

Describe the research group, its track record, its future prospects and why it has been selected for support; (max 1 page)

Future of the Professions Research Group

This proposal has emerged out of discussions between leaders of three current research groups in the Faculty of Arts and Education (two of which have cross-faculty membership). These are the Practical and Public Ethics Research Group, the Environmental & Social Justice Research Group, and the Libraries Research Group. The proposal brings together leading research already conducted in the three groups to create a new interdisciplinary focus. Professions and the bodies that represent them were once, in effect, guilds serving to protect the interests of members who provided a well-specified set of services to society. In recent decades society has placed new demands on professions. It now expects professions to abide by societally endorsed codes of ethics, ensure that members do not discriminate against any clients, and ensure that professional services are provided to all requiring them. For the most part the professions have adapted to meet these societal demands. New and emerging challenges will require many of the professions to change much further.

These emerging challenges include:

- *The global COVID-19 pandemic and potential future pandemics.* Pandemic diseases raise considerations around the responsibilities that professions have to protect societal health and wellbeing, which can conflict with traditionally understood responsibilities towards clients.
- *An aging population.* As the population ages there are less people of working age providing professional services to more people of non-working age. This demographic shift places new demands on professionals.
- *An information age.* The rapid rise of the internet has created unprecedented opportunities to improve professional practices by improving their evidence base but brings with it dangers of reliance on low quality information. The replacement of physical spaces with online ones also has major consequences for the relationships between professionals and clients.
- *Conscience and the rising demand for religious freedom.* A recognised right to conscientiously refuse to provide services used to be restricted to the healthcare professions. Other professionals, including social workers in the US, are now demanding a right to conscientiously refuse to perform professional duties, placing their consciences ahead of obligations to clients, and states are accommodating some of these demands.

How should professions adapt to meet these and other emerging challenges? The Future of the Professions Research Group will approach this topic in two related ways. Philosophical analysis will be used to address overarching questions about the future to which the professions ought to aspire, while social scientific research will examine ways in which two particular professions, social work and librarianship, may be able to adapt to meet new and emerging challenges. Charles Sturt is a leading educator for both these professions and thus particularly well-placed to explore the implications of their challenges and to disseminate and implement the results of this exploration. The two approaches will inform one another.

The proposal:

- Provides an interdisciplinary focus for high-quality academic research.
- Has significant potential to generate grant income, building on past successes in Category 1 funding in applied ethics, Category 3 in social work, and a mix of Categories 1 and 3 in library and information science.
- Builds on areas of ERA strength while also building capacity in an area in which there is potential for ERA improvement, through strategic interdisciplinary research: Charles Sturt was rated 'above world average' (4) in ERA 2018 in both Applied Ethics and Library and Information Studies and has strong potential to improve ERA scores in Social Work (currently a 2).
- Aligns with CSU as the University for the Professions as well as with its 'For the Public Good' and 'Yindymarra Winhanganha' values and aims.
- Covers several key Fields of Research that are linked to Fields of Education that Charles Sturt will be assessed in under the Provider Category Standards, with Society and Culture (09) hinging on the prospects for 4409 Social Work, 4410 Sociology and 5001 Applied Ethics, and Information Technology (02) hinging on the prospects for 4610 Library and Information Studies.
- Aligns with current Australian Government higher education policy, which emphasises practical outcomes as exemplified by the Job-ready Graduates Package.
- Connects strongly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which provides an effective framework for the demonstration of research impact and community engagement, directly supporting the University's future standings in the *Times Higher Education* Impact Rankings.

Nomination of the lead for the research group – noting they must have at least 50% research workload for the three years of funding by this scheme; List (1 line)

Lead: Assoc. Prof. Steve Clarke, School of Social Work and Arts, FTE 100%

The members of the group, and their academic level and FTE; List (e.g. 10 lines)

Note that the size of this group reflects our topic. To conduct research on the future of the professions, we need to take account of developments across a broad range of professions. So, we require input from academics from a variety of backgrounds who engage, as a part of their work, with different professions and professionals.

