

## Embassy internship opportunities in Rome for ACU students

Australian Catholic University (ACU) students will have a rare opportunity to shadow the country's top diplomat in the Vatican as part of a new formal agreement with the Australian Embassy to the Holy See.

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis and Australia's Ambassador to the Holy See, Her Excellency Chiara Porro, signed a memorandum of understanding in Rome last week detailing a new internship program that will be open to current ACU students in 2022/2023.

The prestigious internship will see students with an interest in international relations undertake work inside the Embassy's headquarters in the Vatican for between four and 12 weeks.

Through the Rome Internship Program, students will have the chance to manage the Embassy's social media, support public diplomatic events, draft reports on developments in the Vatican, audit international meetings, and respond to inquiries from Australian departments and the public.

Professor Skrbis said the internship agreement between ACU and the Embassy marked a significant step in strengthening the university's identity in Rome.

"Her Excellency Chiara Porro represents Australia's most senior diplomatic presence in the Vatican, and I am immensely grateful that she has acknowledged ACU and our commitment to education excellence through this internship," Professor Skrbis said.

"The Rome Internship Program is an extension of ACU's commitment to deepening our place in Rome, the spiritual and administrative home of the Catholic Church, as well as our first international campus.

"I encourage all students with a keen interest in international politics and international relations to consider this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work inside one of the most important diplomatic headquarters in the world."

Ambassador Porro will welcome the first ACU student intern in Semester 2 2022.

"The Australian Embassy to the Holy See has worked closely with the Australian Catholic University's Rome campus since it was first opened in 2015, including supporting ACU's Conaci Scholarship program for Indigenous students," Ambassador Porro said.

"We have co-hosted several initiatives, including last year to mark the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

"We are pleased to further strengthen our relationship through the launch of the Rome Internship Program, which will provide ACU students with a unique insight into Australia's relations with the Holy See, and practical experience working on international issues."

Ambassador Porro is Australia's fourth ambassador to the Holy See – but second female diplomat - and the youngest person invited to be part of the Vatican's diplomatic corps.

She is also the only resident ambassador to the Holy See who has lived in the Pacific region.

Born in Italy, Ambassador Porro moved to Australia at the age of three before living in Indonesia with her family.

The Holy See first established diplomatic relations with Australia in 1973.

Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI announced the first resident ambassador, the Honourable Tim Fisher AC, during the Sydney World Youth Day in 2008.

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