



Charles Sturt  
University



# Research communiqué

Research news at Charles Sturt  
Spring 2025

Cartoon reproduced with permission from Cathy Wilcox, *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Cockatoo dance study captivates global media  
A Charles Sturt-led study on the dance moves of cockatoos captured worldwide attention, with coverage in CNN, BBC, ABC and other outlets.

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HDR



## Message from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

After five months formally in this role, I want to begin by thanking everyone who has helped me navigate this exciting and challenging landscape as we work together to address both the internal and external factors shaping our research environment.

Research is about nurturing ideas, people and possibilities. It means creating an environment where innovation thrives, collaboration is natural and impact is intentional. To look after research is to look after researchers – to enable their creativity, support their resilience and remove the barriers that limit their potential.

Charles Sturt's growing research reputation is reflected in our recent performance in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, where the university rose from the 800–1,000 band to the 601–800 band for the first time. Notably, Research Quality has emerged as our highest-ranked pillar; we are now positioned among the top quartile of universities worldwide. At the end of September, the university has secured over \$23 million in research grants, and achieved \$18.4 million in HERDC research income, and continues to perform strongly on Q1/Q2 publications

This edition of the Research communiqué highlights our collective success, from our partnerships with multiple external stakeholders to national and international recognition for our researchers. Together, these stories reaffirm the talent, commitment and impact that define Charles Sturt.

I was privileged to attend the launch of the Children's Voices Centre (CVC) in Bathurst on 1 October, a truly moving event that celebrated both the achievements and the aspirations of this important initiative. The essence of the Children's Voices Centre is to take the voices of children, expressed in all their richness, and translate them into change – in policy, in practice, in communities and in the lives of children themselves. Congratulations to Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod, Director of the Children's Voices Centre, all the team members and the wider CVC community who have worked tirelessly to bring this vision to life.



Looking ahead, we are preparing for the Digital Agrifood Summit, to be held from 5–7 November at our Wagga Wagga campus. It has become a highlight of our calendar – a powerful example of our university's leadership in connecting technology, research and industry to advance the future of sustainable agriculture, attracting national and international stakeholders

As we navigate a period of financial constraint and careful decision-making, it is important to recognise that our research achievements and the people behind them remain central to who we are and to the contribution we make to our communities.

I invite you to take a moment to celebrate these achievements and to share them with pride. They are a testament not only to individual excellence but also to the strength of our collective research culture, built on the contributions of colleagues past and present. Together, we continue to create knowledge and partnerships that shape a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive future.

**Professor Neena Mitter**  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)





Charles Sturt Research now has a dedicated [LinkedIn page](#). Follow us to stay up-to-date with the latest research and initiatives that deliver regional solutions with a global reach and impact.

## Charles Sturt continues to be a global leader in climate action, gender equality and sustainability

Charles Sturt continues to deliver strong outcomes in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings, reflecting our commitment to sustainability and all its facets in our university strategy.

THE's Impact Rankings are the only global university rankings that measure progress towards the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals. They evaluate our university programs and initiatives, including research, teaching and learning, partnerships and engagement, and facilities and operations.

Charles Sturt achieved impressive results within individual SDGs, including ranking:

- in the top 1 per cent for SDG 13: Climate Action
- in the top 4 per cent for SDG 5: Gender Equality
- in the top 6 per cent for SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
- in the top 7 per cent for SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- in the top 9 per cent for SDG 15: Life on Land.

These results are particularly impressive given increasing competition and participation of global universities in the THE Impact Rankings.



Times Higher Education Impact Ranking 2025

## Upcoming Provocations Public Lectures

The Provocations Public Lecture series celebrates Charles Sturt research. The lectures aim to challenge orthodoxy through new thinking but also revive policy ideas and political thought from the past for one more encore.



### Recordings

#### Why haven't herbivores eaten all the world's green plants?

In this Provocations Public Lecture, Distinguished Professor Geoff Gurr explores the surprising ways nature defends itself – from spiders and parasitic wasps to insect-killing fungi – and how these natural defence systems are shaping the future of farming.

Discover how researchers at Charles Sturt University are harnessing these solutions to boost biodiversity, protect pollinators, reduce pesticide use and improve farmer profits.

[Watch this recording to see how nature holds the key to more sustainable agriculture.](#)

Charles Sturt University

Provocations Public Lecture Series

Optimising yield, growth and use of the '5<sup>th</sup> quarter' for Australian agricultural food access and market security

Wednesday 5 November, 7:40 pm - 8:40 pm

Professor Jane Quinn  
Professor of Veterinary Physiology

Join us for a special Provocations lecture and celebration of the [Agricultural Innovation Program](#) at the Gulbali Institute, led by Professor Jane Quinn.

This event is part of the [Digital Agrifood Summit](#) immersion activities at Charles Sturt University. It will be held at the CSU Riverina Playhouse, Wagga Wagga.

If you can't make it in person, the lecture will also be live-streamed – simply select the live-stream ticket option when registering.

[Register here.](#)

## 2026 Provocations Public Lectures

The Provocations series celebrates Charles Sturt research and brings bold ideas into the public arena. In 2026, the series will run online at a new time: 12:30 – 1:30 pm AEDT.



**Speaker:**  
Professor Zahid Islam

**Date:**  
25 March 2026

**Time:**  
12:30–1:30pm AEDT

**Location:** Online

**Cost:** free



**Speaker:**  
Distinguished Professor  
Jade Forwood

**Date:**  
27 May 2026

**Time:**  
12:30–1:30pm AEST

**Location:** Online

**Cost:** free



**Speaker:**  
Matthew Muller  
Director, Cool Soil Initiative

**Date:**  
29 July 2026

**Time:**  
12:30–1:30pm AEST

**Location:** Online

**Cost:** free



**Speaker:**  
Professor Julian Grant

**Date:**  
30 September 2026

**Time:**  
12:30–1:30pm AEST

**Location:** Online

**Cost:** free



**Speaker:**  
Professor Matthew  
Winslade

**Date:**  
25 November 2026

**Time:**  
12:30–1:30pm AEDT

**Location:** Online

**Cost:** free



Professor Andrew Hall  
Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

## Innovative wetland mapping system directs environmental watering in Basin

The Murray–Darling Basin is Australia's most regulated river system, with dams and diversions reducing seasonal flows and degrading globally significant wetlands.

Restoring these ecosystems relies on carefully planned releases of 'environmental water', but with limited water available, decisions on when, where and how much to deliver must be carefully considered. A major barrier has been the lack of precise data on wetland extents and volumes, and connections between them.

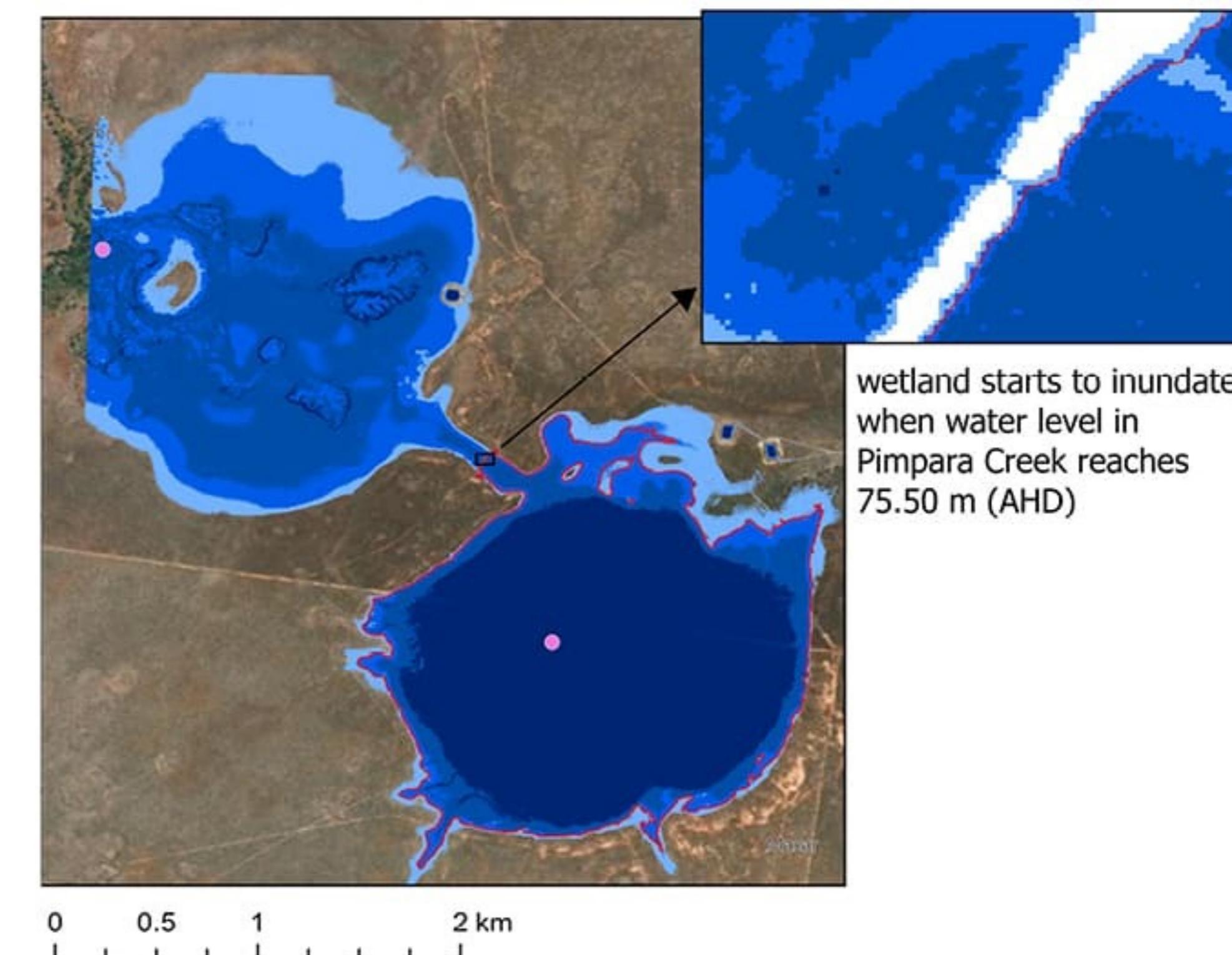
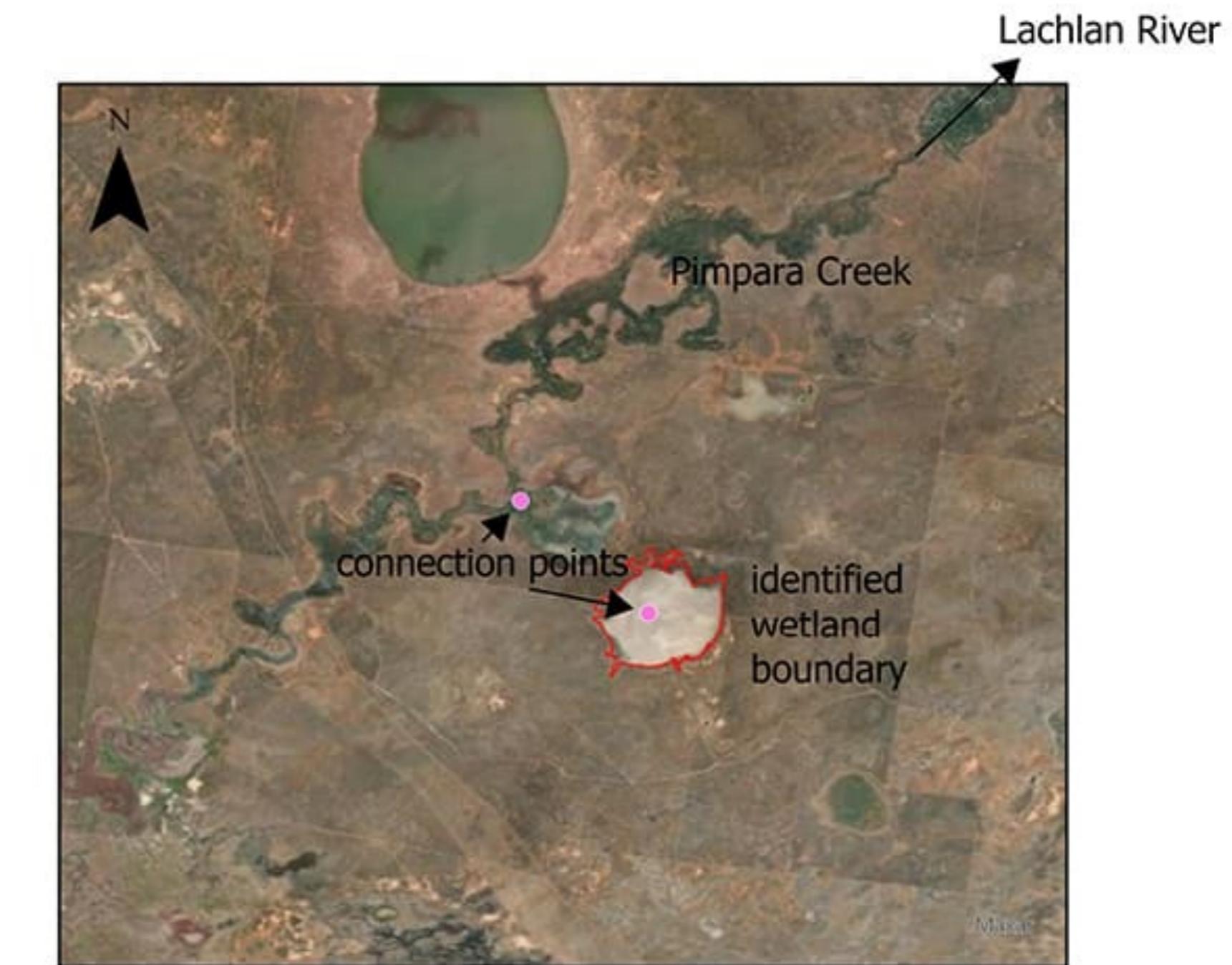
Professor [Andrew Hall](#), a senior researcher in geospatial science at the Gulbali Institute, has led innovative research to address this gap. Using data collected during the Millennium Drought, his team developed methods to map hundreds of wetlands with high accuracy.

By simulating the slow filling of wetlands as they would in a flood, they identified flooding limits, water volumes, and connections to surrounding channels and floodplains.

Checking against satellite images and vegetation patterns showed this semi-automated, repeatable approach showed each wetland's location, depth, capacity and connectivity in detail.

This research is directly informing water planning by the NSW Government, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder and other partners. It enables more targeted and efficient delivery of environmental flows, demonstrating how geospatial science can create cost-effective solutions to complex ecological challenges.

[Read more.](#)



## Strengthening biosecurity and One Health links with CSIRO

Charles Sturt researchers in biosecurity and One Health initiatives have strengthened links with the CSIRO's Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP) during a three-day visit to the Wagga Wagga campus in August.

ACDP's Glenn Marsh and Sarah Edwards met with the Gulbali Institute Biosecurity team, visited the National Life Sciences Hub (NaLSH) laboratory, and engaged in interactive workshops and discussions on emerging biosecurity threats in Australia and overseas, focusing on henipaviruses and other bat-borne viruses.

During their visit, the ACDP:

- developed research proposals on biosurveillance of emerging zoonotic viruses and advanced One Health initiatives with Gulbali Institute researchers
- received presentations from Charles Sturt PhD students on their investigations into henipaviruses, paramyxoviruses, rodent- and bat-borne viruses and outbreaks
- discussed joint PhD fellowships, co-supervision and access to ACDP facilities for advanced training and skill development.

These activities sought to strengthen research collaboration and build long-term pathways for biosecurity partnerships between ACDP and the Gulbali Institute.

It was a fantastic exchange of ideas, expertise and vision, laying the foundation for stronger collaborative research into biosecurity and One Health initiatives in Australia.

Read more about the [Gulbali Biosecurity team](#).



## Challenging farming assumptions in the Riverina

During a field day that showcased crops, pastures and flocks in the long-term Farming Systems trial, over 50 farmers and farm consultants, NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, CSIRO and Charles Sturt researchers and students heard about the comparative performances of the four systems being investigated as part of the trial.

The research project, led by Gulbali Senior Research Fellow Dr Shawn McGrath, compares systems used in the Riverina: continuous cropping using cereals, legumes and canola; a traditional mix of sheep grazing and cereal crops; high intensity mixed farming using dual-purpose crops and vetch for grazing; and ley farming using crops and clover pasture.

Dr McGrath commented that the dry autumn meant that establishment of most crops was late this year, with little or no window for grazing dual-purpose crops, and hand feeding ewes through the June/July lambing period was required. However, crops and pastures are now growing well with the recent rainfall and warmer weather.

Lambs have now been weaned, and extensive data has been collected on crop development, lamb weights, pasture ground cover and weeds.

The project researchers include crop, livestock, weed, soil, social, agribusiness and spatial data scientists, with local farm consultants and industry also advising. The project collaborates with the Southern NSW Drought Resilience Hub and six farming systems groups through southern NSW and is funded by the federal government's Future Drought Fund.



Part of the Charles Sturt Farming Systems research team, including (L-R) Jess Wyse, Jeff McCormick, Shawn McGrath, Ted Wolfe, John Kirkegaard, Felicity Harris and Shamsul Haque



Jeff McCormick 'in speaking flight' during 2025 Farming Systems Field Day on Wagga Wagga campus. Jess and Shawn look on. Photo: Wes Ward



Dr Ivor Stuart  
Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

## Helping reintroduce native fish into the Basin

Regulating the Murray-Darling Basin fuels farming but has harmed native fish. 'Environmental flows' now help restore rivers, yet we still need to learn what flow patterns – when, where, how much and how often – best support fish recovery across the Basin.

Associate Professor of Fisheries [Dr Ivor Stuart](#) leads a Charles Sturt team to investigate native fish that migrate vast distances to spawn and grow in dispersed habitats and face barriers presented by river dams and channels which have changed water flow conditions.

The research focused on the golden perch, a medium-sized, long-lived and highly migratory fish once prevalent across the Basin but now only found in small, fragmented populations in unregulated rivers and streams.

Since 2020, the team have tracked where the perch spawn, hatch and grow as they have dispersed over 1,000 kilometres in the Darling and Murray rivers after major flooding.

Collaborating with NSW government agencies and funded by the Commonwealth government, they use larvae sampling and acoustic tracking to identify how juvenile golden perch have dispersed and what attracts them into the southern Basin.

This will show how future environmental flows could be best managed to support spawning and dispersal of young fish and recover native fish populations and rivers across the Basin.

[More information.](#)



Adult golden perch

## Charles Sturt renews partnership with UMP at international forum

Charles Sturt University and the [University of Mpumalanga \(UMP\)](#) formally extended a longstanding strategic partnership at the recent [Australia Africa Universities Network \(AAUN\)](#) Forum in Perth, Western Australia.

Gulbali Institute Executive Director Professor [Lee Baumgartner](#) renewed the collaboration alongside UMP Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and Internationalisation Professor Aldo Stroebel, Professor Kanaya Oguijuba and Associate Professor [Gordon Craig O'Brien](#) at the forum (see photo right).

Collaboration includes dedicated collaborative research, high-level capacity advancement and innovation, focusing on sustainable water and food security.

Professor Baumgartner said it was a great privilege to “tackle the defining challenges of our time alongside this transformative university with a shared commitment to research supporting regional communities globally”.

“We are excited about five more years of collaboration and the opportunities this renewed commitment will bring for regional communities across both nations.

“We look forward to hearing from researchers, students and academics from both our organisations who are interested in developing collaborations and partnerships,” Professor Baumgartner said.





## Charles Sturt researchers win national awards

Congratulations to Professor David Watson on receiving the inaugural ESA/UNSW Prize for Inspiring Ecology Teaching from the Ecological Society of Australia (ESA).

Professor Watson's leadership and passion for education and conservation have left a lasting mark on applied ecology and ornithology. From his innovative research and collaborative spirit to his unwavering advocacy for threatened species, David inspires students, colleagues and the international ecological community. We celebrate this well-deserved recognition of David's contributions to ecology and science education nationally and internationally. Congratulations, David!

Professor Watson will share his insights as the first Inspiring Teaching Plenary presenter at the annual ESA 2025 Conference in Adelaide from 23 to 28 November.



## Dr Eamonn Wooster has won ESA's 2025 Next Generation Ecologist Award.

Dr Wooster's award-winning research reveals how human impacts on the natural world are shaping wildlife behaviour, with crucial implications for biodiversity conservation. "It's a huge honour to receive this award. Past awardees are ecologists I've drawn inspiration from and looked up to," said the Gulbali Institute postdoctoral research fellow.

The prestigious award supports outstanding early career researchers through a \$3,000 grant and plenary opportunity at the ESA2025 conference in November.



Tiarna Scerri

## Groundbreakers at evokeAG. 2026

What happens when you bring together five bold thinkers, each with a talent for shaking up the status quo? You get evokeAG. 2026 Groundbreakers, a crew of young leaders who aren't just imagining the future of agrifood, they're building it.

Congratulations to Tiarna Scerri, a PhD candidate at the Gulbali Institute, on being named one of the five evokeAg Groundbreakers for 2026. Tiarna's research is on tackling one of agriculture's biggest challenges: antimicrobial resistance. Her research focuses on developing new treatments for bovine mastitis, blending science and policy to ensure innovations are both effective and well-regulated. She is also passionate about engaging young people in agriculture and driving sustainable food systems for the future.

[Read more.](#)



Dr Felicity Harris  
Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

## Driving innovation for grain growers: Felicity Harris joins GRDC Panel

Congratulations to [Dr Felicity Harris](#) from the Gulbali Institute on her appointment to the Northern Panel of the Grains Research Development Corporation (GRDC). Over the next two years, Felicity will contribute her expertise in crop agronomy and physiology to drive research, development and engagement priorities, supporting innovation and long-term profitability for grain growers in Queensland and NSW. This is a significant recognition of her expertise in crop agronomy and physiology and will help strengthen Gulbali's influence in shaping innovation for Australian grain growers.



