Episode 19. Imagining a university sector which provides better education for students and a more influential role in shaping our societies.

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GUEST: Dr Peter Davies professor of sustainability at Macquarie University, School of Natural Sciences and Director of the Australian Harmony Centre for Ecosystem Futures at Macquarie University.

What should a university actually prepare a young person for? A first job? A lifelong career? A changing economy? Citizenship? Climate change? Artificial intelligence? Or something much broader — the ability to understand complex problems and participate in creating a better future?

We discuss how universities could prepare students not only with technical knowledge, but also with critical thinking, collaboration, curiosity, and the ability to keep learning. We cover Peter's vision of a 2040 university, with smaller classes, more group work, broader assessment methods, and stronger connections to real-world issues. He also argues for more cross-disciplinary study, systems thinking, sustainability education, and greater partnerships between universities, government, industry, and the community.

For Sophie, the conversation has a personal dimension. Peter was one of her course convenors during her time at Macquarie University, providing an opportunity to revisit education from a different position — as a recent graduate now looking back at what university prepared her for and forward towards what future generations of students may need.

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https://open.spotify.com/episode/26uy0Y5aF7bt7hZZfgUTQR?si=2a1e69d9b5904982

YouTube:

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