

ACU enters partnership with leading university in Colombia

Australian Catholic University (ACU) has signed an agreement for academic collaboration and Exchange to support collaboration on research, teaching, and staff and student mobility with one of the oldest universities in South America.

The official agreement will promote academic and student exchanges and other collaboration between ACU and Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogota, Colombia.

Pontificia Universidad Javeriana was founded in 1623 and is one of one of the leading and oldest universities in Colombia. Javeriana is the number one university in Colombia according to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and is ranked 501-600 worldwide. The university is entrusted to the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and was named after one of the order's founders, St Francis Xavier.

Under the terms of the agreement with ACU, faculty members and researchers from both universities may have the opportunity to teach and conduct research in Australia or Colombia respectively.

Student exchanges between the two universities will also be offered each Academic Year.

The agreement will also support the two universities collaboration on Integral Ecology and Technology which is inspired and informed by the Laudato Si' Action Platform. Both universities have officially committed to Pope Francis' 7-year Journey Towards Integral Ecology as part of the Holy See's Global Compact initiative.

Other forms of academic collaboration the agreement will open up include short course collaboration, seminars, workshops and conferences, the sharing of academic publications or materials, development of joint academic programs, and inter-institutional internships.

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis and Universidad Javeriana Rector, Father Jorge Humberto Peláez Piedrahita SJ signed the Memorandum of Understanding on 25 July 2022 during an ACU delegation visit hosted by Universidad Javeriana.

Professor Skrbis said ACU already had a strong relationship with Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, most recently partnering at the Congregation for Catholic Education's 2022 Global Compact on Education in Rome.

"This formal partnership agreement builds on a rapidly growing relationship with Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, and underpins our commitment to strengthening relations with institutions in Latin America," Professor Skrbis said.

"As the leading university in Colombia, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana can offer our academics and students a world-class experience, valuable insight into the promotion of an ecological culture on campus, and a deeper understanding of service to the community.

"Our university is committed to providing the best international experiences in Catholic higher education, and I also look forward to welcoming Javeriana's students and academic staff to our eight Campuses in Australia and Rome."

Fr Piedrahíta SJ said the alliance between ACU and Javeriana would help "form citizens of the world".

"For our students it will be of enormous wealth to meet young people from the other side of the planet, with diverse cultures and to allow themselves to be challenged by the difference. Cultural diversity is a fundamental element in our integral formation," he said.

Photos for publication can be accessed [here](#).

Media Contact:

Emilie Ng, 0475 963 606 or emilie.ng@acu.edu.au