Professor Shokoofeh  
Shamsi  
Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

## Professor Shamsi shares expertise on fish health at Aquarium Industries

Parasitologist Professor [Shokoofeh Shamsi](#) recently presented a seminar on fish health to staff from Aquarium Industries in Melbourne. She also came away with new insights from the passionate and knowledgeable Aquarium Industries team. "Fish are treasured pets for many households, so collaborations like this help us support their wellbeing while strengthening industry practice," Professor Shamsi said.

## Climate change, not UV, killed Neanderthals, says Charles Sturt researcher

Our ancestral cousins, the Neanderthals, went mysteriously extinct around 40,000 years ago, while humans did not. The answer has puzzled paleoanthropologists for decades, but some researchers now think sunscreen and tailored clothing might have played a role.

When Neanderthals disappeared, a weakening of the Earth's magnetic field resulted in exposure to higher doses of harmful ultraviolet radiation. Clothing would have offered some protection, more so on humans as they wore form-fitting garments, like their cousins wore loose robes. Humans also coated themselves with mineral pigments such as ochre, acting as an ancient sunscreen.

While these differences alone are unlikely to have resulted in the Neanderthals' demise, researchers think that their exposure to increased radiation would have had detrimental effects.

The increased UV exposure occurred when Earth's north and south magnetic poles began to wander from their traditional positions, which impacted the magnetic field that protects Earth's ozone layer and life from high-energy particles from the sun. This wandering magnetic field is called the Laschamps event, which coincided with the disappearance of the Neanderthals.

Charles Sturt evolutionary biologist Professor Alan Cooper believes it wasn't the UV that killed everybody, it was climate change: "everything [including the weather] goes completely wild at that point." Professor Cooper, who commented on this international study, wasn't involved in this work but has published research with similar conclusions.

Not only did Neanderthals disappear from the fossil record around this time, Professor Cooper added, but so did other species across the disproportionately affected areas.

Anthropologists are careful to note that the coincident timing of the Neanderthal extinction and the Laschamps event could have been mere chance. Further work is underway.

See full story in [The Wall Street Journal](#).



A detailed model of a Neanderthal human at the Natural History Museum, offering insights into the physical traits of our ancient relatives. Photo: Shutterstock



Professor Julian Grant

## Professor Julian Grant appointed Executive Director of Rural Health Research Institute

Professor Julian Grant has been appointed Executive Director of Charles Sturt's Rural Health Research Institute (RHRI).

A registered nurse and professor of nursing, Julian brings extensive leadership and research expertise, with 18 years as a child and family health nurse across rural, remote and metropolitan Australia. Her work focuses on addressing health inequities for children and families, meeting the specific needs of rural communities and removing systemic barriers within the health workforce.

Since 2011, Julian has secured \$3.17 million in research funding, served on the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Health Research Impact Committee (2021–24), currently sits on the NHMRC Research Committee and is the elected academic member of Charles Sturt University Council.

Julian joins at an exciting time as the institute works to improve health outcomes in regional Australia and beyond.



Dr Hazel Dalton  
Rural Health Research Institute

### Project title: Building gender-sensitive disaster resilience - Addressing structural drivers of gender-based violence

**Project team:** Dr Christina Malatzky, Associate Professor at Queensland University of Technology (QUT); Ms Gayle Reynolds, Community Research Associate at QUT; Dr Catherine Cosgrave, Director at Attract Connect Stay; and Dr Hazel Dalton, Charles Sturt University.

\$149,956

**Project summary:** This project addresses how disasters intensify gender-based violence (GBV) through existing structural inequalities in the Bundaberg Regional Council area, with particular focus on impacts for women with disabilities and older women. Working with Country to Coast Queensland (funder) and the Bundaberg Domestic and Family Violence Community Working Group, the research develops prevention-focused approaches that address the structural drivers of GBV, including gender inequality, rigid stereotypes and male-dominated decision-making, across the disaster continuum.

The project employs a four-phase participatory approach: conducting foundational evidence reviews, mapping community power structures through stakeholder interviews and lived experience narratives, co-designing a community action plan, and building sustainable cross-sectoral partnerships. The outcome will be a community-owned five-year action plan that provides practical pathways for building gender-sensitive disaster resilience, with formal handover to local stakeholders.



Dr Subash Thapa  
Rural Health Research Institute

### Project title: Longitudinal trends of melanoma diagnosis in Denmark: Biopsy rates, temporal shifts, and risk predictors

**Project team:** Dr Subash Thapa from Charles Sturt University and Professor Jesper B. Nielsen from the University of Southern Denmark are collaborating on a new research project, established through a formal research agreement. The University of Southern Denmark has committed AU\$100,000 to support the initiative, which is scheduled for completion by December 2026.

**Project summary:** Melanoma incidence and mortality are influenced by complex factors, including biopsy practices and diagnostic biomarkers. This project will generate evidence on skin biopsy practices and diagnostic patterns to inform melanoma early detection and prevention strategies. Specifically, the project will: (a) assess whether intervals between repeated biopsies affect melanoma risk, (b) examine regional differences in biopsy-to-melanoma diagnosis ratios, (c) explore anatomical site-specific trends in melanocytic lesion removal and melanoma risk, (d) evaluate temporal changes in diagnoses in relation to evolving pathology practices and (e) determine whether biopsy and diagnostic patterns vary by referring specialist. The project will be based on longitudinal analysis of Denmark's comprehensive 25-year pathology records (1998–2023) and linked socio-demographic data encompassing approximately three million cases with 39 histological morphology codes. This project is the first to causally examine how biopsies influence diagnosis, identify opportunities for earlier detection, and support strategies to reduce melanoma-related morbidity and mortality. The findings will be relevant not only for Denmark but also for regions globally, including rural Australia, where high melanoma incidence and limited access to specialist diagnostic services underscore the urgent need for improved early detection strategies.



Joshua Slattery  
Rural Health Research  
Institute

## PhD student develops simple test for gum disease parasite

Recipient of an Australian Institute of Medical and Clinical Scientists (AIMS) PhD Research Seeding Grant

\$10,000.00

**Supervisor team:** Associate Professor Bernd Kalinna, Dr Martin Pal, Professor Anna Walduck and Dr Noel Ye Naung

**Project title:** Exploiting CRISPR-Cas12a technology for developing rapid and precise point-of-care diagnostic testing of parasitic infections in remote communities

A Charles Sturt University PhD student has developed a simple, low-cost test to detect *Trichomonas tenax*, a parasite linked to gum disease and tooth loss, during routine dental checks.

Mr Joshua Slattery, based at the Charles Sturt Rural Health Research Institute in Orange, built on his honours project to create a CRISPR-based test that lights up when the parasite is present, even in tiny amounts. His PhD research is now working on a rapid test strip, similar to a COVID-19 test, for use in clinics and the field.

“Gum disease is the number one reason adults lose their teeth worldwide,” Mr Slattery said. “This innovation not only helps improve dental care but also highlights Charles Sturt University’s commitment to hands-on research and making a difference in regional communities.”

[Read more.](#)



## 2025 RHRI Symposium showcases impactful rural health research

The 2025 RHRI Symposium was held on 18 June 2025 at Charles Sturt University in Orange, showcasing research dedicated to improving health outcomes for people living in rural and regional communities.

Across two days, the event brought together researchers, health professionals, community partners and stakeholders to highlight projects already making an impact in real-world settings. More than 30 research presentations focused on rural health and service delivery, addressing First Nations health disparities, improving child health, and strengthening health and medical research capacity.

The symposium also marked the close of the RHRI's first research phase, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.

Charles Sturt Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Renée Leon welcomed guests and VIPs, including local federal and state representatives, at an evening function on 17 June 2025 at the Orange campus.

Since its establishment in 2022, the RHRI has:

- created a health and medical research hub at the Orange campus, supporting the School of Rural Medicine and School of Dentistry with 30 researchers
- partnered with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and regional stakeholders to co-design impactful projects
- seen four researchers and one faculty affiliate ranked among the top two per cent of researchers globally
- published more than 290 peer-reviewed articles, advancing biomedical sciences, rural clinical health, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.



Photo (left to right): Professor Bamini Gopinath, Board Member, RHRI Advisory Board, RHRI, Charles Sturt University and Cochlear Chair in Hearing and Health and Professor, Department of Health Sciences, Macquarie University; Professor Julaine Allan, Acting Deputy Director, RHRI, Charles Sturt University; Professor Neena Mitter, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Charles Sturt University; Professor Jason White, Director, Research Services, Charles Sturt University; Professor Renée Leon PSM, Vice-Chancellor and President, Charles Sturt University; The Hon. Andrew Gee MP, Independent Federal Member for Calare; Professor Anna Walduck, Acting Executive Director, RHRI, Charles Sturt University; Elizabeth Barrett, Chair, RHRI Advisory Board, RHRI, Charles Sturt University; Mr Philip Donato, Independent Member for Orange, Parliament of NSW

## Cancer detection transformed through new 'molecular switch' technology

A Charles Sturt University researcher is helping transform the future of cancer diagnosis with a new, low-cost testing method, fast-tracking access to treatment.

Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Cancer and Molecular Biology) in the Charles Sturt Rural Health Research Institute Dr Sharmin Aktar has co-led two major studies that introduce a powerful new tool for detecting genetic mutations linked to colorectal cancer.

As one of the most common and deadly forms of cancer globally, she said the research would have a significant impact on healthcare systems regionally, nationally and globally.

"Our goal was to develop a simple, accurate and affordable test that can be used even in areas without access to high-end lab equipment," Dr Aktar said.

[Read more.](#)



Photo (left to right): Dr Sharmin Aktar and Griffith University PhD student Sajedul Islam



## New water testing breakthrough offers fast, affordable detection of dangerous parasite

A Charles Sturt University researcher has helped develop a groundbreaking new method to test water for a dangerous parasite.

The research, titled '[Avoiding commercial kit-based DNA isolation and purification steps: A rapid method for Cryptosporidium oocyst detection](#)', has discovered a faster, cheaper and accurate means of testing for cryptosporidium.

Distinguished Professor in Nanotechnology in the Charles Sturt [Rural Health Research Institute](#) [Muhammad Shiddiky](#) said Cryptosporidium is one of the most common and dangerous waterborne parasites in the world.

"Transmitted via the faecal-oral route through contaminated water or food, it is a leading cause of diarrhoea-related mortality and long-term health impacts such as malnutrition and impaired cognitive development," Professor Shiddiky said.

"According to the [Global Burden of Disease 2019 study](#), cryptosporidiosis resulted in over 133,000 deaths and 8.2 million disability-adjusted life years globally in children under five."

[Read more.](#)



Professor Julaine Allan  
Rural Health Research  
Institute

## Co-designing social media interventions with young people

On 3 September 2025, Professor Julaine Allan presented her research on co-designing social media interventions with young people who use nitrous oxide, as part of the Turning Point monthly seminar series, which attracted over 700 registrations.

Turning Point, Australia's leading national centre for addiction treatment, education and research, plays a key role in supporting individuals and families affected by alcohol, drug use and gambling, as well as training clinicians, students and community groups.

Working alongside colleagues from the University of Wollongong, Julaine facilitated workshops with young people to shape the style and content of harm-reduction resources developed from research evidence. These resources are now live on TikTok, Instagram and Reddit, and early feedback from young people has been highly positive.

[View the resources.](#)



Dr Hazel Dalton  
Rural Health Research  
Institute

## Guest Lecture – University of Leiden, 26 June 2025

Dr Hazel Dalton delivered an online lecture to the Master of Public Health program at the University of Leiden on *Regional mental health planning in rural and remote Australia*.

The presentation provided an overview of Australia's rural and remote mental health needs, services and policies, with a focus on regional planning processes and a case study from Western NSW. With the Australian context outlined, students engaged in discussion and comparison with the Netherlands and broader European contexts.



Alexander (Sasha)  
Tynan  
Rural Health Research  
Institute

## 3MT Success – Sasha Tynan

PhD candidate Alexander (Sasha) Tynan recently reached the finals of the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition, presenting his research on developing a multi-epitope vaccine to prevent schistosome infections. At the Wagga Wagga final, he was awarded the People's Choice Award for his presentation.

Schistosomiasis affects nearly 240 million people worldwide, particularly in tropical and subtropical regions where access to clean water and sanitation is limited. The disease causes chronic ill-health and severe organ damage, disproportionately impacting impoverished and marginalised communities.

Sasha's innovative vaccine approach offers a promising pathway toward eliminating this debilitating disease and delivering enormous health benefits for millions of people globally.



## Research reveals urgent need for targeted dietary interventions to combat chronic disease

New research by Charles Sturt University researchers has revealed critical insights into how poor diet continues to drive Australia's chronic disease burden, despite modest improvements over the past two decades.

Lead researcher from RHRI [Distinguished Professor Jing Sun](#) used data from the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#) (AIHW) to assess trends in non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic kidney disease and type 2 diabetes, from 2003 to 2024.

The results are published in [the article](#) 'Dietary attribution to burden of chronic disease in Australia: a systematic analysis of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2024 national burden of disease dataset' in a Lancet journal, *eClinicalMedicine*.

[Read more.](#)



Professor Julaine Allan  
Rural Health Research  
Institute

## Implementing cognitive remediation for psychoses

The RHRI Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)-funded research project on cognitive remediation therapy for people with psychoses is highlighting the importance of addressing cognitive function as a critical step in improving daily life, relationships and employment opportunities.

Project lead Professor Julaine Allan recently presented progress at the NSW Health Statewide Rehabilitation Psychiatrists Meeting and the Statewide Project Leaders Group for the NSW Health Mental Health Inpatient Rehabilitation Model of Care Framework.

Other project leaders have also been sharing outcomes nationally and internationally:

- Dr Julia Lappin, site lead for South Eastern Sydney LHD, delivered the plenary at the Psychosis Australia Conference in Brisbane.
- Dr Nick Burns, Project Advisory Group Chair, represented the project at the Royal College of Psychiatrists Faculty of Social and Rehabilitation Psychiatry Conference in Cardiff, UK in September 2025.



## Showcasing regional health and medical research

Charles Sturt University was proud to host Research Australia's University Roundtable and a Showcase of Regional Health and Medical Research and Innovation in Orange. The event, chaired by Professor Russell Gruen, brought together national leaders for robust discussions on the strategic priorities for health and medical research in regional, rural, remote and very remote (RRRvR) Australia.

Led by Professor Julian Grant, the Roundtable featured contributions from distinguished speakers, including Ms Rosemary Huxtable AO PSM and Professor Jenny May AM, National Rural Health Commissioner, whose insights helped shape a forward-looking discussion on opportunities to strengthen research in these communities.

A Lightning Panel Discussion featured Dr Hazel Dalton, Luke Marks an HDR candidate working in Western NSW Local Health District and Dr Kate Dooley an early career researcher from the School of Allied Health, Exercise and Sports Sciences at the Faculty of Science and Health as invited contributors.

The accompanying Showcase highlighted the unique strengths of regional research and reinforced the importance of investing in local capacity – not only to improve health outcomes, but also to strengthen the workforce, drive innovation and build more resilient, self-reliant communities.

## Conference presentation

At the 2025 National Allied Health Conference in Adelaide, Heidi Gray, a PhD candidate at RHRI, presented *The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use*. Co-authors were Nicola Ivory, Nicole Snowdon and Professor Julaine Allan.





Dr Jacqueline Service

St Mark's National  
Theological Centre  
Faculty of Arts and  
Education

## Dr Jacqueline Service on women's leadership and the 'stained glass ceiling'

On 2 August 2025, Dr Jacqueline Service, Director of St Mark's National Theological Centre and Charles Sturt Senior Lecturer in Systematic Theology, participated in the biennial Evangelical Women in Academia conference, "Raising Her Voice: Women in Scripture, Theology, Mission and the Church." The conference platforms equip and inspire Christian women engaged in academic work across Australia.

Dr Service was invited to contribute to a plenary panel on *Women's leadership and the 'stained glass ceiling'*, addressing barriers to, and opportunities for, women's leadership within the church and academy.

She spoke alongside Rev'd Dr Melinda Cousins (Director of Ministries, Baptist Churches SA & NT) and Rev'd Tracy Lauersen (National Program Manager, Families and Culture Commission, Anglican Church of Australia). The panel offered insight and encouragement to women navigating leadership challenges, highlighting pathways for greater participation and influence in the church and academy.





Associate Professor  
Bernard Doherty

Faculty of Arts and  
Education

## Bernard Doherty contributes to national conversation on religious liberty

On 12 September, Associate Professor Bernard Doherty spoke at the [University of Notre Dame Sydney Religious Liberty Conference](#). The conference theme, 'Religious Liberty in Australia,' covered a variety of topics of contemporary concern. Dr Doherty was invited to speak about the Parliament of Victoria's current inquiry into the recruitment methods and impacts of cults and organised fringe groups. His presentation highlighted some of the conceptual problems surrounding the inquiry and its poorly defined notion of what constituted a 'cult' and discussed some of the previous government inquiries which have examined the practices of minority religions.



Associate Professor  
Anthony Rees

Faculty of Arts and  
Education

## Associate Professor Anthony Rees joins ACU panel on faith and dialogue

On 15 October, Associate Professor Anthony Rees was a panellist in an online seminar hosted by the Australian Catholic University (ACU). The theme for the panel was the role of scriptural authority in interfaith dialogue and it also featured Dr Mahsheed Ansari from the Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation, and Dr Emmanuel Nathan (ACU).



Dr Kristy Campion  
Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Dr Kristy Campion to deliver keynote at ANZSOC 2025

Dr Kristy Campion, Senior Lecturer in Terrorism Studies at the Australian Graduate School of Policing and Security, has been invited as one of four keynote speakers at the 2025 [Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology \(ANZSOC\) Conference](#), to be held from 1–3 December at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Brisbane.

The conference theme, 'Advancing knowledge, shaping justice,' will bring together leading scholars, practitioners and policymakers to address emerging challenges in criminology – from technological changes to new forms of crime – and explore how research can help forge a more just and resilient society.



Dr Leo Lin  
Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Dr Leo Lin presents at Social Sciences Week seminar

Dr Leo Lin from the School of Policing Studies was invited to speak at the Social Sciences Week – Translational Criminology Seminar Series, hosted by the Crime and Security Science Research Group at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Dr Lin discussed the growing risks of AI-driven deepfakes and cryptocrime, sharing insights from major cases such as the Arup fraud and the Bybit hack.



Professor Ashad Kabir  
Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Professor Ashad Kabir invited as Distinguished Speaker at ICAI 2025

Professor Ashad Kabir from the School of Computing, Mathematics and Engineering was invited to serve as a Distinguished Speaker at the International Congress on Artificial Intelligence (ICAI) 2025.

The flagship two-day virtual event, organised by the IEEE Systems Council BUBT Student Branch Chapter and supported by the Bangladesh University of Business and Technology (BUBT), was held online from 6–7 September 2025. The congress brought together global experts to connect, share knowledge and explore advancements in artificial intelligence (AI).

*Professor Kabir presented on Applications of artificial intelligence and smartphone apps in health and agriculture: Recent advancements and opportunities.*

This recognition highlights Professor Kabir's outstanding contributions to AI and his leadership in advancing innovative, ethical and impactful research with real-world benefits.



## Charles Sturt University and Pro Patria Centre: Advancing veteran health and wellbeing

One year after the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide delivered its findings, Charles Sturt University and the Pro Patria Centre convened a landmark conference to assess progress and chart the path forward. The "12 Months On" Conference: Building a Future of Veteran Health and Wellbeing was held on 8 October 2025 at Charles Sturt University's Wagga Wagga campus. It brought together researchers, clinicians, veterans and policymakers to examine what has been working in veteran health innovation and suicide prevention.

The conference showcased significant advances across multiple domains. Emerging therapies including psychedelic-assisted treatments, hyperbaric oxygen therapy and endocannabinoid health are now part of active research and clinical discussions. Greater attention is being directed to traumatic brain injury as an underlying driver of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, helping to reframe treatment approaches away from purely psychiatric models towards integrated neurological care.

Collaborative care models demonstrated throughout the conference highlight how partnerships between universities, veteran organisations and health providers are integrating evidence-based research into frontline services. Community-driven initiatives featured prominently, with veteran-led projects successfully reducing stigma, increasing peer connection and ensuring that lived experience shapes service delivery.

This conference reflects the broader commitment embodied in the Pro Patria Research Strategy 2025–2027, which Charles Sturt University is helping to deliver. Through four interconnected research domains – Health and Wellbeing, Physical Health and Performance, Family and Community, and Innovative Therapies – the partnership is building the evidence base needed to support veterans, first responders and their families, particularly in regional areas.

Complementing this research agenda is Charles Sturt University's Veteran Pathway and Support Program, which recognises military service through direct entry pathways, academic credit recognition across multiple disciplines and comprehensive wraparound support services. By combining rigorous research with purpose-built educational opportunities and strong clinical partnerships, Charles Sturt University and the Pro Patria Centre are creating sustainable, evidence-based solutions that honour service whilst strengthening regional communities through improved health, wellbeing and social connection outcomes.



Explore your veteran career options

### Veteran Pathway and Support Program

Discover your veteran career after serving in the Australian Defence Force. Our Veteran Pathway and Support Program for veterans and current serving military personnel supports your military to civilian transition.

Whether you're currently serving or have served in the Australian Defence Force, adjusting to civilian life after military service can be a challenging journey, and we're here to help.

From pathways and direct entry courses to veteran support services, our program offers everything you need to discover a meaningful career.

Contact us →

Apply now →



### Discover your pathway to civilian success

As a veteran or currently serving, you can access three dedicated support streams.



