

# Education and Tropical Science

## OVERVIEW

Townsville is known as the education and science hub for North Queensland. It has a concentration of world class education, training and research facilities with considerable scope to expand as an internationally recognised education provider.

The key education and tropical science facilities within Townsville include:

- James Cook University (JCU)
- Townsville General Hospital
- Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS)
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- Tafe Queensland North
- TecNQ.

Townsville’s education and training sector contributes over \$600 million (6.4%) to Gross Regional Product (GRP) each year, with technical, vocational and tertiary education services contributing around \$250 million.

Tropical science forms a core component of Townsville’s professional, scientific and technical services industry, which contributes over \$370 million (4.0%) to GRP.

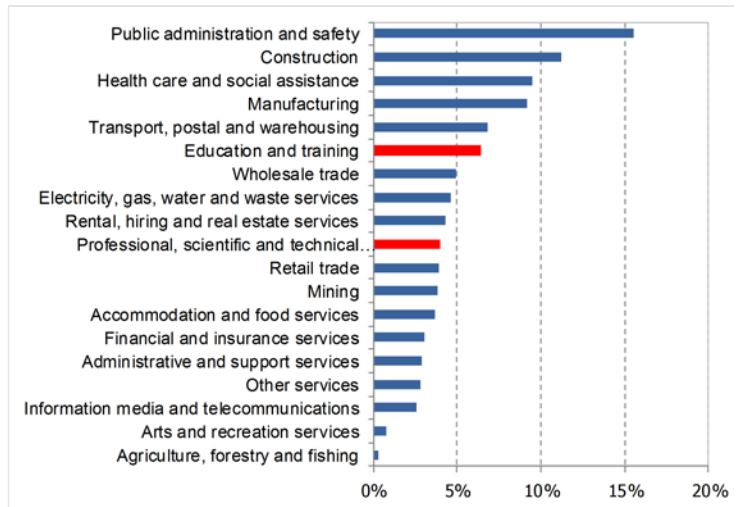
In addition to direct employment and economic activity, Townsville’s research sector has been shown to generate substantial health, safety, and productivity outcomes for the region (WRI, 2013).

## OUTLOOK

Townsville has a competitive research advantage due to its proximity to the Great Barrier Reef and its tropical environment. The region has a strong history of researching architecture for tropical conditions.

There is also increasing regional interest for research into high value aquaculture production.

Figure 1: Industry % contribution to GRP (2012/13)



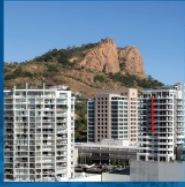
Note: Estimates based on industry contribution to GRP excluding ownership of dwellings and net taxes.  
Source: AEC

JCU is one of Australia’s leading tropical research universities, with its main teaching campus located in Townsville.

The university has experienced strong enrolment growth, averaging 3.7% per annum over the past five years to approximately 13,000 students over 2014.

JCU has a strong focus on molecular sciences, tropical veterinary sciences, and tropical health and medicine. Key research areas include communicable disease control, skin cancer, clinical medicine, indigenous health and occupational health in mining.

Expansion in tropical medical and health science is highlighted by recent research developments, and significant co-locations.



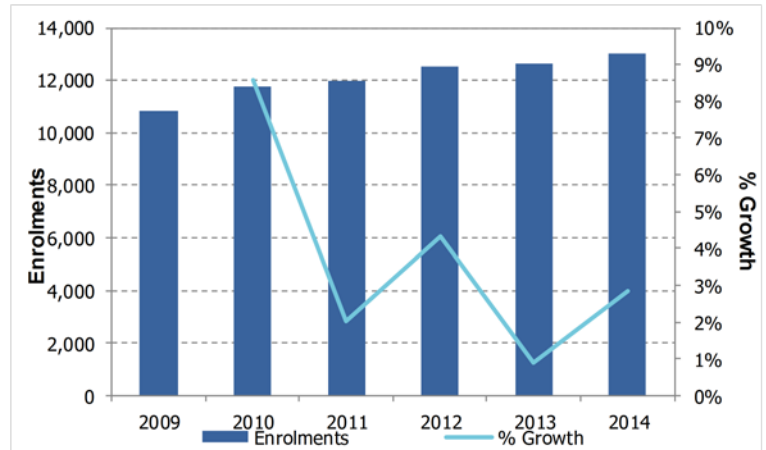
The co-location of research groups into the Townsville Campus has resulted in strategic and collaborative linkages between public health, tropical medicine and veterinary science. Key initiatives include:

- Co-location of the Townsville Hospital and the Health and Medical Precinct of JCU
- Development of the Australian Tropical Science and Innovation Precinct in collaboration with CSIRO and the Queensland Government. Key focus areas include marine microbiology and medicinal chemistry
- A Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries relating to the Australian Institute of Agricultural Sciences. The institute will have a strong focus on biosecurity issues and livestock production
- A \$40 million expansion of medicine and pharmacy facilities.

There exists considerable scope to further expand Townsville's role as a nationally and internationally recognised education provider. Central Queensland University (CQU) recently opened a Distance Education Centre based in the CBD, and JCU has significant current and longer-term expansion plans.


With its competitive research advantages, Townsville is also establishing a profile as a leading centre for innovation in tropical urban living. Key growth fields include architectural design, energy management, bio-fuels, aquaculture and tropical diseases.

Figure 2: Townsville University Enrolments



Source: JCU (2015)

## MORE INFORMATION

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