

UN Tourism Ulysses Prize Award Ceremony (17th Edition)

University of Technology Sydney

Sydney, Australia, 19 November 2025

Professor Andrew Parfitt

Vice Chancellor and President

University of Technology Sydney

Welcoming Remarks

SPEAKING NOTES

- Thank you, Sara.
- Welcome, everyone, to UTS.
- I am pleased you could all join us on such a special occasion.
- Let me begin by acknowledging the Gadigal People – they own the land on which the campus stands, always have and always will.
- I would like to pay respect to Elders past and present and acknowledge them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for this land.
- I would like to acknowledge:
 - Mr Beka Jakeli, Director of External Relations at UN Tourism – who joins us from Spain
 - Dr Larry Dwyer, and

- His family, friends and colleagues who join us here tonight.
- It is a genuine privilege to host this event and to celebrate the awarding of the UN Ulysses Prize to Dr Larry Dwyer.
- While we will shortly hear more about the significance of this Prize, I want to reflect on what this honour means for UTS.
- This is one of the highest distinctions in tourism research globally – an honour that recognises leadership, innovation and a deep commitment to using tourism as a force for good in the world.
- UTS is proud to be associated with this prestigious award, and with UN Tourism – an organisation whose mission closely aligns with our own: to use knowledge, research and collaboration to drive sustainable development and social good.
- Although much of Larry’s body of work was undertaken during his long career at UNSW, we are very proud that he continues to contribute to the field here at UTS.
- His achievements are a powerful reminder of what research can do – how it can inform policy, shape industries and improve lives.
- Larry’s pioneering work in tourism economics and sustainable policy has transformed the way governments, businesses and communities understand the true value of tourism.
- His research has shaped how nations measure tourism’s economic impact, how they plan for sustainable growth and how they balance the benefits of tourism with the protection of culture, heritage and environment.
- In doing so, Larry has embodied the spirit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – showing how evidence-based research can promote inclusive and sustainable growth.

- This recognition also shines a light on Australia's leadership in tourism research, and on the important role of universities in addressing global challenges.
- At UTS, we bring together diverse disciplines, cultures and perspectives to find solutions that help shape a just and equitable society – whether in sustainability, climate action, economic resilience or social inclusion.
- Our role as a globally connected university is to turn research into real-world outcomes.
- Collaboration is central to how we do that – it is part of our DNA at UTS.
- Deep connections with industry and community have always been central to our unique history and identity.
- We believe in the enormous power of knowledge-sharing and working together to create positive change.
- As public-purpose institutions, universities have a vital role to play in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Just as importantly, we have a responsibility to inspire and equip our students – the next generation of thinkers, innovators and leaders – to carry this work forward.
- As Larry himself has often pointed out, tourism and the visitor economy are far more important than many people realise.
- Here in New South Wales, tourism generates more than \$40 billion annually in direct and indirect revenue.
- It provides employment for over 250,000 people and growth opportunities for our regional areas and small businesses.

- But it is about much more than revenue.
- Tourism is about connection, cultural exchange and community empowerment.
- And when managed responsibly, it supports conservation efforts, protects natural and cultural heritage, and encourages sustainable travel and eco-tourism practices.
- A significant contributor to tourism in NSW of this is also strongly linked to international students, who come to study and whose families visit them during their studies, making this a nice connector of Larry's work to his leadership in universities.
- Tonight's award is a celebration of Larry's work, and how he has deepened our understanding of tourism's contribution and its impacts.
- It also honours a career devoted to using knowledge to guide action and creating lasting, positive change.
- On behalf of UTS, I would like to congratulate Larry on this recognition.
- This award is a source of great pride not only for you and your family, but for your colleagues and the entire UTS community.
- I will now hand you back to Sara.
- Thank you.

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