Associate Professor  
Alain Neher

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences



Dr Lucia Wuersch

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences



Associate Professor  
Alfred Wong

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Small businesses shaping the future of decent work through AI and digital transformation

At the 9th Regulating for Decent Work (RDW) Conference hosted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland (2–4 July 2025), researchers from Charles Sturt University and the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) shared new insights into the future of work in the digital age. Associate Professor Alain Neher, Dr Lucia Wuersch, Associate Professor Alfred Wong and Professor Marc K. Peter co-authored a full paper titled 'Strengthening labour market institutions through leveraging industry 4.0 and 5.0: A working from home example in Swiss MSEs,' which was presented on 2 July.

The study examined how micro and small enterprises (MSEs), which account for 98 per cent of Swiss businesses and 70 per cent of the global workforce, are adapting to digital transformation (Industry 4.0) and the rise of ethical AI (Industry 5.0). Industry 4.0 reshaped telework into widespread working from home (WFH), while Industry 5.0 expands this trajectory through human-machine collaboration, the Internet of Things and AI designed to support wellbeing in Society 5.0.

A four-year pooled cross-sectional study (2020–2023) of 2,015 Swiss MSE managing directors

(MDs) found significant growth in the adoption of digital communication tools, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. A follow-up 2024 survey of 526 MDs revealed that six per cent of MSEs are already employing AI solutions, such as chatbots, to enhance efficiency and innovation.

The research recommends that policymakers accelerate the adoption of remote work policies, provide digital templates and expand training programs. For businesses, leadership in ethical digital strategies and employee skill-building are key to strengthening labour institutions, fostering engagement and ensuring resilience in the evolving digital economy.

### Reference

Neher, A., Wuersch, L., Wong, A., & Peter, M. K. (2025). Strengthening labour market institutions through leveraging Industry 4.0 and 5.0: Working from home example in Swiss MSEs. *9th Regulating for Decent Work Conference, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 2–4 July.*

### Related publications

Neher, A., Wuersch, L., Wong, A., & Peter, M. K. (2025). The association between technology group, working from home behaviour and preferred communication tools in disruptive times: A micro and small enterprise perspective. *European Research on*

*Management and Business Economics, 31(2), 1–14.*  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2025.100280>

Peter, M. K., Wuersch, L., Neher, A., Lindeque A. P., & Lerch, K. M. (2024). The workplace of the future: The COVID-19 pandemic and working from home in Swiss small businesses. *Journal of Strategic Management, 17(4), 707–729.* <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSCMA-09-2023-0248>

Peter, M., Wuersch, L., Wong, A., Neher, A. (2024). Digital transformation of work: Swiss MSEs working from home behaviour during COVID-19 – pioneers leading the pack. *European Business Review, 36(2), 249–270.* <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-01-2023-0008>





Associate Professor  
Abhishek Dwivedi

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Two recent publications on B2B engagement and brand strategy

Associate Professor Abhishek Dwivedi recently had two successful publications; together, these works provide strategic insights for firms on leveraging credibility and pricing to foster stronger, trust-based relationships with customers.

### Credibility builds lasting business relationships

In the competitive arena of business-to-business (B2B) markets, where empowered buyers sift through endless options and demand proven reliability, our recent study uncovers how a selling firm's credibility can spark lasting customer engagement. Imagine industrial buyers, wary of risks and uncertain value in complex purchases, turning to signals like consistent marketing and clear brand positioning to gauge a selling firm's trustworthiness. Our research suggests that this credibility reduces perceived risks, enhances views of value and quality, and fosters buyer dependence, ultimately driving engagement through repeat buys, referrals and feedback.

This matters because strong buyer-seller relationships drive smoother supply chains, spark innovation and keep local economies humming. For businesses, the lesson is simple: focus on being dependable and clear about what you offer, and even smaller players can build lasting connections that boost sales and trust.

Abhishek Dwivedi, Civilai Leckie, Lester W. Johnson; Selling firm credibility and buying firm engagement. *European Journal of Marketing* 2025; <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-10-2022-0762>

### The power of premium pricing

Picture a bustling marketplace where brands vie for attention, but consumers often wonder if a higher price tag truly signals something special. Our latest study tackles this puzzle, exploring how seeing a brand as premium-priced – like those sleek smartphones that cost a bit more – shapes shoppers' knowledge of the brand, its standout appeal and, ultimately, their trust and happiness with it. Drawing from US survey data, the research reveals that premium pricing isn't just about dollars; it builds deeper connections by making brands feel unique and reliable.

This insight hits home for businesses chasing growth in crowded fields, where strong customer bonds drive loyalty and community buzz. For marketers, the message is straightforward: lean into premium pricing as a smart tool to stand out, foster trust and keep folks satisfied – even smaller brands can play this game to strengthen ties and spark sales.

Dwivedi, A., & McDonald, B. (2025). A model of brand price premiumness and its marketing outcomes. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 1–22.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2025.2544671>



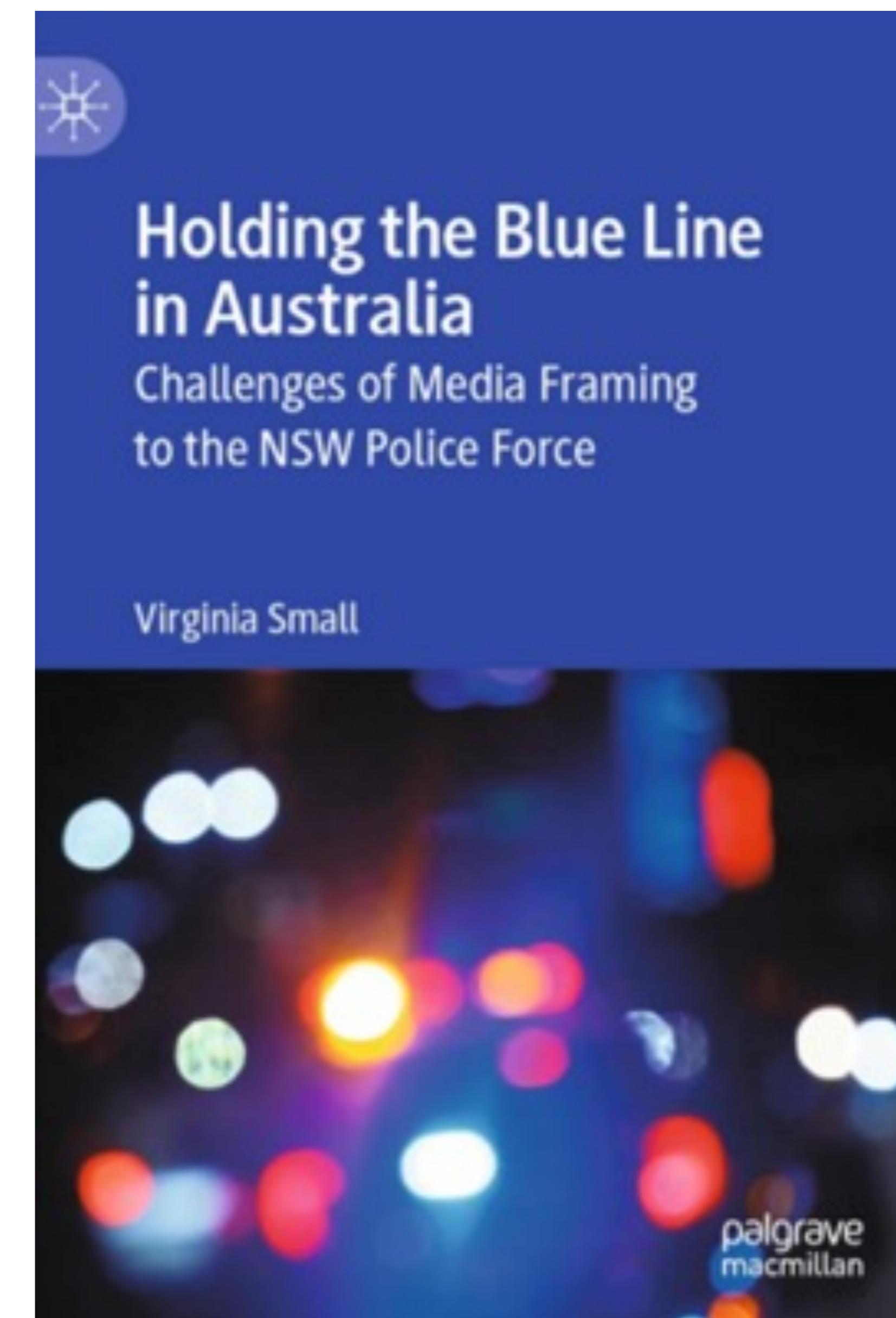
Dr Virginia Small

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## New book by Dr Virginia Small: *Holding the Blue Line in Australia*

Congratulations to Dr Virginia Small, Lecturer in the School of Policing Studies, on the publication of her new book, [Holding the Blue Line in Australia: Challenges of Media Framing to the NSW Police Force \(2025\)](#).

The book examines how social media shapes public opinion and mainstream media in Australia, with a particular focus on its influence on policing in New South Wales. Dr Small explores how social media framing affects law enforcement operations and the police's capacity to respond effectively in an evolving digital landscape.





Dr Kristy Campion

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural SciencesAssociate Professor  
Emma ColvinFaculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Exploring youth vulnerability to extremist recruitment

Dr Kristy Campion, Senior Lecturer in Terrorism Studies at the Australian Graduate School of Policing and Security, and Emma Colvin, Associate Professor in Law and Criminology at the Charles Sturt Centre for Law and Justice, have co-authored a compelling article in *The Conversation* titled '[Extremists are targeting young Australians who crave belonging – what can we do?](#)'

Their research examines the factors that make young people susceptible to extremist recruitment and presents evidence-based strategies to foster disengagement and build resilience.

This work underscores the real-world impact of their research and its value in shaping community understanding and informing policy.



Dr Linda Peach

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Exploring the rise of 'tradwife' culture

In *The Conversation*, Dr Linda Peach from the School of Psychology shares her collaborative research in the article '[From the manosphere to tradwives – why are young women embracing traditional gender roles?](#)'

The piece explores the social and psychological factors driving the resurgence of traditional gender ideologies among young women.

You can also listen to Dr Peach discuss her research on [ABC Radio NSW](#) (timestamp 2:01).

## Strengthening financial crime intelligence in Australian Commonwealth regulatory agencies

By Emma Kerin, Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences

Financial crime remains one of the most persistent and complex threats to national and global economic stability. In Australia, federal regulatory agencies are on the frontline of preventing and disrupting these crimes; however, the intelligence functions that underpin their efforts are often underdeveloped, inconsistently structured and insufficiently understood because traditionally the sector has been overlooked in intelligence research. Doctoral research by Emma Kerin addresses this urgent challenge by delivering new insights and solutions offering both theoretical and practical contributions with strong international relevance.

This research investigates the internal intelligence capabilities of Australian Commonwealth regulatory agencies, with a focus on how these structures support, and hinder, the prevention and disruption of financial crime. Using an exploratory qualitative methodology grounded in organisational theory and a social constructivist lens, the research draws on interviews, surveys and document analysis to identify critical gaps in intelligence strategy, leadership support, policy flexibility and workforce development.

The study identifies four central and interconnected challenges: limited strategic development, unclear role definition, misaligned accountabilities and the ongoing undervaluation of regulatory intelligence functions. These issues not only limit operational effectiveness but also stifle innovation in how intelligence is applied in non-traditional regulatory settings.

What sets this research apart is its strong international perspective. Comparative analysis with regulatory agencies in Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom enhances the global relevance of the findings and informs a set of forward-looking recommendations. The research proposes characteristics for a new model for

intelligence structures specifically designed to meet the unique needs of regulatory agencies. This structure empowers agencies to move from reactive intelligence activities to proactive, outcome-driven strategies.

The research makes two key contributions. Theoretically, it expands the understanding of intelligence operations beyond traditional law enforcement or national security paradigms. Secondly, practically, it delivers a flexible structure that can be adopted or adapted by regulatory agencies in Australia and internationally, enabling a more coordinated and effective response to financial crime.

This work exemplifies Charles Sturt University's mission to deliver research that is not only academically rigorous but also socially and globally impactful. The project contributes to strengthening institutional resilience, enhancing the professionalisation of public sector intelligence and supporting more effective responses to financial crime at both national and global levels.

As financial crime becomes increasingly sophisticated and transnational, there is a growing urgency for regulatory agencies to modernise their intelligence functions. This research directly addresses that need and positions Charles Sturt University at the forefront of a vital, emerging area of public sector innovation.

By challenging outdated structures and proposing a future-focused intelligence model, this study paves the way for a paradigm shift in regulatory intelligence, transforming it from a peripheral, reactive function into a strategic, embedded capability. Through this work, Charles Sturt University continues to demonstrate its leadership in research with real-world impact, contributing to stronger governance, economic integrity and global security.



Dr Yanzan Al-Hayek

Faculty of Science and Health

## Dr Yanzan Al-Hayek: PhD research on safer, smarter CT imaging

In June 2025, Yanzan Al-Hayek completed his PhD at Charles Sturt University with a thesis titled *The Implications of Patient Centring on CT Number and Radiation Dose in CT Imaging*. His research addressed a critical but often overlooked aspect of computed tomography (CT) practice: precise patient positioning at the gantry isocentre. Through three experimental studies using anthropomorphic and uniform density phantoms across multiple scanner models, Yanzan demonstrated that off-centring can significantly alter CT number accuracy and increase patient dose. These effects were particularly pronounced at lower tube voltages, with larger patient sizes and when bowtie filters were misaligned, underscoring the importance of precise positioning to optimise both image quality and radiation safety.

A national survey of Australian radiographers complemented the experimental work, revealing variability in centring practices, limited awareness of localiser direction effects and inconsistent review of CT numbers post-acquisition. This highlighted gaps in knowledge and opportunities for targeted continuing professional development. The outcomes of this research provide a robust evidence base to enhance clinical guidelines, improve patient safety and inform future integration of auto-positioning technologies in CT imaging. Yanzan's work offers valuable insights for radiographers, educators and equipment manufacturers seeking to maximise diagnostic benefits while minimising unnecessary radiation exposure.





Dr Xiaoming Zheng

Faculty of Science  
and Health

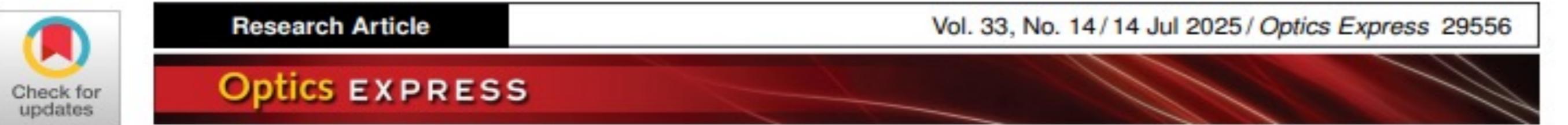
Dr Yazan Al-Hayek

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Charles Sturt researchers advance understanding of tissue imaging physics

Researchers from Charles Sturt University, including Dr Xiaoming Zheng and Dr Yazan Al-Hayek from the medical radiation sciences discipline, have co-authored a study titled '[Impacts of coherent interference of X-rays on measured attenuation coefficients of tissue materials using monochromatic CT of Australian Synchrotron](#)'. The work, conducted at the Australian Synchrotron, investigated how coherent interference influences attenuation coefficients of tissue-equivalent materials using monochromatic CT imaging.

The study measured liquid water and electron density phantoms at varying beam energies (58–72 keV) and phantom sizes, providing new insights into phase contrast imaging and interference effects in diagnostic radiology. Findings confirmed that theoretical predictions of attenuation coefficients were consistent with experimental results, advancing understanding of tissue imaging physics and informing future applications of synchrotron-based CT.



### **Impacts of coherent interference of X-rays on measured attenuation coefficients of tissue materials using monochromatic CT of Australian Synchrotron**

**XIAOMING ZHENG,\* SANAT AVAZBAEV, AND YAZAN AL-HAYEK**

*Medical Radiation Science, School of Dentistry and Medical Sciences, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia*  
\*[xzheng@csu.edu.au](mailto:xzheng@csu.edu.au)



Bismark Ofori-  
ManteawFaculty of Science  
and Health

## Research advocates for clearer cardiac MRI education for patients

Bismark Ofori-Manteaw and colleagues from York St John University, UK, Tamale Technical University, Ghana and University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana have published their article '[Readability of patient education materials on cardiac MRI](#)' in the *European Heart Journal - Imaging Methods and Practice*. The study evaluated online patient education materials for cardiac magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) from leading organisations, including the British Heart Foundation, RadiologyInfo and the European Society of Cardiology, using six established readability indices. Findings revealed that while some resources, such as those from the British Heart Foundation, were written at an accessible level, many others were too complex for low-health-literacy audiences.

The research highlights the importance of ensuring patient education materials are clear, concise and accessible, particularly in specialised imaging such as cardiac MRI. Bismark's contribution underscores the role of radiography researchers in advancing patient-centred care by advocating for materials that enhance understanding, support informed decision-making and ultimately improve health outcomes.

JOURNAL ARTICLE

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

## Readability of patient education materials on Cardiac MRI

Albert Dayor Piessson  , Bismark Ofori-Manteaw , Hanifatu Napari Mumuni ,  
Klenam Dzefi-Tettey

*European Heart Journal - Imaging Methods and Practice*, qyaf111,  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ehjimp/qyaf111>

Published: 20 August 2025 [Article history ▾](#)



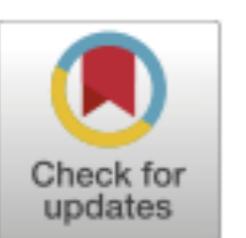
Bismark Ofori-Manteaw

Faculty of Science and Health

## Advocating for soft skills in medical radiation science education

Charles Sturt University academic Bismark Ofori-Manteaw advocates for soft skills inclusion in medical radiation science education in his paper titled '[Integrating soft skills into medical radiation science curricula: A necessity, not an option](#)'. In this piece, Bismark argues that technical expertise alone is not sufficient for modern medical radiation science practice. He emphasises the critical role of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, empathy and cultural competence in improving patient care, enhancing interprofessional collaboration and supporting safe clinical practice.

He calls for a paradigm shift in curriculum design, urging universities and training institutions to embed soft skills development alongside technical competencies. By equipping future medical radiation science professionals with both technical and interpersonal capabilities, Bismark highlights the need to prepare graduates who are not only clinically competent but also compassionate and adaptable in diverse healthcare settings.



ELSEVIER

Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences 56 (2025) 101979

Commentary

### Integrating soft skills into medical radiation science curricula: A necessity, not an option

Bismark Ofori-Manteaw

Medical Radiation Science Discipline, School of Dentistry and Medical Science, Faculty of Science and Health, Charles Sturt University, Locked Bag 588 Boorooma Street, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

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Bismark Ofori-Manteaw

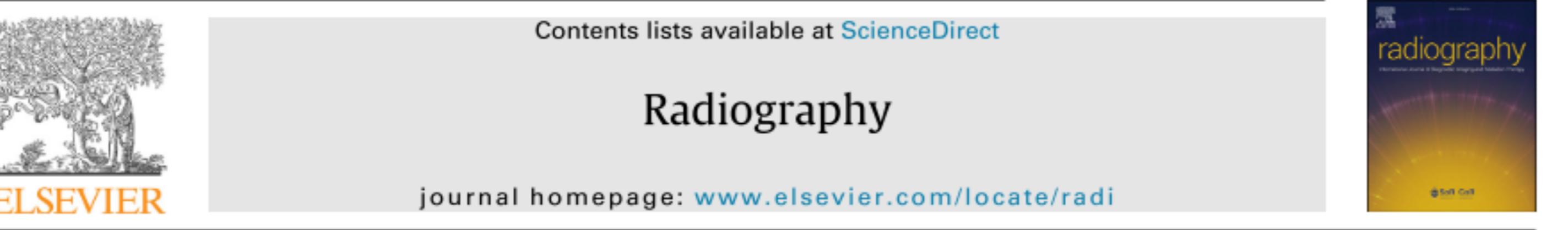
Faculty of Science and Health

## Exploring sustainability in radiography: Insights from Ghana

Bismark Ofori-Manteaw co-authored a study titled '[Exploring sustainability in radiography: A study of Ghanaian radiographers](#)', published in *Radiography*. The research investigated the awareness and practices of Ghanaian radiographers in relation to environmental sustainability in healthcare. Nearly half of the participants identified climate change as a significant societal concern, while many advocated for training programs, policy development and collaboration with environmental experts to embed sustainable practices in radiography.

The findings underscore the need to integrate sustainability principles into professional development and radiography curricula, positioning radiographers as key contributors to environmental stewardship in healthcare. This study highlights practical strategies to reduce environmental impact while maintaining high standards of patient care, advancing global conversations on sustainability within medical imaging.

[Radiography 31 \(2025\) 102952](#)



## Exploring sustainability in radiography: A study of Ghanaian radiographers

W. Abdul Razak <sup>a, b, \*</sup>, C. Takyi <sup>a</sup>, B.B. Ofori-Manteaw <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of Cape Coast, College of Health and Allied Sciences, School of Allied Health Sciences, Department of Medical Imaging and Sonography, Cape Coast, Ghana

<sup>b</sup> Fatima College of Health Sciences, Department of Radiology and Medical Imaging, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates

<sup>c</sup> Charles Sturt University, Faculty of Science and Health, Medical Radiation Science Discipline, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia



Bismark Ofori-Manteaw

Faculty of Science and Health



Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science and Health

## New study explores advancing environmental sustainability in medical radiation science education

Charles Sturt University researchers Bismark Ofori-Manteaw and Shayne Chau, in collaboration with colleagues from RMIT University, the University of Ghana, the City University of London and Bournemouth University, UK, have co-authored a newly published article, '[Advancing environmental sustainability concepts in medical radiation science education: A document analysis](#)'.

The study analysed documents published between 2015 and 2025 to evaluate current practices, barriers and strategies for integrating environmental sustainability (ES) into medical radiation science (MRS) education. Findings revealed three major themes: current ES practices in MRS curricula, barriers such as limited resources and insufficient knowledge, and strategies for improvement including risk-benefit analysis, fostering collaboration and raising ES awareness. The paper calls for embedding sustainability concepts into radiography education to prepare graduates for environmentally responsible professional practice and to support global sustainability goals.

