness and understanding around the prevalence of sexual violence in Australia university environments, prompting the introduction by universities and residential colleges of enhanced support services for student survivors and more visible and robust policies, procedures and training aimed at managing and preventing campus sexual violence. These efforts were accompanied by strengthened national regulatory mechanisms led by TEQSA, the higher education regulator.





*“The Hunting Ground Australia Project was really transformative in the space of university sexual assault in Australia... not only through the first national student survey and the first-of-its-kind data we had around the actual prevalence of this issue and the experience of students, but also in helping to drive media attention, engagement and awareness of how this issue was manifesting and the institutional failures from universities in prevention and response.”*

– Renee Carr, Fair Agenda

Australian Government  
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Good Practice Note:  
*Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector*

July 2020



Sign in Search The Guardian Australia edition

Culture Lifestyle More

What can The Hunting Ground teach Australia? - video



**103 RESIDENCES WILL TRAIN ALL STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR RESIDENT WELFARE TO PREVENT & RESPOND TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

FIND OUT WHICH: [FAIRAGENDA.ORG/RESIDENCES\\_SURVEY](https://fairagenda.org/residences_survey)



FAIR AGENDA

Australian Government  
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Report to the Minister for Education:  
Higher education sector response to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment

An overview of Australian higher education provider responses to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment

January 2019

## POSITIVELY CHANGING CAMPUS CULTURES TO REDUCE INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT

The Hunting Ground Australia Project (2015-2018) was highly effective in utilising the documentary *The Hunting Ground* to create a collaborative, comprehensive and unified campaign around the incidence of, and responses to, sexual violence within Australian university communities.

### **Our impact campaign was the catalyst for change.**

Following decades of advocacy efforts by student survivors, women's groups and sexual assault services being largely ignored, our impact campaign, with our partners and collaborators, was able to catalyse action across the Australian university sector.

Alongside campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground*, our impact team and partners collaborated with journalists and writers to produce regular media coverage in national news outlets.

With ongoing student and activist campaigning, we collectively established campus sexual violence in Australian universities as an issue requiring institutional attention.

The Hunting Ground Australia Project was the instigator in establishing national baseline data on the incidence of sexual violence in Australian universities and residential colleges.

The first national student survey by the Australian Human Rights Commission in 2016 finally provided the information to convince universities, residential colleges and governments that there was indeed a problem here in Australia.

In direct response to our collective campaigning, the university peak Universities Australia, created a national campaign and resources to guide the sector.

***“The Project itself pushed this issue to the top of the national agenda and we saw it being discussed in parliament, we saw federal politicians paying attention for the first time. And we’ve seen now a concerted effort from universities to continue that work, five years down the track.”***

– Sharna Bremner, End Rape on Campus Australia



**“It’s a credit to the student and community activists that all 39 universities came together to face the realities of student sexual harassment and assault in 2016, the year before the global #MeToo movement. Now all workplaces know they must act of sexual harassment.”<sup>2</sup>**

– Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner 2016-2023

## **Universities Australia apologises to victims as it releases National Student Safety Survey into sexual assault and harassment**

By Niki Burnside

Posted Wed 23 Mar 2022 at 1:32pm, updated Thu 24 Mar 2022 at 10:43am



Individual universities and residential colleges have introduced new policies, procedures and training to manage and prevent sexual violence within their institutions.

Australian universities have been required to report against the Commission’s *Change the Course* recommendations to government agencies.

The national higher education regulator TEQSA has developed detailed guidance materials to higher education providers and started to investigate complaints from student survivors.

The THGAP campaign had considerable impact in positively changing campus cultures to reduce incidents of sexual assault and harassment – but more needs to be done.

A second follow up survey, the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS), committed to by Universities Australia in 2017 and undertaken in 2021, was released in March 2022. The NSSS unfortunately indicated a concerning lack of progress in both reducing campus sexual violence prevalence rates and increasing student’s confidence in reporting mechanisms and university support services.

With a new federal government elected in May 2022, THGAP campaign partners EROC Australia and Fair Agenda continue to push for greater accountability around university responses to campus based sexual violence, actively engaging in the University Accord process and lobbying political leaders.

2. Australian Human Rights Commission, Twitter, 25 March 2023.

The topic of sexual violence can trigger traumatic memories for survivors. Survivors have the right to talk about their experiences on their own terms. If you sense that a survivor needs additional support, contact the national hotlines:

## 1800 RESPECT

Free and confidential 24/7 National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service.

Call **1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)** and ask to speak to a trauma counsellor.

[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

To find services visit:

[www.1800respect.org.au/services](http://www.1800respect.org.au/services)

## LIFELINE – CRISIS SUPPORT

24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.

**13 11 44**

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

## MENSLINE

Free and confidential 24/7 professional telephone and online support and information service for Australian men.

**1300 789 978**

[www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency Services: **000**

Police Assistance (non-emergency): **131 444**

If you are a survivor and would like to reach out to other university students and supporters:

## END RAPE ON CAMPUS (EROC) AUSTRALIA

EROC Australia works to end sexual violence at universities and residential colleges through direct support for survivors and their communities; prevention through education; and policy reform at the campus, state, and federal levels.

[www.endrapeoncampusau.org](http://www.endrapeoncampusau.org)



*If you want to make a complaint in relation to an incident:*

## AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (AHRC)

The AHRC can investigate complaints regarding sexual harassment and discrimination at universities, and attempts to resolve complaints through conciliation.

**[www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints)**

## STATE & TERRITORY ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BODIES

Sexual harassment complaints can also be made to local state/territory anti-discriminatory bodies.

**[www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/australias-anti-discrimination-law](http://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/australias-anti-discrimination-law)**

## OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICES

Where a survivor believes that a university has acted unfairly or otherwise mismanaged a sexual violence case, they may be able to make complaints to an Ombudsman office. Complaints about public universities and higher education providers can be made to the relevant state/territory Ombudsman.

International students can make complaints regarding private higher education providers to the Overseas Students Ombudsman.

**[www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints)**

# THE HUNTING GROUND AUSTRALIA PROJECT

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## GOOD PITCH AUSTRALIA

Shark Island Institute and Documentary Australia Foundation host GOOD PITCH<sup>2</sup> AUSTRALIA, and brought the first of these events to Sydney in October 2014. Since the inaugural event Good Pitch Australia has raised over \$14 million in philanthropic funding. This funding has contributed to both production and outreach funding, and has entirely financed the development and implementation of social impact campaigns, targeting a diversity of issues central to society – now and into the future.

The results have been impressive: contribution to policy, the forging of 200+ powerful strategic partnerships and alliances between community groups, the corporate sector, NGOs and policy makers; the creation of tools around issues to raise awareness and give people a way to practically engage with life-changing behaviours, attitudes and action. These results represent a high return on social capital for our philanthropic community.

[www.thehuntinggroundaustralia.com.au](http://www.thehuntinggroundaustralia.com.au)

[facebook.com/THGAustraliaProject](https://facebook.com/THGAustraliaProject)