Disciplinary co-leads:

Assoc. Prof. Karen Bell, School of Social Work and Arts, Level D, FTE 100%

Dr Heather Boetto, School of Social Work and Arts, Level C, FTE 100%

Prof. Philip Hider, School of Information Studies, Level E, FTE 100%

Assoc. Prof. Hamid Jamali, School of Information Studies, Level D, FTE 100%

Assoc. Prof. Morgan Luck, School of Social Work and Arts, Level D, FTE 100%

Other members:

Prof. Wendy Bowles, School of Social Work and Arts, Level E, FTE 100%

Dr Donna Bridges, School of Social Work and Arts, Level C, FTE 100%

Prof. Oliver Burmeister, School of Computing and Mathematics, Level E, FTE 100%

Assoc. Prof. Mary Carroll, School of Information Studies, Level D, FTE 100%

Dr Daniel Cohen, School of Social Work and Arts, Level C, FTE 100%

Dr Anna Corbo Crehan, Australian Graduate School of Policing and Security, Level C, FTE 100%

Dr Jane Garner, School of Information Studies, Level B, FTE 100%

Dr Kasey Garrison, School of Information Studies, Level C, FTE 100%

Dr Peta Jeffries, School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Level B, FTE 100%

Prof. Seumas Miller, Australian Graduate School of Policing and Security, Level E, FTE 100%

Dr Bernadette Moorhead, School of Social Work and Arts, Level B, FTE 60%

Dr Piero Moraro, Centre for Law and Justice, Level B, FTE 100%

Prof. Manohar Pawar, School of Social Work and Arts, Level E, FTE 100%

Dr Holly Randell-Moon, School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Level C, FTE 100%

Dr Emma Rush, School of School of Social Work and Arts, Level B, FTE 100%

Dr Ruth Townsend, School of Biomedical Sciences, Level C, FTE 100%

Prof. Suzanne Uniacke, School of Social Work and Arts, Level E (Retired Adjunct)

Dr Simon Wakeling, School of Information Studies, Level B, FTE 100%

Dr Sabine Wardle, School of Social Work and Arts, Level B, FTE 100%

What internal funding support (Faculty and Research Centre) have group members received in the past three years; (Max ½ page)

2020 FOAE Compacts Schemes: Jane Garner, ECR Grant, \$22,466; Sabine Wardle, ECR Grant, \$13,809.

2020 COVID-19 Research Grants Scheme: Jane Garner et al., \$10,060; Suzanne McClaren, Oliver Burmeister et al., \$27,000; Jodie Kleinschafer, Oliver Burmeister et al., \$28,000; Ashad Kabir, Oliver Burmeister et al., \$12,000.

2019 FOAE Compacts Schemes: Donna Bridges, Student Support, \$2,750 & Events & Activities \$2,898;

Jane Garner, RO/RA Support, \$7,753 & New Staff Grant, \$8,000; Hamid Jamali, Skills Development, \$2,940; Peta Jeffries, Early Career Mentor, \$4,425; Bernadette Moorhead, Income and Initiatives, \$4,450 & Skills Development, \$1,305; Holly Randell-Moon, RO/RA Support, \$3,517 & Events and Activities, \$6,957; Simon Wakeling, New Staff Grant, \$7,952; ESJ Group, establishment grant, \$19,100; LRG Group, establishment grant, \$19,914.

2018 FOAE Compacts Schemes: Donna Bridges, Grant Development, \$9,969; Peta Jeffries, Income and Initiatives, \$7,090; Holly Randell-Moon, New Staff Grant, \$7,939.

2018-2020 Charles Sturt University Research and Senior Fellowships: Oliver Burmeister, \$99,000; Karen Bell, \$48,000.

2017-2018 FOAE Compacts Schemes: Suzanne Uniacke and Steve Clarke, Research Assistance for Sustained Programs of Research Funding, \$31,753.

What [FoR codes](#) (2 and 4 digit) will be covered by publications and which Q1/Q2 journals will be targeted (or equivalent); Use table below

FoR	Journal	
4409	<i>British Journal of Social Work</i> <i>Social Service Review</i> <i>Social Policy and Administration</i> <i>Health and Social Care in the Community</i> <i>Journal of Social Policy</i>	All Q1
4410	<i>Journal of Service Research</i> <i>Work, Employment and Society</i>	All Q1
4610	<i>Library Quarterly</i> <i>Library and Information Science Research</i> <i>Journal of Librarianship and Information Science</i> <i>Library Management</i> <i>Collection Management</i> <i>Journal of Documentation</i> <i>IFLA Journal</i>	All Q1
5001	<i>Ethical Theory and Moral Practice</i> <i>Ethics and Social Welfare</i> <i>Journal of Social Philosophy</i> <i>Journal of Applied Philosophy</i> <i>Ethics, an International Journal of Social, Legal and Political Philosophy</i>	All Q1

What are the research questions that will initially be tackled and why? What impact will this research have?; (Max 1 page)

Overarching questions

What are professional obligations? How do these change over time? There is a foundational debate in applied ethics on the nature of professional obligation, which will be of strong interest to editors of leading applied ethics journals. A postdoctoral fellow will work on this topic under the supervision of Clarke and Luck.