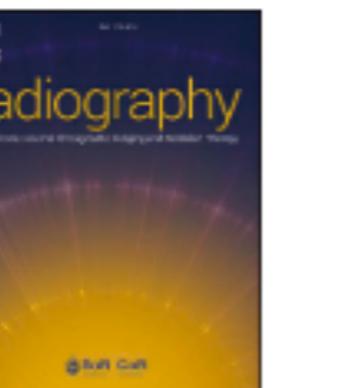
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journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/radi](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/radi)



### Advancing environmental sustainability concepts in medical radiation science education: A document analysis

J.L. Ago <sup>a,b,\*</sup>, A. Kilgour <sup>a</sup>, M. Chau <sup>c</sup>, B. Ohene-Botwe <sup>d</sup>, B. Ofori-Manteaw <sup>c</sup>, C.L. Smith <sup>a</sup>, G. Acquah <sup>b</sup>, T.N. Akudjedu <sup>e</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Discipline of Medical Radiations, School of Health and Biomedical Sciences, RMIT University, Bundoora Campus, Australia

<sup>b</sup> Department of Radiography, School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences, University of Ghana, Korle-Bu Campus, Ghana

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Bismark Ofori-  
ManteawFaculty of Science  
and Health

## Understanding stress and coping mechanisms among radiography students

Bismark Ofori-Manteaw has co-authored a new study titled '[Stress and coping mechanisms among undergraduate radiography students: A single centre study in Ghana](#)', published in *Radiography*. Over 40 per cent of students reported very high stress levels, largely linked to academic workload, examinations and clinical demands. Common effects included fatigue, headaches and difficulty concentrating.

Students adopted coping strategies such as engaging in internet use, taking breaks, meditation and spending time with family and friends. The findings underscore the urgent need for structured support programs and institutional interventions to safeguard student wellbeing and academic success.

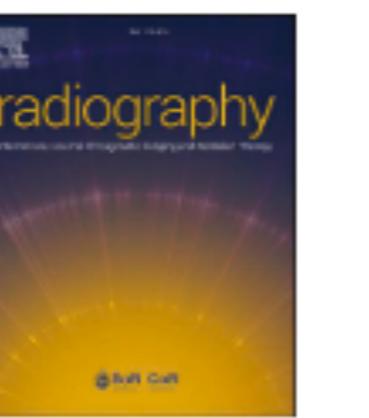
*Radiography* 31 (2025) 103094



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**Radiography**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/radi](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/radi)



## Stress and coping mechanisms among undergraduate radiography students: A single centre study in Ghana

V.D. Atuwo-Ampoh <sup>a,\*</sup>, G. Whajah <sup>a</sup>, B. Ofori-Manteaw <sup>b</sup>, P. Addo <sup>a</sup>, N.A. Angaag <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Medical Imaging, University of Health and Allied Sciences – Ho, Volta Region, Ghana

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<sup>c</sup> Department of Radiology, Holy Family Catholic Polyclinic, Kulmasa, Savannah Region, Ghana



Caroline Nabasenja

Faculty of Science  
and Health

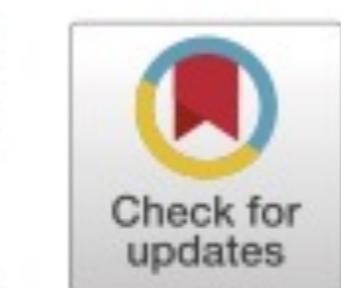
Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science  
and HealthAssociate Professor  
Elyce GreenFaculty of Science  
and Health

## Charles Sturt team investigates AI-generated reflections in radiography education

Charles Sturt University researchers Caroline Nabasenja, Shayne Chau and Associate Professor Elyce Green have published a pilot study titled '[Exploring ChatGPT-4o-generated reflections: Alignment with professional standards in diagnostic radiography](#)' in the *Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences*. The study examined the potential of ChatGPT-4o to support reflective practice in medical radiation science education, using clinical scenarios from third-year radiography placements.

Findings revealed that AI-generated reflections were generally well-structured and clear, though they sometimes lacked emotional context and person-centred insight. The authors conclude that while AI can assist in structuring reflections, it should complement, rather than replace, human-guided reflective learning. Hybrid approaches that combine AI with educator input may enhance both efficiency and authenticity in radiography education.



Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences 56 (2025) 102082

Research Article

### Exploring ChatGPT-4o-generated reflections: Alignment with professional standards in diagnostic radiography – A pilot experiment

C Nabasenja<sup>a</sup>, M Chau<sup>b,\*</sup> and E Green<sup>c</sup><sup>a</sup> Faculty of Science and Health, Wagga, Charles Sturt University NSW, Australia<sup>b</sup> Faculty of Science and Health, Port Macquarie, Charles Sturt University NSW, Australia<sup>c</sup> Three Rivers Department of Rural Health, Charles Sturt University, NSW, AustraliaJournal of Medical Imaging  
and Radiation SciencesJournal de l'imagerie médicale  
et des sciences de la radiation[www.elsevier.com/locate/jmir](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jmir)

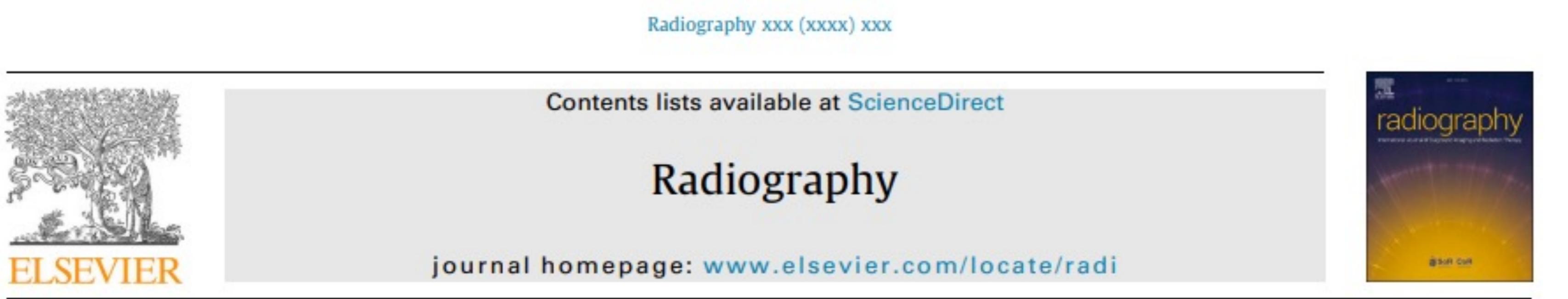


Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Shayne Chau publishes study on emotional burden of imaging report access

Shayne Chau of the medical radiation science discipline has published an article titled '[Alone with the diagnosis: A reflective analysis on imaging report access and emotional burden](#)' in *Radiography*. The study explores the emotional consequences of unguided access to imaging reports via digital health portals, particularly in cancer diagnostics. Drawing on first-hand reflection and a narrative literature review, the work highlights issues such as scanxiety, obsessive information-seeking and reduced patient safety when abnormal results are accessed without professional context or support. Shayne calls for more sensitive pathways for releasing high-risk findings, underscoring the vital role of radiographers in providing timely communication and support to patients navigating distressing diagnoses.



Review article

### Alone with the diagnosis: A reflective analysis on imaging report access and emotional burden

M. Chau

*School of Dentistry and Medical Sciences, Faculty of Science and Health, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia*



Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science  
and Health

Clare Singh

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## AI-driven clinical scenario coach 'Bill' enhances radiography education

Shayne Chau and Clare Singh along with colleagues G. Higgins and Elio Arruzza have published a study describing the development of '[Bill, an AI clinical scenario coach for medical radiation science education](#)'. Built on OpenAI's GPT-4o, Bill simulates realistic clinical challenges aligned with the Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia's professional standards. The prototype generates structured, interactive learning environments, providing feedback on both technical skills and advanced clinical decision-making tasks. Early trials demonstrated Bill's potential to enhance radiography education by offering structured, adaptive guidance and opportunities for authentic practice in a safe environment. The project illustrates how AI can complement traditional teaching methods, bridging gaps in pedagogy and supporting future-ready radiography graduates.



### Technical note

#### 'Bill': An artificial intelligence (AI) clinical scenario coach for medical radiation science education

M. Chau <sup>a,\*</sup>, G. Higgins <sup>b</sup>, E. Arruzza <sup>c</sup>, C.L. Singh <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Faculty of Science and Health, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia

<sup>b</sup> Division of Learning and Teaching, Charles Sturt University, Port Macquarie, NSW 2444, Australia

<sup>c</sup> Allied Health and Human Performance Unit, University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA 5000, Australia

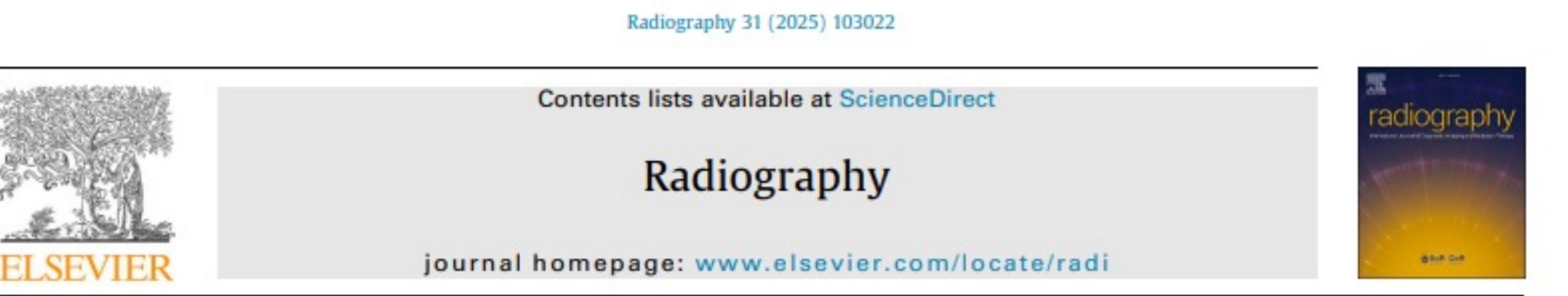


Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Charles Sturt research explores educational value of podcasts

Shayne Chau, together with colleagues from the University of South Australia, has co-authored a systematic review published in *Radiography* titled '[The role of podcasts in allied health education: A scoping review on engagement and learning outcomes](#)'. The review synthesised evidence from 21 eligible studies across allied health disciplines including physiotherapy, medical radiation science, occupational therapy, and sports and exercise science. Findings highlighted that podcasts are widely perceived as flexible and engaging resources, commonly used to complement flipped classrooms and self-directed learning. While students valued podcasts for accessibility and learner flexibility, the review identified limited evidence of long-term educational impact, particularly in skills development. The authors call for further high-quality research to establish the effectiveness of podcasts in allied health education and to guide best practice in their integration into curricula.



### Systematic Review

## The role of podcasts in allied health education: A scoping review on engagement and learning outcomes

N. Gardiakos <sup>a</sup>, M. Chau <sup>b,\*</sup>, E. Arruzza <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Allied Health & Human Performance, University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA 5000, Australia*

<sup>b</sup> *Faculty of Science and Health, Charles Sturt University, Level 5, 250 Boorooma St, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia*





Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Exploring 360° virtual tours to prepare radiography students for practice

Shayne Chau, in collaboration with H. Vu and E. Arruzza, has co-authored a study published in *Radiography* titled '[Use of 360° interactive virtual tours to enhance familiarity of the radiology department](#)'. The study evaluated the effectiveness of 360-degree virtual reality tours as a supplementary educational tool to prepare students for clinical placements in radiography. Findings showed that 90 per cent of students found the tours beneficial for improving their confidence and understanding of radiology settings, including X-ray room layouts and essential equipment. Students reported reduced anxiety before placements and 100 per cent indicated they would use the tool again. The research highlights the potential of immersive digital learning tools to ease the transition into clinical practice and enhance preparedness for healthcare students.

[Radiography 31 \(2025\) 103023](#)

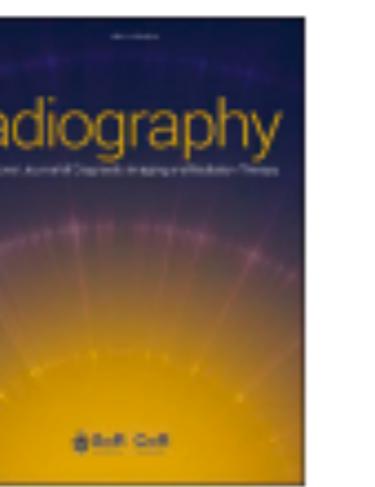


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Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

**Radiography**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/radi](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/radi)



## Use of 360° interactive virtual tours to enhance familiarity of the radiology department

H. Vu <sup>a,\*</sup>, E. Arruzza <sup>a</sup>, M. Chau <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> UniSA Allied Health & Human Performance, University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA 5000, Australia

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Shayne Chau

Faculty of Science  
and Health

Dr Gea Rahman

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

Dr Tanmoy Debnath

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Clarifying AI in healthcare: Strategies for informed consent

Charles Sturt University researchers (Shayne Chau, Dr M.G. Rahman and Dr T. Debnath) have co-authored a paper titled '[From black box to clarity: Strategies for effective AI informed consent in healthcare](#)'. The study addresses the ethical, legal and practical challenges of integrating AI into clinical workflows, particularly the need for transparent and effective informed consent practices. The study highlights the risks of inadequate communication around AI systems, including patient mistrust, clinician over-reliance and insufficient attention to data privacy and algorithmic fairness. To address these challenges, the authors propose strategies such as simplifying consent language, using visual aids, personalising information and ensuring continuous feedback mechanisms. These approaches aim to uphold ethical standards, improve patient understanding and ensure responsible integration of AI technologies in healthcare.

[Artificial Intelligence In Medicine 167 \(2025\) 103169](#)



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### Artificial Intelligence In Medicine

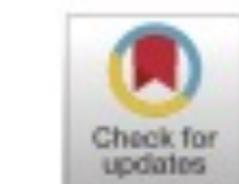
journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/artmed](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/artmed)



Research paper

### From black box to clarity: Strategies for effective AI informed consent in healthcare

M. Chau <sup>a</sup>, M.G. Rahman <sup>b</sup>, T. Debnath <sup>c,\*</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Faculty of Science and Health, School of Dentistry and Medical Sciences, Charles Sturt University, Boorooma, New South Wales, Australia

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Shayne Chau

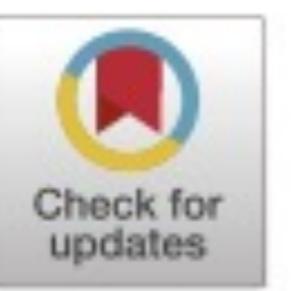
Faculty of Science  
and Health

Clare Singh

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## AI-powered interview preparation for radiography graduates

Shayne Chau and Clare Singh of the medical radiation science discipline, in collaboration with Elio Arruzza of the University of South Australia, have authored a paper titled '[The 'Negotiator': Assessing artificial intelligence \(AI\) interview preparation for graduate radiographers](#)'. The study evaluated The Negotiator, an AI-driven interview preparation tool powered by OpenAI's ChatGPT, designed to help radiography graduates build confidence and readiness for professional job interviews. The research assessed AI-generated interview scenarios for clarity, alignment with competency standards, engagement and overall effectiveness. Findings indicated that the tool provides valuable support in preparing structured responses and enhancing interview confidence, though refinements are needed to strengthen contextual specificity and alignment with professional standards. The study highlights the potential of AI to complement traditional preparation methods and calls for further development to expand its application across health professions.



Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences 56 (2025) 101982

Research Article

## The 'Negotiator': Assessing artificial intelligence (AI) interview preparation for graduate radiographers

M. Chau<sup>a,\*</sup>, E. Arruzza<sup>b</sup> and C.L. Singh<sup>a</sup><sup>a</sup> Faculty of Science and Health, Charles Sturt University, Level 5, 250 Boorooma St, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia<sup>b</sup> UniSA Allied Health & Human Performance, University of South Australia, Adelaide SA 5000, Australia



Associate Professor  
Marco Paschoal  
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Dr Julia Iglesias  
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and Health



Dr Katia Weber  
Faculty of Science  
and Health



Dr Faisal Rehan  
Faculty of Science  
and Health



Dr Noel Ye Naung  
Faculty of Science  
and Health



Associate Professor  
Jake Ball  
Faculty of Science  
and Health



Associate Professor  
Tony Dawson  
Faculty of Science  
and Health



Professor Andrew  
Flatau  
Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Innovative dental research through multidisciplinary collaboration at Charles Sturt

Since 2022, the Centre for Rural Dentistry and Oral Health (CRDOH) has built a regional dental research platform aligned with and committed to its strategic research vision. During this short time, the dental research group has successfully secured multiple competitive grants, laying the foundational networks and infrastructure to support a multidisciplinary and translational dental research program. The research group, led by Associate Professor Marco Paschoal, brings together experts in clinical dentistry, microbiology and material science, with a strong focus on the development, evaluation and application of dental biomaterials in a range of clinical settings. The team fosters innovative and rigorous scientific methodologies within a rural research environment.

The research group maintains active collaborations with national and international institutions and industry partners, significantly enhancing its research capacity and productivity, including significant publications in high-impact journals. It has also successfully secured a diverse portfolio of funding, including Research Infrastructure Support, early career researcher grants, Tri-Faculty Research New Staff support, Conference Schemes, Faculty Discretionary Funds and industry-sponsored initiatives, which have all supported the development of a well-equipped dental materials laboratory.

Close partnerships with academic and industry stakeholders will ensure the group's research remains translational, impactful and aligned with real-world clinical needs, in particular the need to address oral health disparities affecting priority populations.

The CRDOH's research vision prioritises research themes and goals that align with Charles Sturt University's *University Strategy 2030* and the *NSW Oral Health Strategic Plan 2022-2032*, while fostering a dynamic, collaborative ecosystem in support of sustainable dental research and improved oral health outcomes in regional, rural and remote populations.



Dr Clifford Lewis

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Reimagining tourism through a stigma-informed lens

Dr Clifford Lewis from the School of Business recently spent a week at [Tshwane University of Technology](#) in Pretoria, South Africa, sharing his research and engaging with an inspiring community of colleagues, researchers and students.

During the visit, Dr Lewis conducted workshops on qualitative research, industry research methods and academic writing, and delivered a keynote seminar as part of the Dean's Presentation Series.

In his presentation, Dr Lewis emphasised the importance of putting people – both tourists and service providers – back at the heart of the tourism experience. He advocated for a stigma-informed approach to tourism research and practice, one that:

- takes a holistic view of individuals, environments and systems
- acknowledges both minoritisation and privilege through an intersectional lens
- seeks to repair injustice by fostering empowerment and participation
- recognises agency and aims to create transformative, humanising tourism experiences
- moves beyond tokenistic diversity toward genuine inclusion.

Dr Lewis' work reimagines tourism as a field that uplifts, empowers and genuinely celebrates diversity. He expressed gratitude to his hosts, Mr Uwe Hermann and Head of Department Ms Rosa-Anne Naudé-Potgieter, for their kind invitation and hospitality.





Natasha Lubke

Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

Professor Raf Freire

Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

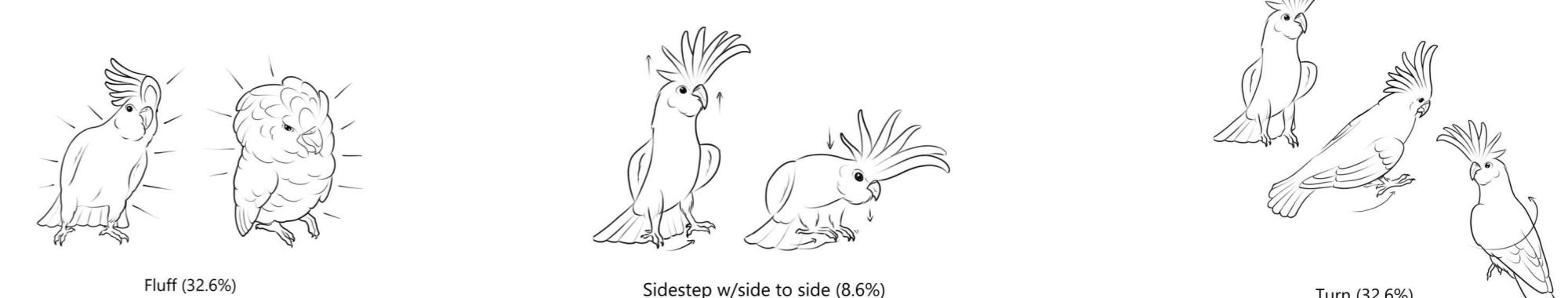
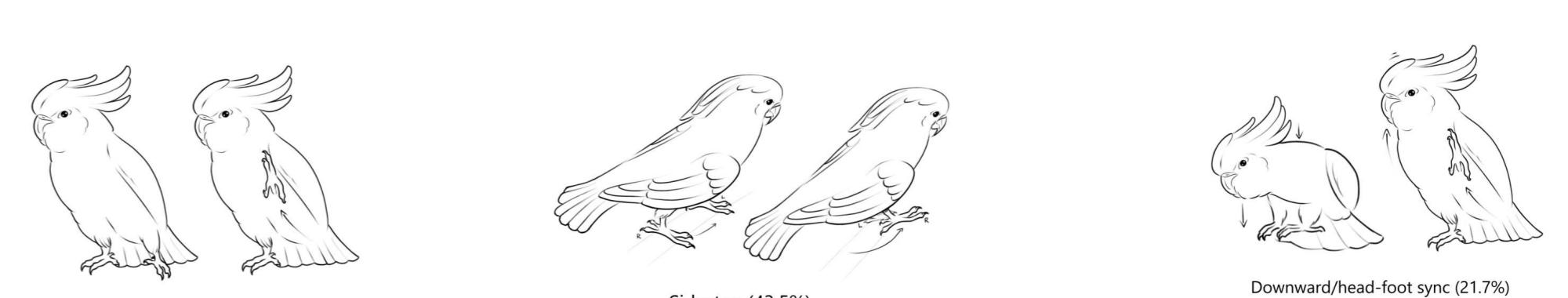
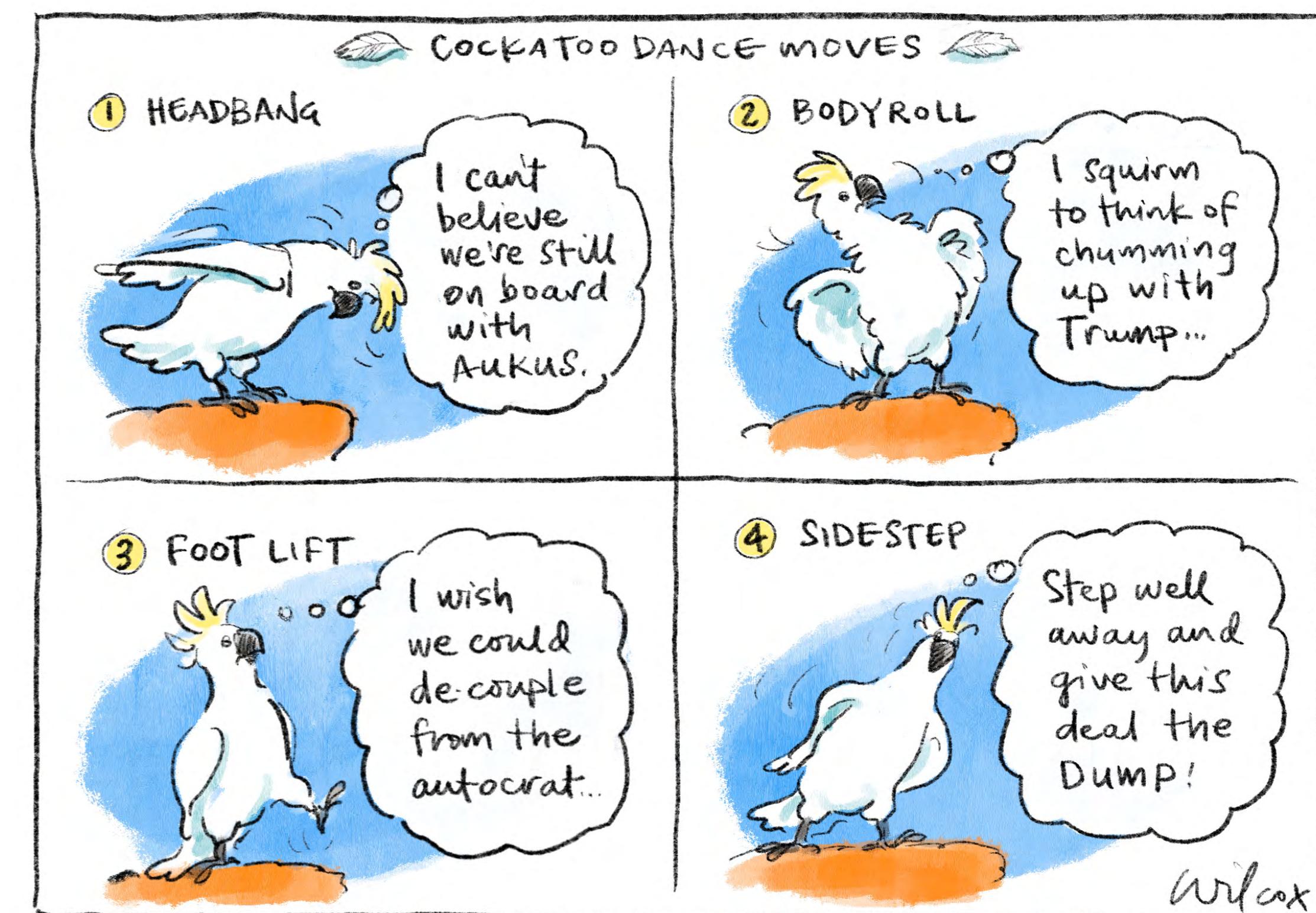
## Dancing behaviour of cockatoos draws international press coverage

A publication arising from an honours project by Natasha Lubke, supervised by Professor Raf Freire, Associate Professor Melanie Massaro and Associate Professor Suzanne Held (Bristol University, UK) attracted widespread media interest.

By analysing 45 YouTube videos and conducting a follow-up experiment at Wagga Wagga Zoo, we were able to publish an ethogram of cockatoo dance behaviour in the respected multidisciplinary journal *PLOS One*. This act of scholarly validation transformed the 'dancing cockatoo' from a simple internet meme into a significant finding in animal welfare and cognition. News outlets like CNN, BBC, Newsweek, ABC and The Times (UK) were quick to pick up the story, often leading with attention-grabbing headlines such as 'Cockatoos can bust a move' or 'Squawker on the dance floor'. Respected science press such as *Science* and *NewScientist* also picked up the story, as well as numerous radio stations in Australia.

The press coverage was instrumental in reframing the narrative from 'a cute bird on the internet' to 'a complex cognitive discovery'. Journalists highlighted the key takeaways of the research: that cockatoo dancing is more varied and common than previously thought, that it may be linked to well-developed cognitive and emotional processes, and that it may serve as a form of play and a sign of positive welfare. By focusing on these implications, the media reports elevated the story beyond simple entertainment. This strategic focus on the scientific value, while retaining the popular core of the story, showed the value of coupling science with an attention-grabbing theme.

The day after publication, renowned cartoonist Cathy Wilcox posted the following cartoon inspired by our research in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. (With permission from copyright holder, C Wilcox)



Dr Nnamdi  
MgbemenaFaculty of Science  
and Health

## Championing cardiovascular research at Charles Sturt

By Dr Nnamdi Mgbemena

My name is Nnamdi Mgbemena, and I am a lecturer in the discipline of physiotherapy (Orange Campus). In March 2025, I was appointed as the Charles Sturt University Champion and Rising Star for the NSW Cardiovascular Research Network (CVRN).

The CVRN is a pioneering, cross-institutional and multidisciplinary initiative funded by the NSW Government Office for Health and Medical Research and its member organisations, and is supported by the Heart Foundation. Since its inception in 2005, the network has played a pivotal role in building cardiovascular research capacity across NSW by offering grants, awards, workshops, seminars and events tailored to support early and mid-career researchers. Its reach spans the full research spectrum, from basic biomedical science to clinical, population and public health research, all directed towards improving cardiovascular health outcomes.

As the Charles Sturt University Champion and Rising Star, my role is to foster stronger connections between CVRN and Charles Sturt, whilst creating opportunities for collaboration and research engagement for early- and mid-career researchers at Charles Sturt. I am also pleased to share that I recently received the CVRN 2025 Professional Development Award which will support

my training in physiotherapy in the intensive care unit. This opportunity will enhance my clinical research expertise and help build Charles Sturt's capacity in advanced cardiopulmonary care research. Looking ahead to 2026, these skills will be critical in developing impactful clinical research initiatives that align with the mission of CVRN to improve cardiovascular outcomes across NSW.

I am also pleased to note that Charles Sturt's membership within CVRN has grown to 15 members, including higher degree by research (HDR) students. Our team has already convened to begin shaping plans for 2026, including exploring research collaborations across the network and the possibility of hosting a CVRN Rising Star Seminar at one of our campuses.

We welcome colleagues who would like to be part of this growing team.



Dr Tracey Parnell

Faculty of Science  
and Health

Tana Cuming

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Creating inclusive healthcare experiences for people with disability

For the 5.5 million Australians living with disability, accessing mainstream healthcare can be difficult. Barriers to services and limited involvement in health decisions often lead to unmet needs and poorer health outcomes. These challenges are intensified in rural areas due to geographic isolation, limited resources and a lack of specialised services.

To address this, Blue Sky Community Services, the Mid North Coast Local Health District and people with lived experience of disability co-designed a pilot education program for health staff. The aim was to build staff knowledge, understanding and confidence to work collaboratively with people with disability and their families, improving healthcare experiences and outcomes.

The program was independently evaluated by Charles Sturt University researchers Tracey Parnell and Tana Cuming. The evaluation findings demonstrated that the program significantly improved staff capability. As one staff member shared, “Some really simple changes in our everyday practice can make the health journey for someone with a disability so much better”.

The program strengthened relationships between health services and disability providers, fostering more coordinated care. The involvement of people with disability in co-designing the program ensured its relevance and impact. For participants with lived experience, contributing to the program was empowering. “It was quite a privilege to be involved,” one person shared.

Overall, the evaluation showed that co-designed, locally delivered training can play a vital role in making health services more inclusive and accessible. The collaborative, context-specific approach enhanced staff capability and laid the foundation for more responsive and sustainable care. The outcomes highlight that including lived experience in healthcare education is not just beneficial – it is essential to overcoming entrenched barriers and building an inclusive healthcare system for all Australians.

## Tuning in: Enhancing postgraduate midwifery education through podcasts

The Charles Sturt University midwifery team, Jayne Lawrence, Dolores Dooley, Tameeka Mulquiney, Melissa Woodhouse-Adolphus, Michelle Mitchell and Alicia Carey, introduced podcasts into the Graduate Diploma of Midwifery during the 2025 session. The idea for the *Midwifery Matters* podcast emerged from student feedback during the January intensive schools. Students shared the challenges of balancing full-time clinical work, academic demands and personal commitments, which made traditional synchronous learning difficult. In response, the team explored podcasts as a more flexible, accessible learning tool.

With support from Learning Technology Lead Lachlan Kalache, the team launched a Spotify channel. Episodes aligned with subject learning outcomes and focused on professional, legal and safety frameworks in midwifery. Using generative AI tools, lecturers developed scripts that delivered key content in a conversational, episodic format.

A pilot study was conducted with 64 students in the Professional Midwife subject. Fifteen students responded to a mixed-methods questionnaire exploring their experiences with podcast-integrated learning. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Students appreciated the flexibility and relevance of the content, with comments such as:

“The podcasts made heavy content easier to access and digest.”

“Every episode was extremely valuable, I wish there were more!”

“Relaxed and conversational... easy to engage with while driving.”

Spotify analytics show 521 episode plays and over 55 followers. Eleven episodes have been released in Series 1 and two in Series 2. The podcast aligns with Charles Sturt’s educational model of curiosity, connection and innovation, featuring guest presenters, including alumni and clinical midwives, to enrich the learning experience.

Following its success, podcasting has now been embedded into more subjects within the Graduate Diploma of Midwifery. The team has also submitted a nomination for the 2025 Change One Thing award.

[Listen to the podcast.](#)





Dr Job Fransen  
Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Agree to disagree – the use of adversarial collaboration through moderated interviews to examine divergent and convergent perspectives of 'adversaries'

Daniel Kadlec (Edith Cowan University), Jordan Cassidy (Queensland University of Technology) and Job Fransen (Charles Sturt University) recently published a study in *Sports Medicine – Open* using the innovative method of adversarial collaboration. In this article, Job curated and moderated a structured dialogue between two academics with contrasting views to explore whether their perspectives on agility training and assessment were truly divergent.

Through a qualitative, iterative, moderated, structured interview method, made entirely openly available through the Open Science Framework ([osf.io/eqrax/](https://osf.io/eqrax/)), the authors explored whether their perspectives on how agility (i.e. the ability to change direction or velocity in relation to perceptual information) should be trained and assessed in the context of high-performance sport were indeed divergent. Both authors had previously published articles in which two opposing hypotheses were raised:

1. Agility should be trained and assessed by targeting underlying capacities such as speed, strength and change of direction ability.
2. Agility can only be trained and assessed in situ, where the relationship between perceptual information and motor action is maintained.

While both researchers were convinced they had contrasting perspectives, the iterative method used in this article demonstrated that they only really differed in perspectives on one sub-component, and hence their perspectives aligned to a much greater degree than they first thought.

This adversarial collaboration now serves as the start of a further collaboration between the team members, in which the competing hypotheses that remained after this discourse will be tested empirically through a cooperatively designed randomised controlled trial, of which all aspects, including the final publication, will also be made openly available.

In conclusion, this method, as an exploration of agreement and disagreement between apparent adversaries through moderated conversation, can result in the robust testing of research hypotheses.

Cassidy, J., Kadlec, D. & Fransen, J. Exploring Convergence and Divergence in Seemingly Contrasting Perspectives on Training Perceptual-Cognitive Abilities for Sports Performance Through Moderated Dialogue. *Sports Med – Open* 11, 101 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40798-025-00904-y>



Dr Job Fransen  
Faculty of Science and Health

## The Australian Institute of Sport supports the development of esports

A team led by Dr Dylan Poulos (Southern Cross University) and Dr Kyle Bennett (Southern Cross University), which also included Dr Job Fransen (Charles Sturt University), was the first to receive funding from the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) to study high performance in esports.

This is notable, as esports, or electronic sports, has recently become Olympic, with the inaugural Olympic Esports Games to take place in Saudi Arabia in 2027. While the team received these funds about 18 months ago, a study was recently published examining how Australia can increase its competitiveness in esports as a nation.

The article, funded through the AIS grant, published in the *Journal of Sports Sciences*, used semi-structured interviews with elite esports players, coaches and support staff from major regions (e.g. Asia and Europe) and minor regions (e.g. Oceania) to develop a model that can be used by minor esports nations, such as Australia, to bridge the gap with their more competitive counterparts, not by imitating what they do, but by ensuring that talent development and training for esports talent in Australia aligns with best-practice principles, tailored to the needs of Australian esports players.

Poulos, D. R., Jackman, P. C., Fransen, J., Polman, R. C., & Bennett, K. J. (2025). An exploration of high-performance environments in esports: A preliminary model. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 1-26.



Figure 1. The esports high-performance model.



Associate Professor  
Donna Bridges

Faculty of Arts and  
Education



Dr Elizabeth Wulff

Faculty of Arts and  
Education



Professor Branka  
Krivokapic-Skoko

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences



Associate Professor  
Larissa Bamberg

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Women in Trades Team wins unsolicited best paper prize

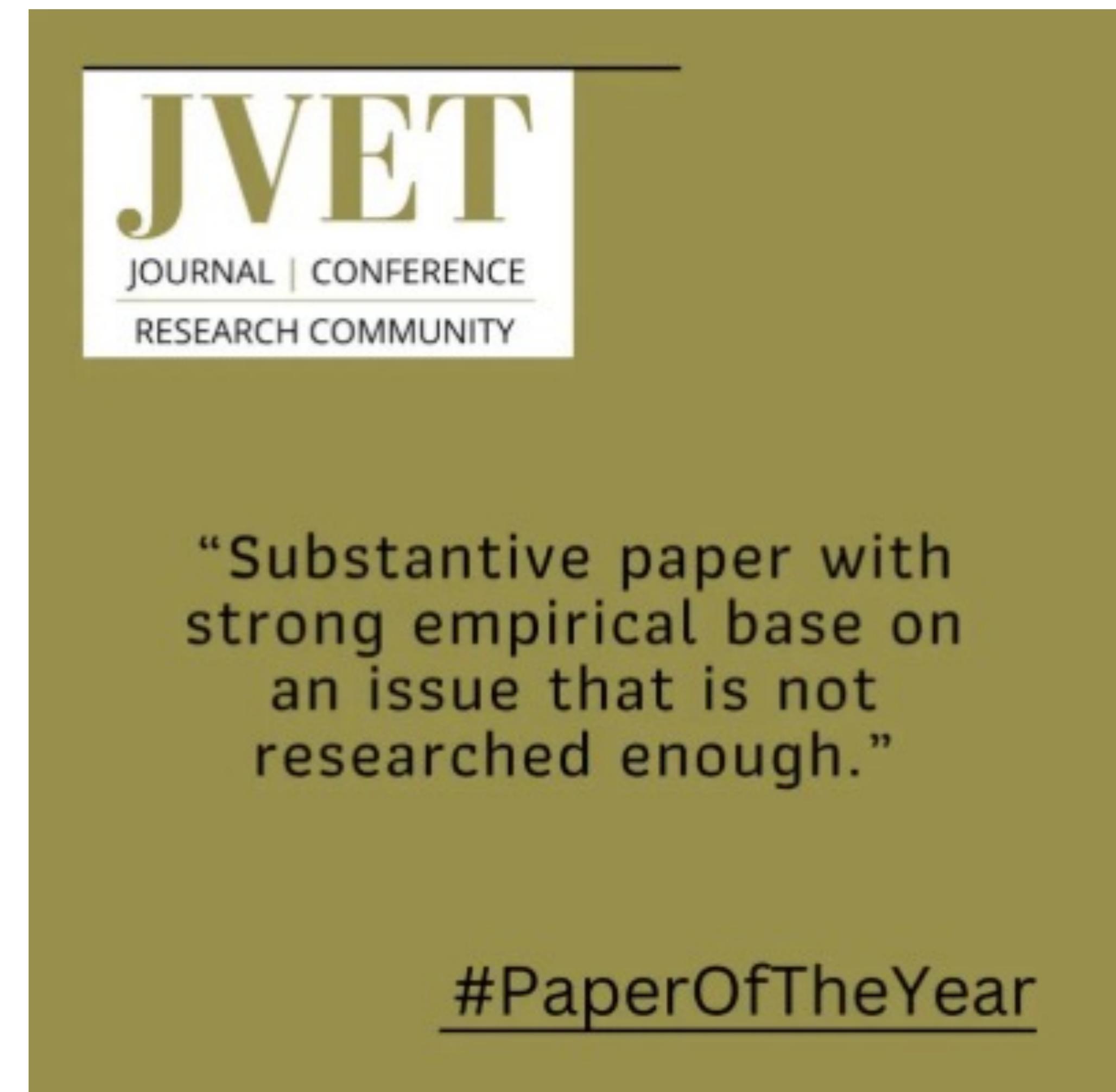
The Women in Trades Team, comprising Associate Professor Donna Bridges, Dr Elizabeth Wulff, Professor Branka Krivokapic-Skoko and Associate Professor Larissa Bamberg, has been awarded the unsolicited Paper of the Year 2024 by the *Journal of Vocational Education and Training* for their article, 'Girls in trades: Tokenism and sexual harassment inside the VET classroom'.

The Editorial Management Committee described the paper as 'A substantive paper with strong empirical base on an issue that is not researched enough'.

The research investigates how vocational education and training (VET), the gateway to skilled trades, can either challenge or reinforce gender segregation. Based on interviews with tradeswomen, apprentices, and industry and government representatives, the team found that VET has the capacity to normalise the tokenism of women and contribute to gender and sexual harassment. Furthermore, a VET classroom environment where gender inequalities and harassment are normalised is the most significant barrier to women continuing their education and apprenticeships.

[Read the paper.](#)

This is the second time the Women in Trades Team has won an unsolicited best paper prize. In 2023, the team won the Neville-Plowman Prize for Best Article 2022 for the paper, 'Inequality regimes in male-dominated trades: What role do apprenticeship intermediaries (GTOs) play?'.





Professor Lihong  
Zheng

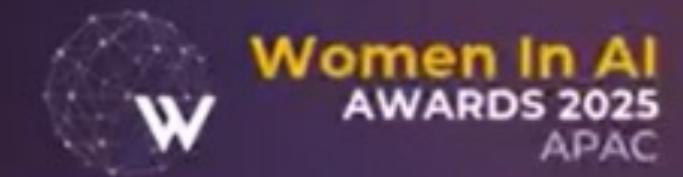
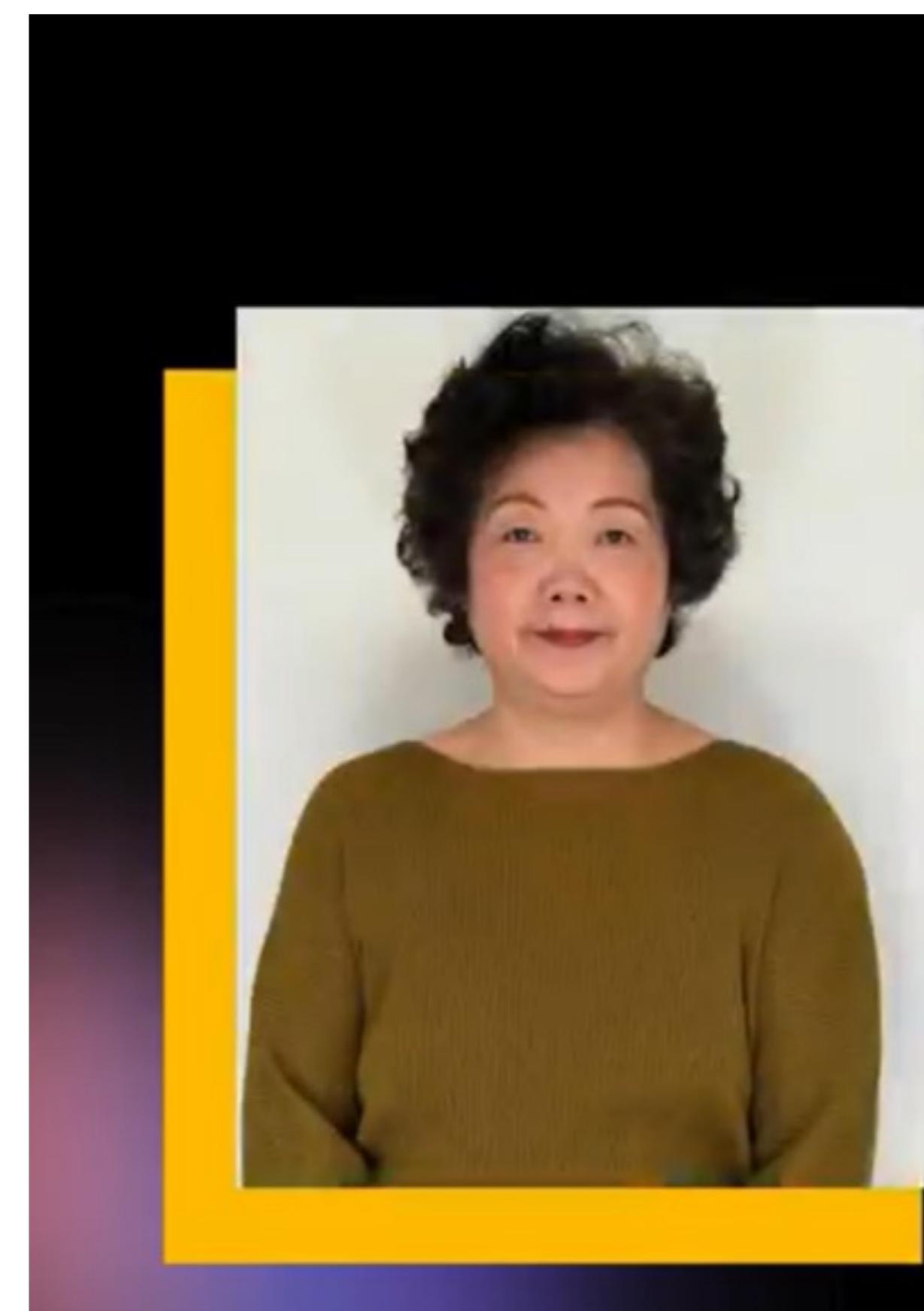
Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Professor Lihong Zheng named finalist for 2025 Women in AI Awards

Congratulations to Professor Lihong Zheng from the School of Computing, Mathematics and Engineering, who has been named a finalist for the 2025 Asia Pacific Women in AI (APAC WAI) Awards.