In what ways can community engagement and curriculum co-creation enhance education for the professions? Through partnerships with industry, priority community issues can be explored and strategies developed to enhance professionals' capacity to respond to urgent challenges spelled out in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

What are the major challenges facing library and information science education for professional practice in a changing world? Heated debate is taking place around the role of formal education for the library and information professions. This debate lacks an evidence base, which members of our group will provide.

The professions in a post-COVID world

Does the reality of the global pandemic impose new moral responsibilities on professionals? If so, what are these new responsibilities? The realisation that many of our actions can significantly impact on the health of others has led to a rethinking of the proper scope of moral responsibilities, including those of professionals. This is a pressing issue.

How is contemporary social work practice conceptualised in the context of disaster preparedness? The increasing magnitude and frequency of disasters has disproportionate impacts on marginalised communities. It is crucial to embed skills for disaster practice in the professional domain. While there is a body of literature on post-disaster social work practice, the conceptualisation framework for contemporary professional practice is under-developed.

Professions for an ageing population

What moral responsibilities do we have to elderly people? There is a lack of rigorous philosophical research on issues of intergenerational justice and about the extent to which professions are responsible for ensuring that just outcomes are delivered to elderly people. There is a clear need for such research, which our group can provide.

How can e-health education build capacity for professional practice in end-of-life care? The majority of elderly people do not have access to high quality, equitable and culturally appropriate care. To build capacity for quality palliative care, opportunities to upskill health and welfare professionals are critical. An e-health platform for palliative care education would deliver flexible, self-paced, low-cost skill development for professional practice.

Professions in an increasingly online world

How will local services such as public libraries facilitate social connection in the post-COVID world? Research is needed regarding a post-COVID world with changed configurations of physical and online spaces, and different attitudes and behaviours towards social interaction. Our group can provide this research, building on the internally funded COVID-19 and public libraries research project.

How can public libraries in Australia extend their services through inter-professional collaboration with social work? Internationally, public libraries are employing social workers to diversify services provided to community members experiencing complex social issues. In Australia, this form of inter-professional cooperation is underdeveloped and requires further research to optimise impact and effectiveness. A postdoctoral fellow will work on this topic under the supervision of Hider and Bell.

Professions and conscience

How can concerns for the religious freedom and conscience of individual professionals be reconciled with the obligations of professionals towards their clients? This is a crucial issue for many religious professionals and religious organisations that provide social services. It also raises important questions about the autonomy of professional organizations. Work on the topic builds on Clarke's current ARC DP on 'Religion, Pluralism, and Healthcare Practice'.

How should librarians deal with misinformation and disinformation? The traditional 'information neutral' stance of librarians has come under particular strain in recent years with the proliferation of conspiracy theories and 'fake news'. Research will investigate the role that librarians can and should play in providing access to trustworthy information to meet the needs of vulnerable groups in their communities.

Have these research questions been ‘pitched’ for funding previously (internal or external funding) (Max half page)

Two questions have:

How can e-health education build capacity for professional practice in end-of-life care?

A research proposal for \$80,843 was submitted by Wardle, Bell and Jeffries that addressed this question was shortlisted for Dept. Foreign Affairs and Trade/Australia-India Council grant (April 2021) but was ultimately unsuccessful. Only 20 of 146 applications were shortlisted and invited to deliver a research ‘pitch’ to the AIC panel; ten projects were funded, with this project just missing out in the final round of assessment.

How will local services such as public libraries facilitate social connection in the post-COVID world?

An initial exploratory study on this theme is presently being conducted by members of the LRG with the support of a grant from the State Library of New South Wales for \$12,481.

What external funding sources and/or external partnerships will be targeted and why (Max half page)

Australian Research Council Discovery Project Scheme. Clarke has been a CI on three ARC Discovery Projects (over \$1M total) focussed on applied ethics research, including two he has led, hosted by Charles Sturt. He is well suited to lead a grant application involving applied ethics research, for \$400,000 (approx.) over three years. There is renewed interest in the professions and the obligations of professionals, in applied ethics, so this is an attractive topic.

Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award. A Postdoctoral Fellow (PF) will be recruited who has good prospects of winning this three-year award. Clarke has supervised three previous PFs at Charles Sturt, all of whom now have flourishing academic careers. He will mentor the PF through the application process. Renewed interest in the professions and the obligations of professionals, in applied ethics, makes this a very fundable topic.

The State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW) is funding three relevant projects (over \$20K in total) being carried out by the LRG, including an exploratory investigation into public libraries’ place in a post-COVID world (Wakeling, Hider, Jamali, Randell-Moon). The SLNSW has indicated that more grants will be available from next year for similar (and larger) projects, and has invited the LRG to submit further proposals. The SLNSW oversees the network of public libraries across the state and is an ideal partner for public library research.

Australian Research Council Linkage Project Scheme. Hider will lead a 2022 ARC Linkage application assessing the alignment of contemporary practices and services of Australian public libraries with their perceived and stated missions. The challenges librarians and their communities face in the post-COVID world make a comprehensive evaluation of the shifting role of librarians urgent. Hider has been lead CI on external grants totalling approximately \$1M. The Australian Public Library Alliance, Australian Library and Information Association and the State Library of NSW will be included as application partners.

Australia-India Council Grant (Dept. Foreign Affairs and Trade). Wardle, Bell and Jeffries will apply for funding in the 2022 AIC round. With in-kind support from international partners (Centre of Excellence in Palliative Care Research and Action Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, India) a proposal to co-create and deliver professional education via an e-health platform for quality end-of-life care will be submitted.

What government or industry partners have been engaged (any commitment to co-investment would be viewed favourably); (Max half page)

Meeting the needs of the community in a time of disaster: Strategies for resilience in health and welfare organisations. External funding - NSW Government Community Resilience Innovation Program). Community partners Wagga Wagga City Council, NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Dept. Communities and Justice, NSW Dept. Health, NSW Police/Emergency Management team. CSU project team – Boetto, Bell, Bowles.

Developing an e-health platform for professional capacity-building in end of life care. International partner – Centre of Excellence in Palliative Care Research and Action - Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (India). CSU project team – Wardle, Bell, Jeffries.

Professional identity in social work. International partners King's College (England), Nihon Fukushi University (Japan), Tel Aviv University (Israel). Internal funding – FOAE Research Support Scheme. CSU project team – Moorhead, Bell, Bowles. Research question - What are the major challenges facing social work education for professional practice in a changing world?

Australian Public Libraries during the COVID-19 Crisis. Funded by Charles Sturt, and partnered by the Australian Public Library Alliance, the peak public libraries body in Australia, assisted by the Australian Library and Information Association, the country's peak body for librarianship in general. This project is on course to produce three Q1 and one Q2 journal publications, as well as a final report for the ALIA website, and has led to three further projects funded by the State Library of NSW. The SLNSW has indicated interest in co-investing in projects emanating from the proposed Future of the Professions group.

Evaluating Public Library Community Engagement and Impact. This project has been supported and co-designed by Libraries ACT, with the objective of identifying practical strategies public libraries can adopt to maximise impact and engagement with their communities in changing times.

Proposed 3 year budget and justification on next three pages

Year 1 (up to \$300,000)						
Funding for:	Position Level	Fraction	Salary	Salary with Oncosts	Total Cost	Comments
Group Lead	Buyout for Lead	20%	\$22,384	\$26,091	\$26,091	Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using code AX160 x 345 hours.
Postdoctoral Fellow 1 (PF1)	Level A, Step 6	100%	\$91,312	\$113,726	\$113,726	
Postdoctoral Fellow 2 (PF2)	Level A, Step 6	50%	\$45,656	\$56,863	\$56,863	
Research Assistant	Level 7, Step 1	50%	\$43,587	\$52,719	\$52,719	
Relocation expenses for PF1					\$8,000	
Co-lead Bell	Buyout for Co-Lead	10%	\$11,192	\$13,046	\$13,046	Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using code AX160 x 172.5 hours.
Co-lead Jamali	Buyout for Co-Lead	10%	\$11,192	\$13,046	\$13,046	Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using code AX160 x 172.5 hours.
Total cost (year 1)					\$283,491	
Year 2 (up to \$180,000)						
Funding for:	Position Level	Fraction	Salary	Salary with Oncosts	Total Cost	Comments
Group Lead	Buyout for Lead	20%	\$22,384	\$26,091	\$26,613	With 2% added.
Postdoctoral Fellow 1	Level A, Step 6	50%	\$47,529	\$59,196	\$60,380	With 2% added.