Her nomination highlights the growing influence and contribution of women in AI – shaping a more inclusive, ethical and transformative future for technology. The awards ceremony was held in Sydney on 25 July, celebrating the exceptional talent and diverse voices driving innovation across the region.

“These awards celebrate the incredible women who are pushing boundaries, driving innovation, and ensuring that AI and emerging technologies are developed and deployed to serve humanity,” said Women in AI APAC.



**FINALIST | Agribusiness and Rural Development**

**LIHONG ZHENG**

*Professor at Charles Sturt University*

### SHORT QUOTE

“Harnessing AI in agriculture opens new frontiers for food security, sustainability, and rural innovation. I’m honoured to contribute, working with teams to deliver solutions that support farmers and protect the environment. Being recognised among outstanding researchers is humbling and reflects the collective efforts of my collaborators, students, and mentors. I remain committed to impactful research and fostering future innovators.”



## Professor Zahid Islam elected Fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales

Congratulations to Professor Zahid Islam, who has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales (FRSN).

Founded in 1821, the Royal Society of NSW is one of Australia's oldest and most respected institutions, dedicated to advancing knowledge through science, evidence and reason. The society unites scholars, professionals and leaders from across disciplines who share a commitment to rigorous inquiry, open dialogue and the pursuit of ideas that shape a better future.

Professor Zahid Islam

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences



## Professor Lihong Zheng appointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of Agriculture*

Professor Lihong Zheng from the School of Computing, Mathematics and Engineering has been appointed as a new Editorial Board member of the Journal of Agriculture in the Section 'Artificial Intelligence and Digital Agriculture'.

In this role, Professor Zheng looks forward to contributing to the journal's continued success and supporting the publication of high-quality, impactful research at the intersection of AI, digital technologies and agriculture.

Professor Lihong  
Zheng

Faculty of Business,  
Justice and  
Behavioural Sciences

## Charles Sturt research wins 1st prize at international neurology meeting

We are delighted to share that Associate Professor Mohmad Farooq Shaikh recently presented our research at the prestigious 24th Annual Meeting of the Infantile Seizure Society in Kuala Lumpur, held alongside:

- 33rd Malaysian Society of Neurosciences Annual Scientific Meeting (MSN 2025)
- 13th Malaysian Paediatric Neurology Update Meeting
- 7th BRaINs | BNC Research and Innovations in Neuroscience.

The presentation was awarded 1st Prize in the Oral Presentation – Adult Neurology category for the work titled ‘Perampanel and women with epilepsy: A systematic review’.

Special congratulations also go to Bronte Jolly and Caitlin Cleary, alumni of Charles Sturt University’s pharmacy discipline, whose undergraduate project laid the foundation for this research.





Professor Rafael  
Freire

Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

## Appointment to NSW Animal Research Review Panel

Congratulations to Professor Rafael Freire, who has been appointed to the NSW Animal Research Review Panel.

Professor Freire has been nominated to represent NSW universities and will serve as the third university representative on the panel for a four-year term, from 28 January 2025 to 27 January 2029.

This appointment recognises Professor Freire's expertise and commitment to advancing animal welfare in research and further strengthens Charles Sturt's contribution to this important state-wide body.



Distinguished  
Professor Chris  
Blanchard

Faculty of Science  
and Health

## Professor Chris Blanchard appointed Chair of new AgriFutures Rice RD&E Panel

Distinguished Professor Chris Blanchard has been appointed Chair of the new AgriFutures Rice RD&E Panel, which will guide research and innovation to support the sustainability and growth of the Australian rice industry. The Panel's first priority is developing the next five-year RD&E Plan in consultation with growers and stakeholders.

[Read more.](#)



Michelle Grigg

Faculty of Science  
and Health  
Gulbali Institute

## Celebrating research excellence: Michelle Grigg in the spotlight

Thesis: Increasing accessibility of occupational therapy services to older adults in rural NSW:  
Development of an occupational therapy telehealth service delivery model

Congratulations to PhD student Michelle Grigg, who has been recognised for her exceptional contributions to rural health and research.

Michelle is a first class honours graduate from the School of Allied Health, Exercise and Sport Sciences and is now in the final year of her PhD candidature. Supervised by Professor Rylee Dionigi, Associate Professor Melissa Nott and Dr Michelle Smith-Tamaray, Michelle's research is focused on developing a telehealth model of care to improve occupational therapy access for older adults in rural communities.

Michelle is also a practising occupational therapist and allied health professional with the Southern NSW Local Health District (LHD), where she has combined her roles as clinician, manager, leader and researcher to drive innovation in regional healthcare.

Michelle was honoured on Allied Health Professions Day (14 October) with the Research Allied Health Professional of the Year award.

The Southern NSW LHD Chief Executive commended Michelle's work, stating:

"Michelle has used her unique position to identify and pursue opportunities for the profession, demonstrating her passion for the importance of Occupational Therapy in the public health system."

Michelle's research is a powerful reminder that older persons are agents of change, and that accessible healthcare through telehealth can help ensure all individuals receive the support they need – regardless of geography.

We're incredibly proud of Michelle's achievements and the meaningful impact her work is having on rural communities.





## Digital Agrifood Summit 2025

The Digital Agrifood Summit will take place from 5–7 November 2025 at Charles Sturt University's Wagga Wagga campus, uniting industry leaders, innovators and producers under the theme 'Securing Australia's agrifood future'.

Across three days, the Summit will showcase how technology, research and collaboration can drive a stronger, more sustainable agrifood sector. The program features a dynamic mix of hands-on activities, thought-provoking talks and valuable networking opportunities.

### Wednesday & Friday: On-the-ground experiences

The Summit begins on Wednesday afternoon (5 November) with immersive activities, including site tours and live demonstrations that showcase how the latest agricultural

technologies (AgTech) are being applied in the field. This day also features Professor Jane Quinn's Provocations Public Lecture at the CSU Riverina Playhouse.

These will continue on Friday morning (7 November), offering attendees another chance to see AgTech in action. Led by industry experts, these sessions are designed to bridge the gap between innovation and real-world adoption.

### Thursday: The main event

Thursday (6 November) is the headline conference day, featuring a full program of Australian and international speakers tackling the big challenges and opportunities in strengthening Australia's food systems. Sessions will span topics from productivity and connectivity to resilience and resource management. With more than 400 delegates expected, it's a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas, share insights and forge partnerships that could shape the sector's future.

### Thursday evening: Gulbali @ Sunset

The day concludes with Gulbali @ Sunset, a networking event at the Magpies Nest. Guests will enjoy local Riverina food, live entertainment and a keynote address – all in a relaxed, social setting.

### Backed by strong partnerships

The 2025 Summit is proudly supported by Charles Sturt University, AgriPark, and the NSW Government's Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development through its Farms of the Future program. Together, these partners are ensuring the Summit is more than a showcase of innovation – it's a practical platform for shaping the future of Australia's agrifood sector.

[Buy tickets and view the program.](#)



Charles Sturt feedlot

## University Farm

The past 12 months have seen the consolidation of the One-CSU Farm Model with the appointment of new staff and ongoing investment in key farm equipment and infrastructure. We welcomed our new Farm Director, Steve Wainewright, and our new Farm Manager at the Orange Farm, Rodger Shannon, in addition to engaging with Charles Sturt students as part of our busy casual roster to support farm, teaching and research activities.

There has been significant investment in the farm, highlighted by work carried out at the Ruminant Research Precinct. We are nearing completion of our six-pen fully covered beef feedlot facility, where the first cohort of cattle will enter under an industry-funded project in September. A state-of-the-art feed mill has also been installed, along with a six-bay feed shed to support the feedlot operations. Additionally, we have commissioned our off-grid, 1,800-head sheep containment feeding facility with a fully automated feeding system that will support both commercial and research opportunities in the future.

The Dhulura Precinct has also experienced significant investment, with work nearing completion on the netted Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC)-funded facility that will support cropping research. The Vineyard of the Future Project is also underway, with planting expected to commence later in 2025. This site will utilise the latest modern technology to enable best practice farming techniques, supported by investment from the Global Digital Farm initiative.

We are continually working to improve our operations by developing safe and effective systems to support research and teaching opportunities. We welcome the chance to engage with the Charles Sturt community to showcase our efforts and explore future possibilities.

If you want to find out more or visit the farm, please contact our Farm Director at [swainewright@csu.edu.au](mailto:swainewright@csu.edu.au).



Professor Stan Grant Jnr

## From the Director

A typically busy and fruitful time since we last spoke. I have returned from the UK, where I continued work on my next book and wrote my Simone Weil lectures. The lectures are the most prestigious philosophy lectures on the Australian calendar.

Initiated by one of our nation's great minds, Raimond Gaita, 22 years ago, they have been delivered by the greatest thinkers of our time, including Kevin Hart, Richard Kearney, Susan Nieman, Simon Critchley, Avishai Margalit and now me! I am the only Indigenous person to have been afforded this honour. I chose as my theme *When words fail* to explore the limits of language in our divided times. I delivered the first lecture in Brisbane and the second in Melbourne. The ABC has recorded the second episode, which will be featured in their Big Ideas program, reaching an audience of hundreds of thousands. I am planning to have them published in a small book.

Apart from the lectures, I delivered a talk to senior Aboriginal staff at the South Australian Public Service on managing a career as an Indigenous

person. I also spoke at a conference on advocacy for aged care, focusing on the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal elders. This is the first generation of ageing Indigenous people since colonisation and, as a nation and community, we are unprepared for it.

I am currently preparing my Richard Johnson Lecture for the Centre for Public Christianity to be delivered in October. This is another very prestigious lecture series; last year, it was delivered by one of Australia's most acclaimed authors, Tim Winton, so I have a lot to live up to.

All of this reflects our mission of Yindyamarra in action. How do we speak to each other in a fractured world?

Distinguished Professor Stan Grant Jnr

Professor Peter  
Sherlock

## Peter Sherlock to lead the ACC&C while continuing his work with Yindyamarra Nguluway

Professor Peter Sherlock, the Associate Director of Yindyamarra Nguluway, has been appointed as Acting Executive Director of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture (ACC&C), a partnership between Charles Sturt University and the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. He will continue in his role at Yindyamarra Nguluway as well and, with experience in theology and working with First Nations Peoples, find the synergies between the two organisations.

Peter said, "I am excited by the opportunity to contribute to the unique work of the ACC&C at Charles Sturt. The wisdom of ancient, living traditions is sorely needed across our world in this present moment of crisis. The resilience and spirituality of First Nations Peoples in this land and the deep wells of Christian thought and practice have much to offer to each other and to the wider community. I look forward to engaging with the Board, staff and supporters of the ACC&C alongside my work with Stan Grant and Yindyamarra Nguluway as together we deliver our vision to create wisdom for the common good."

### Yindyamarra in action



## Yindyamarra in action: Walk for Truth

By Professor Peter Sherlock, Associate Director

In June, I had the privilege of participating in the final two days of the Walk for Truth led by Commissioner Travis Lovett of the Yoorrook Justice Commission. Yoorrook (a Wemba Wemba word for truth) was established by the Victorian Government with the responsibility to create a record of the ongoing impact of colonisation in Victoria, led by and recorded for First Peoples. To mark the completion of the Commission's report, Commissioner Lovett walked from Portland – the site of the first permanent European settlement in Victoria – to Parliament House, over 400 kilometres away.

Sections of the walk were open to the public and the last two days took the group from Footscray in the inner west of Melbourne to Camp Sovereignty in the Domain just south of the city, then on to Parliament. Along the way, Elders and community members gave participants cultural knowledge relating to the area, giving even the most experienced walkers new ways of understanding the landscape we pass through daily. The last day was an especially powerful experience as thousands turned out, not to protest but simply to walk through the streets of Melbourne and bear witness to our history and our present.

The Walk for Truth offered an opportunity to support the work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission and to give tangible expression to desire for First Peoples and incomers to walk together, sharing our love of Country and the hunger for truth and justice. It was also a chance to go slowly and respectfully and, as we put one foot in front of the other, reflect on the long road we still have to travel to close the gap in health, education, incarceration, life expectancy and wellbeing. [The Yoorrook report is now published](#), with 100 recommendations for government, universities, churches and other social institutions.



## Yindyamarra podcast



### #22 Reflections from Oxford

Join Stan and Jack as they reflect on Stan's latest trip to England, as it has shaped his thinking about his novel, the life of Old England and the vocation of the writer

[Listen to podcast.](#)

Join Professor Stan Grant Jnr and Jack Jacobs as they explore the Wiradjuri philosophy of Yindyamarra and how it might guide us through the challenges facing nation-building and democracy in Australia and around the world.

### #23 After Oasis: How might music help build a better kind of nation?

Stan and Jack reflect on Oasis's reunion, Stan's experience of the historic concert in England, the relationship of music to the soul of the nation and the challenges and dangers of nationalism in the modern world.

[Listen to podcast.](#)



## Beyond the Crown: The Treaty, Equality and the Future of New Zealand Democracy

Join Professor O'Sullivan as he explores new ways of understanding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the path towards a more inclusive New Zealand democracy in his upcoming book.

Date: Friday 31 October

Time: 5–6 pm

Venue: Hunter Council Chamber, Level 2 Hunter Building, Gate 2, Kelburn Parade, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington / [Join via Zoom](#).



Professor Dominic O'Sullivan

Yindyamarra Nguluway  
Faculty of Arts and Education

## New ARC project to advance reconciliation and truth-telling

Professor Dominic O'Sullivan, part of a multidisciplinary team that includes Dr Jennifer Mason, Professor Dean Lusher, Professor Robert Ackland and Professor Tanya Jakimow, was awarded \$1.48 million through the Australian Research Council Discovery Indigenous scheme (2026).

The project, Change the Date? Australia Day, Reconciliation and the Politics of Division, holds great significance. It will examine how cultural narratives are created and how they can develop to better reflect Australia's diversity, promoting reconciliation and truth-telling through educational resources, governance frameworks and public involvement.



## Awards

Professor Michael Friend, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Performance and Governance), congratulated Professor Dominic O'Sullivan (Yindyamarra Nguluway and Faculty of Arts and Education) on his successful ARC grant at our Orange campus, where they attended a conference together. Photo by Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod

## Children's Voices Centre launched in Bathurst

Community members, children, students, staff, and professionals gathered on Wednesday, 1 October, for the official launch of the innovative new Children's Voices Centre (CVC) at Bathurst.

The event was a lively celebration, featuring children's activities and special guests, including Australian Children's Laureate Sally Rippin, who read from her new book *The World We Can Build* co-authored by Eliza Hull and Daniel Gray-Barnett. Dignitaries present included Charles Sturt Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Neena Mitter, Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations) Professor Tony Dreise, Member for Calare Mr Andrew Gee MP, Bathurst Mayor Councillor Robert Taylor, and Deputy Mayor Councillor Ben Fry.

CVC Director of the Centre, Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod described the CVC as a pioneering hub for transformative interdisciplinary research with, for and about children.

"The CVC has been established with the mission of amplifying all children's voices, creating space for children's perspectives to be heard, respected and acted upon," she said.

With over 60 affiliated researchers, the centre draws expertise from education, nursing, allied health (including speech-language pathology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychology, social work, paramedicine), communication, media and data science. Associate Director (Workforce and Policy) Associate Professor Tamara Cumming emphasised the centre's commitment to partnerships with children, families, communities, policymakers and professionals to deliver research that fosters change.

The centre also closely aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In October, at the 76th session of the World Health Organization Regional Committee for the Western Pacific in Fiji, the CVC presented its research project Children Draw Health.

Already, the centre is making a remarkable impact:

- Children from 18 countries have contributed to Children Draw Health, sharing perspectives on wellbeing.

- Researchers have produced a 1,000+ page *Oxford Handbook* with 173 authors across 49 languages, reshaping understanding of multilingual children's speech.
- Collaborations with the World Health Organization are ensuring children's voices influence health equity on a global stage.
- Families and professionals are engaging in research across 100+ languages and dialects.

Congratulations to Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod, Associate Professors Tamara Cumming and Kathy Cologon, Dr Carolyn Gregoric, Lorraine Bennett, and the wider team for bringing this vision to life. As the children who spoke at the launch reminded us, the CVC will be a beacon for children and families, amplifying voices that too often go unheard.



CVC Director and Associate Directors: Associate Professor Kathy Cologon, Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod, Associate Professor Tamara Cumming



## CVC moves to The Treehouse

In June 2025, the Children's Voices Centre (CVC) team moved into The Treehouse on the Bathurst campus of the university – our base for transformative interdisciplinary research with, for and about children. Staff are busily transforming the building into a beacon for welcoming global visitors and undertaking research activities with children and families. Our rooms include The Billabong, The Beehive (a space for our visitors and busy bees), The Nest, The Flower Patch and The Garden (a place where people and ideas grow). We are seeking donations for a new kitchen and other building renovations and developments to enable us to undertake more research with children. Come for a tour during our launch or let us know when you are in Bathurst and come in and say hello.



## Visitors to the Children's Voices Centre

CVC has welcomed several visitors, including:



Nicole Simone, a PhD student from Queensland University of Technology based in Bathurst. She is undertaking research to support Indigenous children in early education centres.



Ida Wiik Sætherskar, a PhD student from Nord University, Norway.



Lucy Rodgers, a Wellcome-funded clinical PhD fellow from City St George's, University of London, UK.



Dr Red Ruby Scarlett, a CVC visiting scholar focusing on arts-based inquiry with children.



Professor Lynn Williams, a CVC visiting scholar from East Tennessee State University, US and Vice-President for Professional Development, National Academies of Practice (NAP) in the US.



Camilla Porsanger, a PhD student from Nord University, Norway.



Professor Lynn Williams presenting in one of her four well-attended hybrid lectures during her visit to Bathurst as the CVC visiting scholar.



Associate Professor  
Tamara Cumming

Children's Voices  
Centre



Dr Kathy Cologon

Children's Voices  
Centre

## CVC leaders share expertise on early childhood

Congratulations to Associate Professor Tamara Cumming and Associate Professor Kathy Cologon, who have been keynote speakers at the 21st Social Justice in Early Childhood Conference and the NSW Department of Education's Early Childhood Research Series.

### Conferences



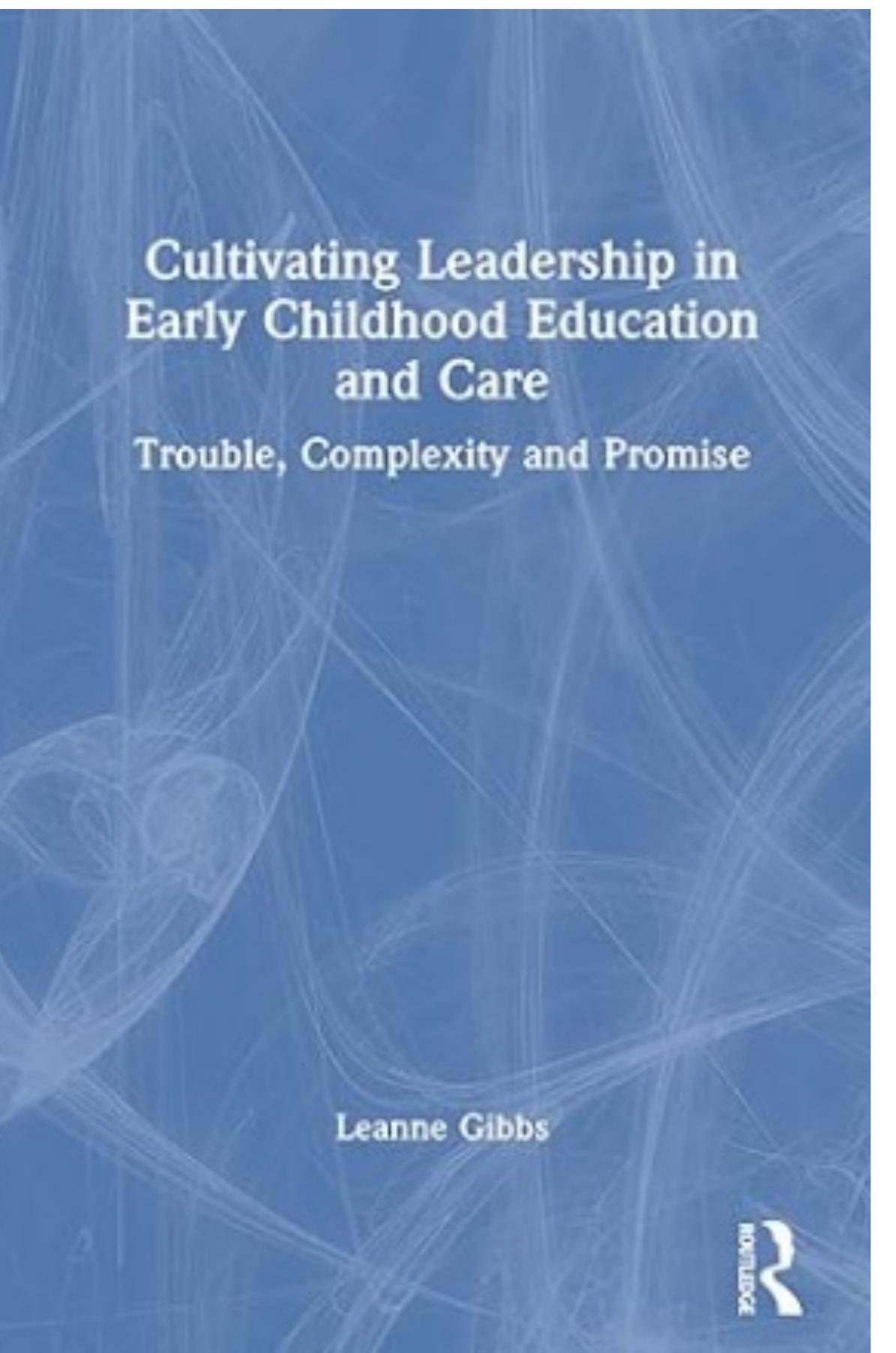


Dr Leanne Gibbs

Faculty of Arts and  
Education  
Children's Voices  
Centre

## Advancing leadership in ECEC: A new book by Dr Leanne Gibbs

Congratulations to Dr Leanne Gibbs on the recent publication of her book: *Cultivating Leadership in Early Childhood Education: Trouble, Complexity and Promise* (Routledge). This significant work provides a transformative overview of leadership in early childhood education and care (ECEC). Using complexity leadership theory and practice architectures, leadership is reconceived as a dynamic, relational and context-sensitive practice. The book is aimed at educators, leaders and academics who want to understand and develop leadership that improves quality, equity and outcomes for children and communities.



## PhD thesis submission – Josephine Ohenewa Bampoe

Josephine Ohenewa Bampoe submitted her PhD thesis on 8 August 2025.

Her research focused on developing a culturally responsive tool – the Bampoe Ghanaian English Speech and Language Assessment (B-GESLA) – to support speech-language pathologists in Ghana (West Africa) in accurately assessing and identifying speech and language disorders in Ghanaian English-speaking children.

This work addresses a critical gap in clinical resources and strengthens the methodological evidence base for creating culturally responsive assessment tools for multilingual children in Majority World contexts.

**PhD Supervisors:** Associate Professor Sarah Verdon, Dr Karen Wylie and Dr Laura Hoffman.



## PhD thesis submission – Mr Goutam Roy

PhD student Mr Goutam Roy submitted his thesis on 6 August 2025.

Goutam's research focused on developing scientific literacy among young children (ages 4-5) in Australia. He submitted his thesis by publication, comprising six papers (five Q1 and one Q2), with one already published, one in minor revision, one in major revision and three under review.

As an international Australian Government Research Training Program (AGRTP) scholarship recipient, Goutam successfully completed his PhD within three-and-a-half years.

**PhD Supervisors:** Dr Shukla Sikder and Associate Professor Will Letts.

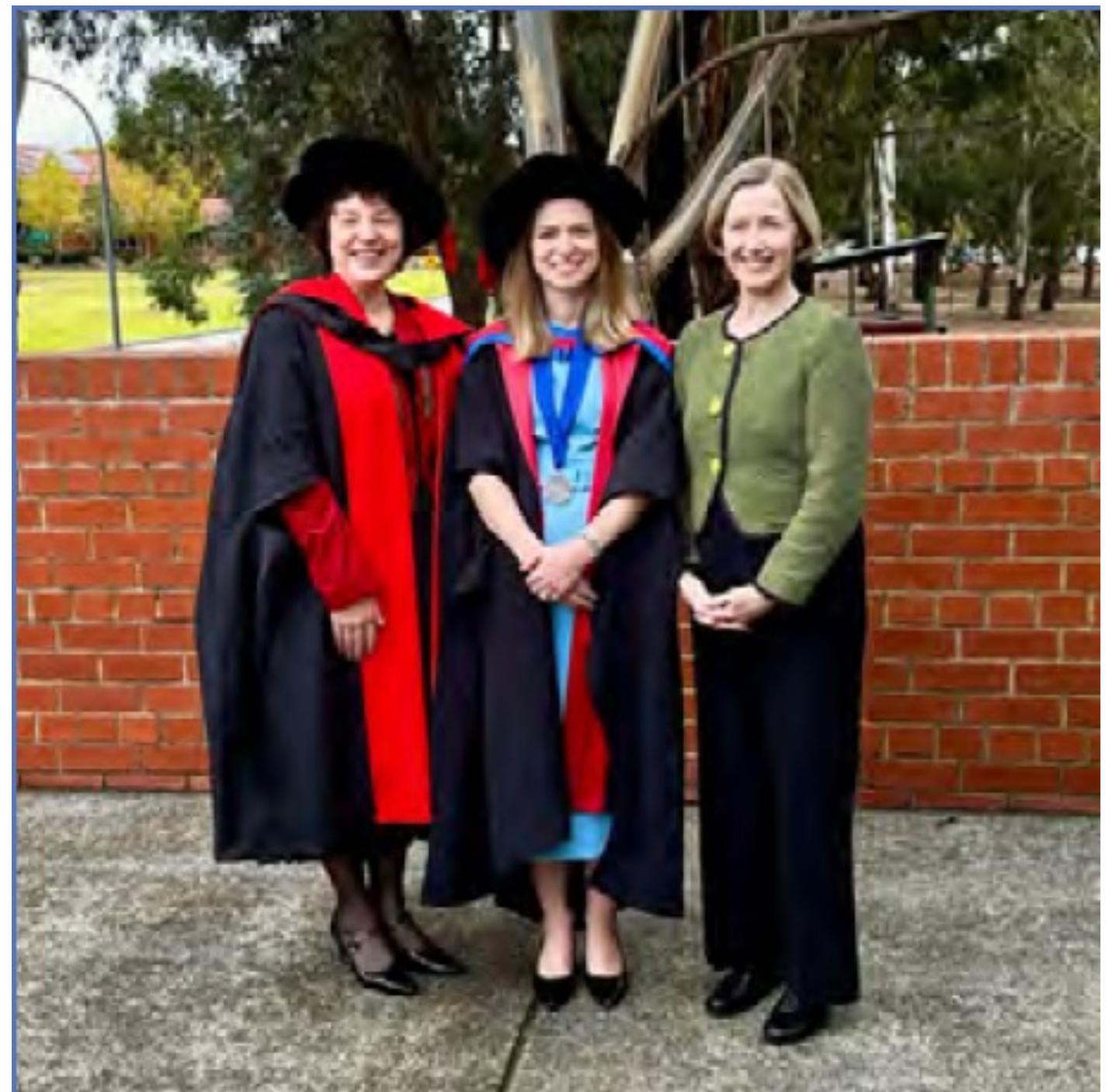


## Congratulations – Dr Kate Margetson

Congratulations to Dr Kate Margetson, who has been awarded the Charles Sturt University Higher Degree by Research University Medal in recognition of her outstanding academic achievement. This prestigious honour is awarded to only one graduate per faculty each year.

Kate's PhD, titled *Moving Beyond Monolingual Practices with Multilingual Children: Learning from Vietnamese-English-Speaking Children, Families, and Professionals*, makes a significant contribution to understanding multilingual practices in early childhood.

**PhD Supervisors:** Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod and Associate Professor Sarah Verdon.



Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod with Australian colleagues Kathryn McKinley (President of Speech Pathology Australia), Associate Professor Deb Phylard (Voice Medicine Australia) and Professor Marleen Westerveld (Griffith University)

## Professor Sharynne McLeod receives prestigious IALP award

Congratulations to Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod, who travelled to Malta to receive the Honoured Member Award from the International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorders (IALP).

IALP, a non-State actor in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), fosters professional knowledge and the exchange of science and services across 55 affiliated societies in 35 countries, representing more than 300,000 members.

Over the past 100 years, only 22 people have received the IALP Honoured Member Award, with just one other recipient from the southern hemisphere (Brazil).





Dr Maree Martinussen

Postdoctoral  
Research Fellow in  
Educational Equity

Distinguished  
Professor Sarah  
O'Shea

Dean, Graduate  
Research

## HEERU launches national research initiative on trauma awareness in Australian universities

The Higher Education Equity Research Unit (HEERU) at Charles Sturt University is leading Australia's first national study examining trauma awareness amongst university staff who teach, supervise or support students.

Led by Distinguished Professor Sarah O'Shea and Dr Maree Martinussen, the national survey research addresses a critical gap in understanding how prepared universities are to respond to students with trauma.

With over one in four Australians experiencing complex trauma, universities need evidence-based approaches to support student success. While trauma can affect anyone, [students from equity backgrounds face higher prevalence rates and often navigate additional barriers](#), making it especially important that universities understand how to respond effectively to their needs.

### National survey launched

Building on this foundation, HEERU has launched its national survey – 'Trauma awareness in Australian higher education: A survey for university employees'. The study invites any employee of an Australian university who delivers, supervises or supports students to participate.

Critically, the research welcomes perspectives from staff with all levels of familiarity with trauma-informed practice, including those with little or no prior knowledge. This approach recognises that effective trauma-informed universities require understanding across the entire academic and professional staff community, rather than placing the burden solely on those already experiencing marginalisation.

### Real-world impact

Trauma can significantly impact students' university experiences, affecting memory, concentration and their ability to engage fully in academic life. Students from equity backgrounds face higher prevalence rates of trauma, yet current approaches to trauma-informed practice in higher education remain underdeveloped.

Without adequate understanding of how trauma intersects with educational experiences, universities risk implementing responses that fail to address the complex needs of their most vulnerable students. This research aims to establish what university staff currently know about trauma and identify the gaps that need addressing to create more responsive educational environments.

### Looking ahead

The survey findings will inform evidence-based recommendations for creating trauma-informed learning environments across Australian universities. This positions Charles Sturt as a leader in developing frameworks that support student success whilst recognising that if we want all students to thrive – not just survive – universities must be willing to do the hard, human work of institutional change.

Participate in the research: If you work at an Australian university and deliver, supervise or support students, [take the survey](#).



Dr Maree Martinussen

Postdoctoral  
Research Fellow in  
Educational Equity

## International doctoral colloquium explores the history and epistemology of education

Dr Maree Martinussen recently joined academics from across the globe at the annual International Doctoral Colloquium on the History and Epistemology of Education, hosted this year by Aalborg University, Denmark. The four-day event brought together scholars from Europe, North America and Australia to share research spanning the history, philosophy and sociology of education.

The colloquium has several purposes: to provide advanced research training for doctoral students, to create a forum where emerging researchers can present and refine their work, and to foster dialogue with academics who act as facilitators and discussants. In doing so, it offers a vibrant platform for developing new ideas and building international research networks. The program also included public lectures, cultural activities, and networking opportunities, strengthening ties between an international consortium of universities.

Dr Martinussen's participation reflects Charles Sturt University's commitment, through HEERU, to global research engagement and to supporting the development of early-career researchers in education.





Dr Maree Martinussen

Postdoctoral  
Research Fellow in  
Educational Equity

Distinguished  
Professor Sarah  
O'Shea

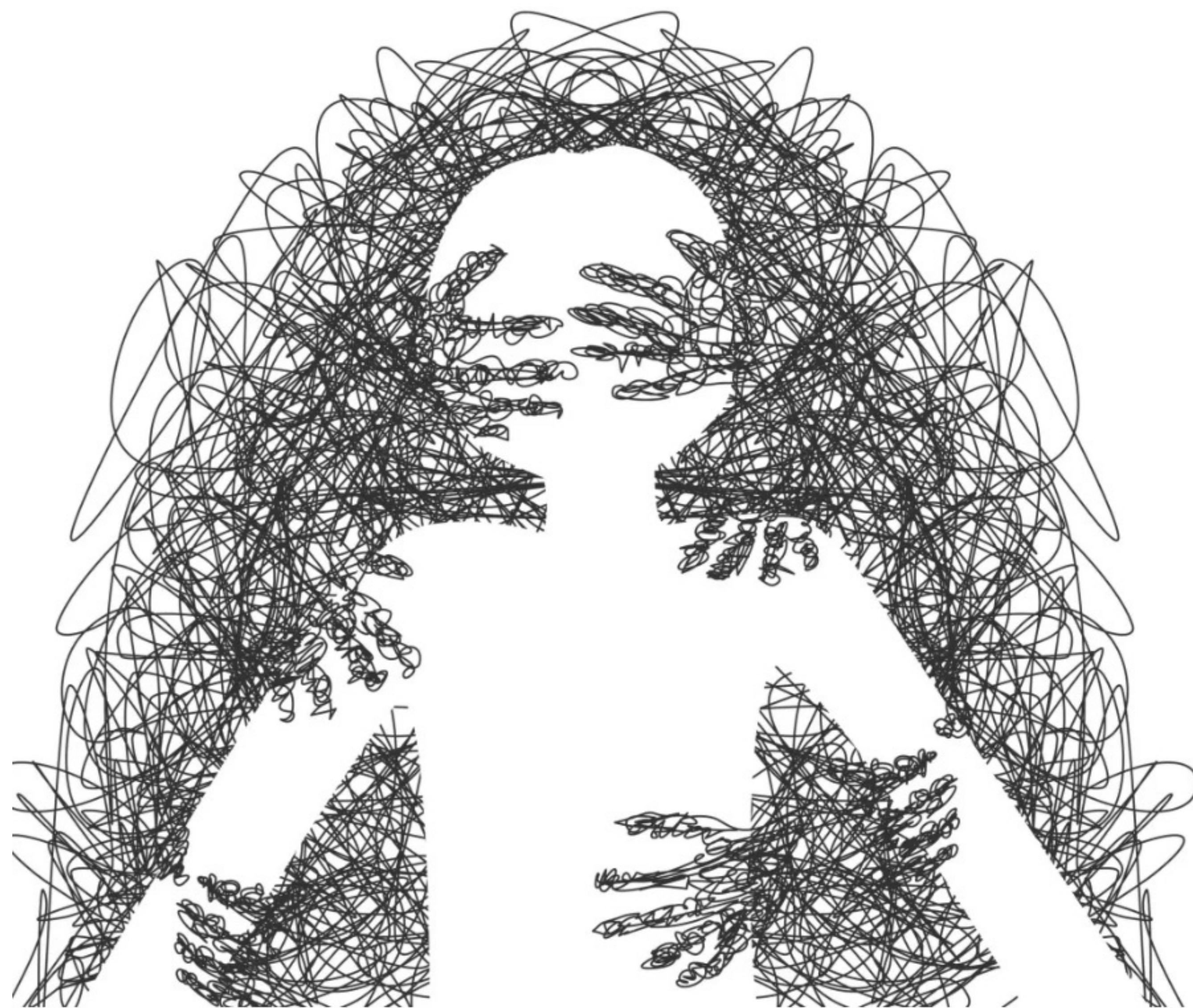
Dean, Graduate  
Research

## Trauma awareness: A new priority for higher education

Complex trauma is increasingly recognised as a [hidden epidemic](#). It is estimated that [one in four Australians](#) suffers the effects of complex trauma. In response, the application of trauma approaches has expanded significantly across school settings. [Advice](#) about how to respond to trauma in school classrooms is [available](#). However, when it comes to higher education, we're only just [beginning to catch up](#), underlining [the need for a better understanding](#) of this area.

Many students bring complex trauma into their university experience. For some, this trauma is linked to earlier life experiences such as abuse, loss of family members, systemic disadvantage or time in care. For others, it's the experience of university itself that can cause or compound harm. Unclear processes, inflexible assessments, and a lack of cultural safety can all affect student wellbeing in ways that aren't always recognised. These may intersect with other on-campus sources of trauma, such as the [high rates of sexual violence on campus](#).

[Read more.](#)





Dr Maree Martinussen

Postdoctoral  
Research Fellow in  
Educational Equity

Distinguished  
Professor Sarah  
O'Shea

Dean, Graduate  
Research

## Charles Sturt team awarded a national grant to examine how students manage study costs

Maree Martinussen and Distinguished Professor Sarah O'Shea have been awarded a 2025 Small Grant from the Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES) for their project, Counting the Costs: Investigating How Low SES Students Make Financial Decisions About Study.

The project explores how students from low socioeconomic backgrounds interpret affordability, assess financial risk, and decide when and where to seek help while navigating university. It will focus on both first-year students and those in enabling education – preparatory programs designed to help people from non-traditional backgrounds build the skills and confidence needed for university study.

Through surveys and interviews with students, educators and university financial counsellors, the research will map the ‘pressure points’ in students’ financial journeys and identify ways institutions can better support decision-making and reduce stress.

Led by Dr Martinussen and Professor O'Shea, the national team includes collaborators from the University of the Sunshine Coast, University of Southern Queensland, Edith Cowan University and the University of Technology Sydney.

### Higher Education Equity Research Unit





Liz Laidlaw

Yindyamarra  
Nguluway

## Theology matters – and not just for church

By Liz Laidlaw, Executive Officer, Yindyamarra Nguluway

This is how Peter Sherlock and Daniel Nellor's book, *Theology Matters*, introduces itself, and it was a theme that created thoughtful and rich discussions in the book launch last week at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture in Canberra. Following the introduction to the book by co-author Peter Sherlock, a panel discussed the book's ideas and how their own experience of theology had mattered in their own work outside of the church.

Panellists Stan Grant Jnr, Richard Refshauge and Robyn Whitaker, in a conversation facilitated by board member Genevieve Jacobs, each spent time reflecting on the lessons from the book connected to their own experiences, touching on ideas such as theological literacy, how the Bible appears in contemporary discussion and the challenges of feeling that we need to divide ourselves into our secular selves and our faith-based selves and how to reconcile the two.

This was followed by a conversation between the whole panel and a Q&A, covering a wide range of territory, including thinking again about what the church offers our society, whether faith can exist without theology, the connections between theology and the arts, the challenges for emerging leaders in theology beyond 2030 and how we can broaden our theological imaginations.

For a cold Canberra night, everyone left warmed as they were reminded of the importance of humanity's vitality and why theology matters in all parts of our lives.

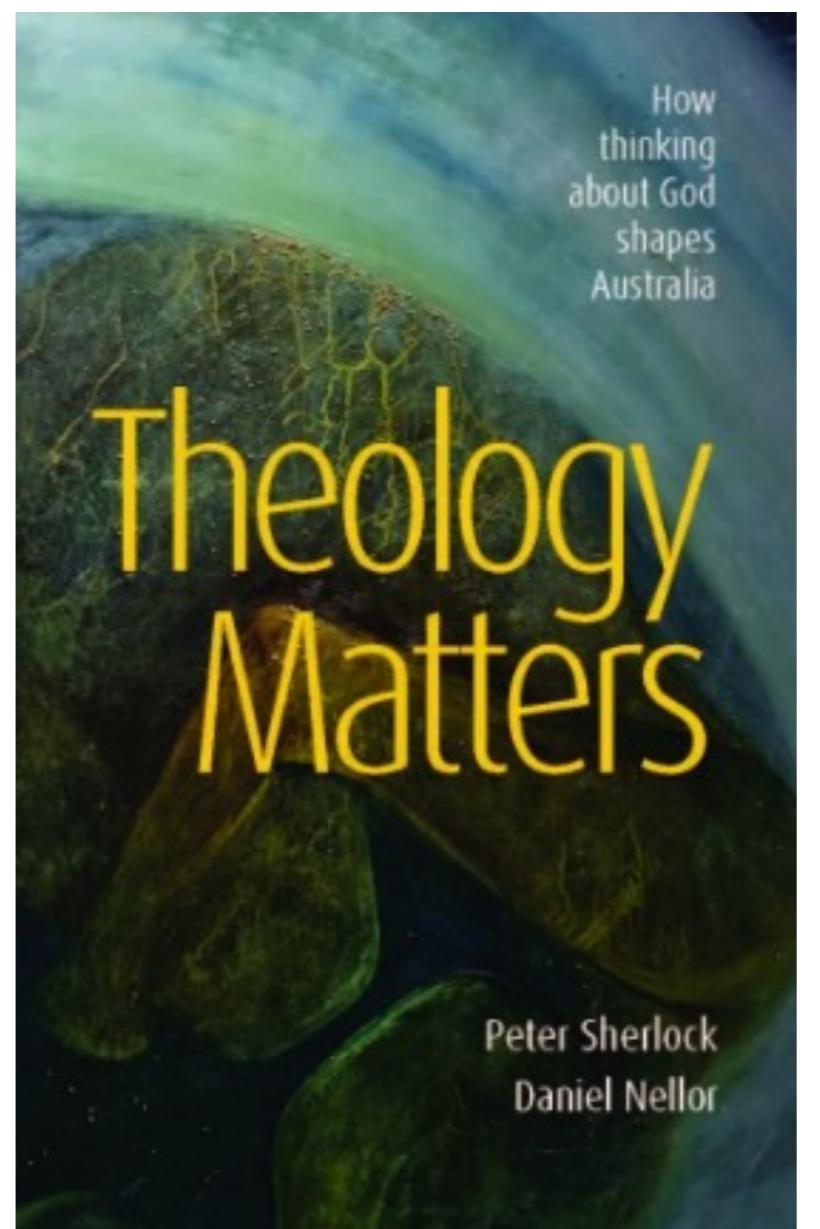
### Book overview:

In the twenty-first century, religion is often seen as divisive, church membership is in decline and religious institutions have been forced to reckon with their own sins. Yet theology still speaks deeply to many people in Australia, both inside and outside the Christian churches.