(PF1)	7					
Postdoctoral Fellow 2 (PF2)	Level A, Step 7	50%	\$47,529	\$59,196	\$60,380	With 2% added.
Project Group Event	-	-	-		\$3,500	
Conference Travel Funding	-	-	-		\$10,000	
Total cost (year 2)					\$160,873	
Year 3 (up to \$150,000)						
Funding for:	Position Level	Fraction	Salary	Salary with Oncosts	Total Cost	Comments
Group Lead	Buyout for Lead	20%	\$22,384	\$26,091	\$27,145	With a further 2% added.
Postdoctoral Fellow 2 (PF2)	Level A, Step 8	50%	\$48,988	\$61,013	\$61,013	With a further 2% added.
Co-lead Boetto	Buyout for Co-Lead	10%	\$11,192	\$13,046	\$13,573	With a further 2% added.
Project Group Event	-	-	-		\$3,500	
Conference Travel Funding	-	-	-		\$10,000	
Total cost (year 3)					\$115,231	

Future of the Professions Group Budget Justification

Teaching buy out is requested for the lead (Clarke) in Years 1-3 to take the lead from 30% to 50% research for three years, as per scheme requirements, thereby reducing his teaching commitments from 60% to 40%. Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using code AX160 ('Significant Marking' rate), as agreed to by his Head of School. 2% annual increases are included in the budget to allow for potential rises in costs of buyout due to future award increases.

A salary is requested for a Postdoctoral Fellow (PF1) in Years 1-2. The PF will be employed full time for 18 months (but offered the option of a 12-month full time contract followed by a 12-month 50% contract). The PF will work under supervision from Clarke and Luck to develop major grant applications, and contribute to the group's research program with a focus on its philosophical components.

Relocation expenses for PF1 are requested in Year 1. We will advertise widely for a PF with a view to maximising our chances of finding a candidate who will be a highly competitive applicant for an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award. Being able to offer to cover relocation expenses will make a postdoctoral position with our group more attractive to a high-quality applicant.

A 50% research assistant (RA) is requested in Year 1 to assist with project grant applications focused on social work and library and information studies. The group has an ambitious schedule of grant applications in social work and library and information studies, and will look to submit competitive grant applications in Year 1 to the State Library of New South Wales, the Australian Research Council Linkage Project Scheme and the Australia-India Council. An RA dedicated to this work program will help ensure that the highest quality applications are submitted.

A salary is requested for a Postdoctoral Fellow (PF2) in Years 1-3. PF2 will be employed part-time 50% for three years. The PF will work under supervision from Hider and Bell to contribute to the group's research program with a focus on interdisciplinary research across library and information science and social work. The PF will contribute to the development of grant applications and assist with organization of group events. We are confident of recruiting a high-quality local candidate for this role.

Funding is requested for two group events to be held in Years 2 and 3 to enable group members to workshop academic papers and prepare them for submission to high quality journals. Funds will be spent on catering and accommodation and travel expenses for group members who need to travel between Charles Sturt campuses and stay overnight.

Funding is requested for conference travel funding in Years 2 and 3. This will be used to enable group members to gain feedback on their work from leading international scholars at world-class events. No funding has been requested for conference travel in Year 1 as it is anticipated that the global pandemic will continue to disrupt international academic events for the next year.

Teaching buy out is requested for 10% of co-lead Bell's salary in Year 1. Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using code AX160 ('Significant Marking' rate), as agreed to by her Head of School. This will allow Bell to undertake a period of intensive work addressing our research question *How can e-health education build capacity for professional practice in end-of-life care?* Bell has particular expertise on this topic.

Teaching buy out is requested for 10% of co-lead Jamali's salary in Year 1. Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using Code AX160 ('Significant Marking' rate), as agreed to his Head of School. This will allow Jamali to undertake a period of intensive work addressing our research question *What are the major challenges facing library and information science education for professional practice in a changing world?* Jamali has particular expertise on this topic.

Teaching buy out is requested for 10% of co-lead Boetto's salary in Year 3. Buyout is calculated at \$64.88 per hour using code AX160 ('Significant Marking' rate), as agreed to by her Head of School. 2% annual increases are included in the budget to allow for potential rises in costs of buyout due to future award increases. This will allow Boetto to undertake a period of intensive work addressing our research question *How is contemporary social work practice conceptualised in the context of disaster preparedness?* Boetto has particular expertise on this topic.