This book presents a series of conversations with prominent Australians about how theological ideas and religious practices inform their contribution to public life. Through their stories, it asks the ultimate question: what difference does theology make?

The interview participants were Deborah Barker, Rufus Black, Frank Brennan, Libby Byrne, Julie Edwards, Dan Fleming, Stan Grant, Sean Lau, Anne Patterson-Gray, Tony Rinaudo and Kevin Rudd.

[Purchase \*Theology Matters\*.](#)



## Engage

The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture publishes *Engage*, a magazine which is issued three times a year and is filled with a wide variety of articles from adjunct scholars, staff and guest writers.

[Read the latest issue.](#)



## Develop as a researcher

Benefit from tailored opportunities such as development programs, workshops and mentoring to enhance your skills, strengthen your capabilities and progress your research career. We would love to hear your ideas and feedback for researcher development in 2026!

[Contact us](#) with your researcher development ideas and feedback for 2026!

The Researcher Development team provides training, mentoring and writing opportunities, along with access to tools and workshops to help you manage and analyse your data.

Our researcher development programs are designed as structured, long-term learning opportunities to build essential research skills. In 2025, we are offering programs in:

- R-programming skills
- foundation grant writing
- mentoring and career development.

Explore our programs: [Researcher development programs](#)

For more information, email: [researchsupport@csu.edu.au](mailto:researchsupport@csu.edu.au)

## Workshops and resources: Enhance your research skills

Our workshops are short, focused and interactive, designed to develop practical skills and provide solutions to research challenges. They include:

- regular sessions like Research & Write and Research Bootcamp, offering dedicated time to advance research goals
- one-off sessions such as Using CRO to Enhance Your Research, providing targeted skill development.

Explore and register via our [training calendar](#).



### Training calendar

Enhance your skills with our writing groups, workshops and events designed for researchers' professional development.

[Browse what's on](#) →

## Resources and recordings

Missed a session? Many of our workshops are recorded and available for viewing afterward. If you couldn't attend or want to revisit a session, visit the [Resources and recordings webpage](#).

## Masterclass series

Following the success of last year's pilot masterclass series, *Seeing like a researcher*, we are excited to continue these lunchtime sessions in 2025, now complemented by a new series, *Let's talk research*.

These masterclasses are designed to enhance research culture, inspiring experienced academics looking to re-energise their research programs and next-generation researchers seeking learning and career advice.

### Seeing like a researcher

This masterclass series taps into the experience, skills and wisdom of research leaders, leveraging the talent within our university. Each session provides a platform for research experts to share insights, strategies and professional skills under the themes of 'research innovation' and 'professional development,' helping academics and research students strengthen their research capabilities.

### Let's talk research

This new series highlights Charles Sturt's leading researchers, offering emerging and experienced researchers, as well as HDR candidates, the opportunity to showcase their work. Sessions will feature cutting-edge research, recent publications and significant findings, fostering a collaborative research environment and sparking new ideas.

Both series aim to inspire, inform and connect researchers, strengthening our research community and driving excellence across disciplines.

### Masterclass themes

The masterclass series includes sessions on research innovation themes and professional skills for research:

- **Research innovation** sessions encompass advanced pathbreaking tools of analysis and are designed to showcase new discoveries in research and update Charles Sturt researchers on new ways of doing research.

- **Professional skills** sessions provide advice on research challenges, such as working with First Nations communities, building long-term partnerships nationally and internationally, and delivering high-impact research.

### When

The masterclass series starts in May 2025. Sessions run on alternative fortnights in a one-hour mid-week lunchtime slot.

### Recordings

Masterclasses are recorded for those who can't attend. You can view the sessions on the [Engagement and impact webpage](#).

More information: [Masterclass series](#)

Enquiries: [researchsupport@csu.edu.au](mailto:researchsupport@csu.edu.au)



## Quantitative Consulting Unit

The Quantitative Consulting Unit (QCU) is a research support unit within the Office of Research Services.

QCU is a consultation service that provides high-level, quantitative statistical advice and support, including recommendations on the design and analysis of research projects. It also undertakes complex statistical analyses to meet the needs of researchers, staff, HDR candidates and students.

Access QCU staff's knowledge, skills and experience to develop submissions to internal and external funding bodies to support statistical analyses of research data.

Benefits for researchers:

- Develop submissions to internal and external funding bodies to support statistical analyses of research data.
- Access training, support and learning resources to improve researcher capability in using, interpreting and applying statistical analysis and technologies.
- Create, use and enhance datasets for research data aggregation, analysis and visualisation.

[More information.](#)

For enquiries, contact: [qcu@csu.edu.au](mailto:qcu@csu.edu.au)

## Spatial Data Analysis Network

The Spatial Data Analysis Network (SPAN) is a research support unit within the Office of Research Services.

SPAN staff can source, prepare and customise spatial datasets, including mapping, image production and processing to optimise their scope, reliability and synthesis.

### Delivering high quality services

Access SPAN staff's knowledge, skills and experience to support research projects, grant-funded projects and research dissemination.

Researchers can liaise with SPAN staff for technical consultation support and advice, including the preparation and customisation of spatial datasets, programming and the development of location-based surveys, research application tools and unique scripts in relation to diverse research problems for:

- geographic information systems (GIS)
- remote sensing and image analysis
- spatial statistics and spatial analysis
- simulation and modelling
- spatial and analytical software

- scientific instrumentation and other hardware
- location-based survey planning and questionnaire design.

Researchers can also access spatial technologies, including field and computing equipment, hardware, software and systems for the creation, use, interpretation and application of spatial statistics to improve research productivity.

[More information.](#)

For enquiries, contact: [span@csu.edu.au](mailto:span@csu.edu.au)

## Editing service

Writing a journal paper takes a lot of time and effort. Wouldn't it be great if you could have your paper professionally edited before it is submitted for publication?

Well, you can!

Charles Sturt offers a free editing service for academic staff to improve the quality of research publications, including papers, books and book chapters.

Checks include spelling, grammar, punctuation, citations and references, consistency in word use, tenses, heading levels, and the formatting of tables and figures, etc. These won't guarantee that your research will be published, but they can smooth the publishing process and sometimes make the difference between a submission being accepted or rejected.

To access the research editing service, please complete the online form (it takes less than two minutes).

For more information, click the link below or contact Research Editor [Mark Filmer](#), directly.

[Find out more or apply.](#)



## Implementation of the new Costing and Pricing Tool

The Costing and Pricing Tool (CPT) is a new budgeting tool for researchers to accurately cost research project budgets with improved accuracy and confidence over the life of a research project.

The CPT is embedded in the online Research Proposal Request (RPR) Form in Research Master. It enables:

- researchers and grant administrators to fully cost both direct and indirect costs of a research project budget
- increased efficiency to capture and approve budget variations
- automated system integration and database updates.

The CPT replaces the Budget Approval Form (BAF).

The CPT was launched university-wide in early March 2025. To support the rollout of the CPT, the Grant Development Team developed a comprehensive suite of help guides and demonstration videos, and have hosted a series of online workshops and drop-in sessions.

For more information on the CPT, contact the Grant Development Team: [research-preaward@csu.edu.au](mailto:research-preaward@csu.edu.au)

## Research Integrity Unit (RIU) update

The Research Integrity Committees oversee key risk areas like human research, animal ethics, biosafety, radiation safety, and national security. The RIU ensures our research meets ethical standards and complies with the *Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018*.

## Our new complaints management procedure

Effective 15 May 2025, the new [Research Integrity Complaints Management Procedure](#) replaces the former *Research Misconduct Procedure*. It outlines how Charles Sturt University handles complaints about research conduct and applies to anyone involved in research at the university, including staff, students, visitors, consultants, contractors and partner organisation members.

## Research reporting obligations

Meeting human research ethics reporting obligations is crucial. In Q1 2025, there were eight instances of non-compliance, and 10 in Q2 2025. These obligations include requesting research ethics extensions and submitting final reports and annual reports. Researchers' continued non-compliance will be referred to the Academic Integrity Unit or Division of People and Culture.

These non-compliance instances highlight the risks of appointing student or adjunct researchers as chief investigators on human research ethics applications. Therefore, we are moving toward only university staff members to be listed as chief investigators to manage associated risks more effectively.

## Upcoming changes to ethical conduct guidelines

From 1 October 2025, the revised *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* will take effect. The updates include minor changes to Section 4 and other sections for clarity and accuracy. The updated 2025 National Statement is available on the [NHMRC Website](#), with a summary of amendments coming soon.

## When in doubt, find out...

For any questions about research integrity or ethics, [contact us](#) via phone or email at [researchintegrity@csu.edu.au](mailto:researchintegrity@csu.edu.au) or reach out to one of our experienced [Research Integrity Advisors](#).

## Updated institutional biosafety forms and templates – Faculty of Science and Health

Please be advised that updated forms and templates related to the Faculty of Science and Health have been added to the Research Integrity website.

Please ensure these updated documents are used moving forward.

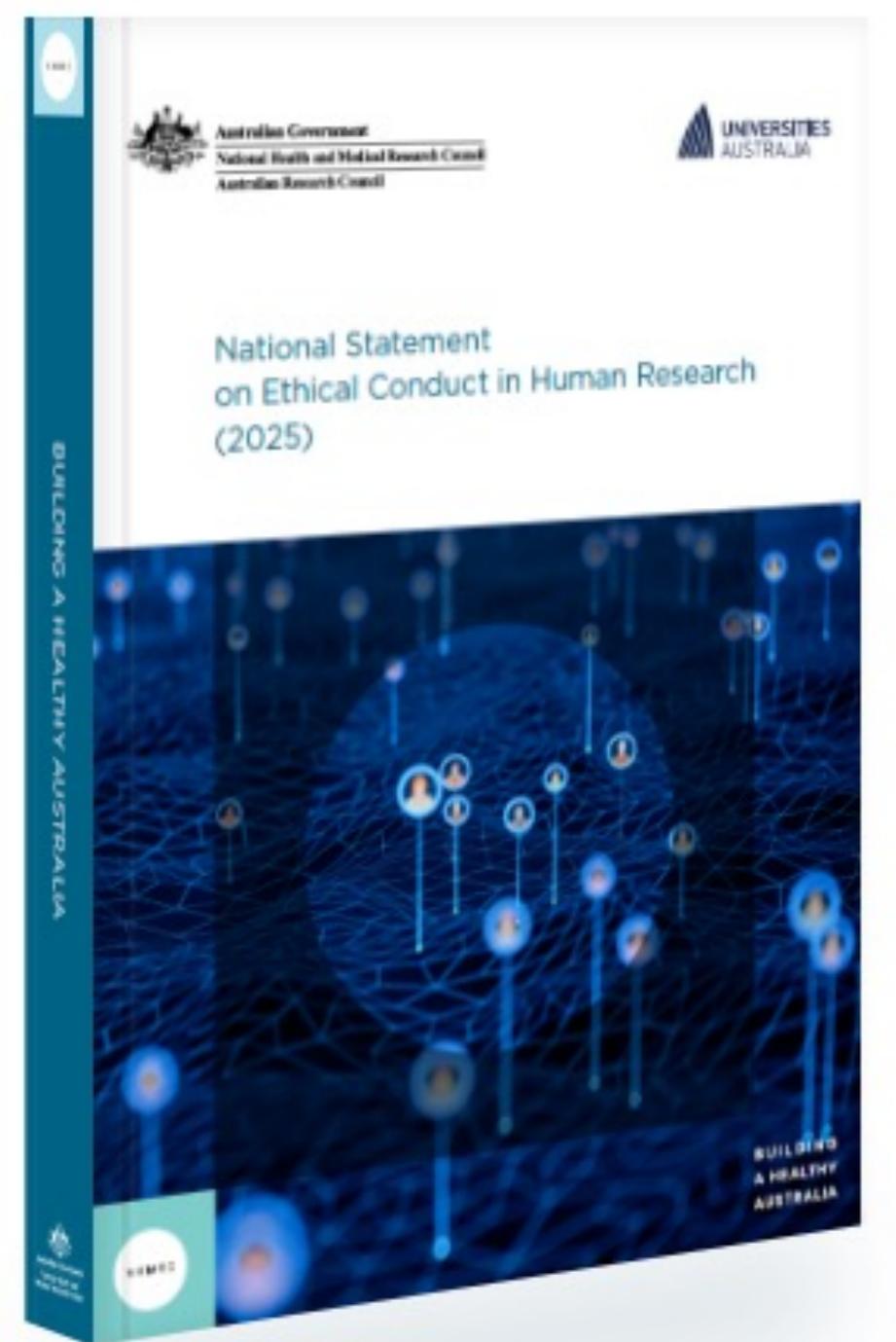
[Access the documents.](#)

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Biosafety team by email at [biosafety@csu.edu.au](mailto:biosafety@csu.edu.au).

## National statement on ethical conduct in human research 2025

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has revised Section 4 of the National Statement to provide guidance on how research involving specific participant groups should be designed, reviewed and conducted. These changes will take effect from 1 October 2025, and researchers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the document to understand the new requirements.

For more information, visit the NHMRC [website](#) or email [ethics@csu.edu.au](mailto:ethics@csu.edu.au).





The left picture is from the School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Charles Sturt University website

## Australian Indigenous research – Ethics reviews

The university's Human Research Ethics Committee has recently appointed Indigenous members and can now review Indigenous research according to the requirements of the National Statement and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) *Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research*. The AIATSIS Code is guided by principles of Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous leadership, impact and value, as well as sustainability and accountability to oversee ethical Indigenous research.

## What is Indigenous research under the code?

The AIATSIS Code defines Aboriginal and Torres Strait research as including “all research that impacts or is of particular significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including planning, collection, analysis and dissemination of information or knowledge, in any format or medium, which is about and may affect Indigenous peoples both collectively and individually. The AIATSIS Code applies to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, regardless of whether the research intends to directly involve human participants, and specifically extends to the use of collections such as archives, datasets, collections of information or biospecimens that may not otherwise be categorised as human research.”

For any enquiries regarding Indigenous ethics review, please email [ethics@csu.edu.au](mailto:ethics@csu.edu.au).

## Research integrity in the age of AI: Two thought-provoking panels

In June, to mark Global Integrity Day, Charles Sturt's [research integrity advisors](#) hosted two thought-provoking panel discussions exploring what it means to conduct research with integrity in today's fast-paced and ever-changing environment.

### Panel one: AI and integrity in research

Our first discussion examined the opportunities and challenges of using AI responsibly in research.

- **Dr Ian Skinner** opened with an overview of the guidelines Charles Sturt has adopted to support researchers in using AI with integrity.
- **Distinguished Professor Sarah O'Shea** followed, highlighting policies particularly relevant to higher degree by research students.
- **University Librarian Carlo Iacono** shared insights into how AI is reshaping the publishing landscape.

Moderated by Associate Professor Clifford Lewis, the panel emphasised that although AI is becoming a widespread tool, researchers remain solely accountable for the integrity of their publications. The message was clear: AI should be used as a partner in research, but with honesty, transparency and accountability in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

### Panel two: Reflections from the Associate Deans of Research

The second discussion featured Charles Sturt's Associate Deans of Research (ADRs):

- **Professor Zahid Islam** (Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences)
- **Professor Julian Grant** (Faculty of Science and Health)
- **Professor Matthew Winslade** (Faculty of Arts and Education)

Moderated by Professor Catherine Allan, the ADRs reflected on the importance of integrity in research practice, the challenges faced by researchers and how integrity can be protected in a changing academic environment. They emphasised integrity as the cornerstone of all research at Charles Sturt, based on principles of honesty, transparency and accountability. While recognising pressures such as technological advancements, complex collaborations and rising demands for productivity, the ADRs shared real-life examples showing that maintaining research integrity is not only achievable but also vital, desirable and expected.

[View both panel discussions.](#)

## Charles Sturt researchers share insights on improving animal welfare

On Thursday 31 July 2025, Dr Lindsay Skyner delivered a presentation on *Navigating the challenges of improving animal welfare standards at research institutes* at the Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART) conference in Brisbane. This paper was authored by Dr Skyner and Professor Raf Freire, who are respectively the former Animal Welfare Officer and the current Presiding Officer of the Charles Sturt Animal Ethics Committee.

[View the program.](#)



Dr Lindsay Skyner  
Animal Welfare Officer

## Research Integrity Advisor Network

The Research Integrity Advisor Network (RIAN) is a representative group of experienced staff researchers. They have a special interest in promoting research integrity across the university. The Research Integrity Advisors (RIAs) are accomplished researchers with real-world experience in navigating the complexities of the research endeavour. Their independence of the research portfolio makes them the perfect option for peer-to-peer learning.

The RIAN plays a key role in driving the research culture of the university. They interpret the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018* (the Code) as well as university policies and procedures, to provide advice to university staff and students about the responsible conduct of research. An RIA can provide advice to any person who is concerned about the conduct of research.

### When to contact the RIAN?

When in doubt, find out. It is always prudent to ask before acting and be guided by an RIA. The research integrity advisors can also help you determine whether to report a concern to the Research Integrity Unit for further investigation.

The RIAN is your first point of contact for concerns relating to the responsible conduct of research at Charles Sturt University. The network members can provide you with an objective evaluation of your concern in perspective to the university policies and procedures. The RIA will guide you through the options available.

Conversations you have with the RIA are generally confidential. If you do not wish to disclose specifics or divulge identities, you can choose to seek general advice.

## Meet our Research Integrity Advisors



**Professor Catherine Allan**

✉ [callan@csu.edu.au](mailto:callan@csu.edu.au)

📘 [View my research](#)



**Dr Ian Skinner**

✉ [iskinner@csu.edu.au](mailto:iskinner@csu.edu.au)

📘 [View my research](#)



**Dr Kate Freire**

✉ [kfreire@csu.edu.au](mailto:kfreire@csu.edu.au)

📘 [View my research](#)



**Cliff Lewis**

✉ [cllewis@csu.edu.au](mailto:cllewis@csu.edu.au)

📘 [View my research](#)

[More information about our RIAs and their research.](#)

### Join the Research Integrity Advisor Network

- Passionate about research integrity?
- Want to network with experienced researchers?
- Eager to enhance your skills in research integrity?
- Aspire to make a meaningful impact?

Join us and help foster a culture of excellence in research integrity.

For more information about how you can join, email [researchintegrity@csu.edu.au](mailto:researchintegrity@csu.edu.au) and learn about the benefits of joining the network.

## New NHMRC guide: Supporting a positive research culture

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has released the *Good Institutional Practice Guide* (the Guide) - a practical resource to help foster high-quality research environments.

The Guide features:

- core values and actionable strategies for building a positive research culture
- self-reflection tools for leaders to assess and plan implementation
- real-world case studies from institutions leading cultural change.

Designed for researchers, students and staff across all research areas, the Guide supports flexible and tailored adoption.

[Download the Guide and learn more.](#)

## Brilliant ideas, three minutes at a time

The 3 Minute Thesis (3MT®) Final was held on 13 August 2025 at the CSU Riverina Playhouse. An audience of more than 150 people – both in person and online – watched as eight outstanding finalists presented their research in under three minutes, with just a single PowerPoint slide.

The finalists represented schools and faculties from across the university, and each presentation was of the highest calibre. Congratulations to all participants and the colleagues who supported them.

- Winner: Nushrat Azam – who will represent Charles Sturt University at the Asia Pacific 3MT® Final. Nushrat also received \$1,000 to support her research project. [Read Nushrat's reflection on her 3MT journey.](#)
- Runner-up: Jennifer Sharp – awarded \$750 in prize money.
- People's Choice: Alexander Tynan – awarded \$500, as determined by audience poll.



## GREAT online modules: Supporting HDR candidates at every stage

The Graduate Research Enhancement and Academic Training (GREAT) online program – a self-paced resource designed to support higher degree by research (HDR) candidates throughout their research journey, was launched in January this year.

This self-paced program comprises eight standalone modules, each of which is targeted at key stages of the HDR research journey:

- **Navigating your research journey:** Understand milestones, policies and challenges throughout your HDR candidature.
- **Being a responsible researcher:** Learn about research ethics, academic integrity, intellectual property and practical steps for preparing ethics applications.
- **Working with your supervisor:** Build effective relationships, set realistic expectations and navigate feedback and challenges.
- **Reviewing the literature:** Master strategies for finding, evaluating and critically appraising literature for your review.
- **Writing your thesis:** Get step-by-step guidance on thesis structure, drafting chapters and preparing for submission.
- **Communicating your research:** Explore publishing options, understand copyright and share your findings with wider audiences.
- **Planning your career:** Identify career pathways, network with professionals and prepare compelling résumés and interview strategies.
- **Wellbeing and balanced researcher:** Develop resilience, balance commitments and promote personal and professional wellbeing throughout your journey.

All HDR candidates have been enrolled into the program and will be encouraged to revisit this resource throughout their candidature. The design of the program allows candidates to 'dip in and out' as desired and there are downloadable resources available as well as additional readings, all designed to support progression and academic success.

Access the GREAT program [here](#) and simply search for 'GREAT Module'.

For questions or support, contact: [HDR-Support@csu.edu.au](mailto:HDR-Support@csu.edu.au)



**GREAT**

## Stay connected with GradWrap – Your HDR blog

*GradWrap* is a dedicated blog for higher degree by research (HDR) candidates, designed to keep you informed, supported and connected throughout your research journey.

Discover the latest news, events and opportunities, including updates on conferences, like DocFest25, professional development resources, scholarships, training programs and more. You'll also find regular features highlighting candidate achievements, calls for abstracts and ways to engage with peers and industry professionals.

*GradWrap* is your go-to hub for staying engaged and making the most of your HDR experience.

[Check it out.](#)

# GradWrap

News, events and opportunities for HDR candidates

Home

DocFest25

Researcher Development

Support & Contacts

Research & Writing Groups

Get Connected

Leadership

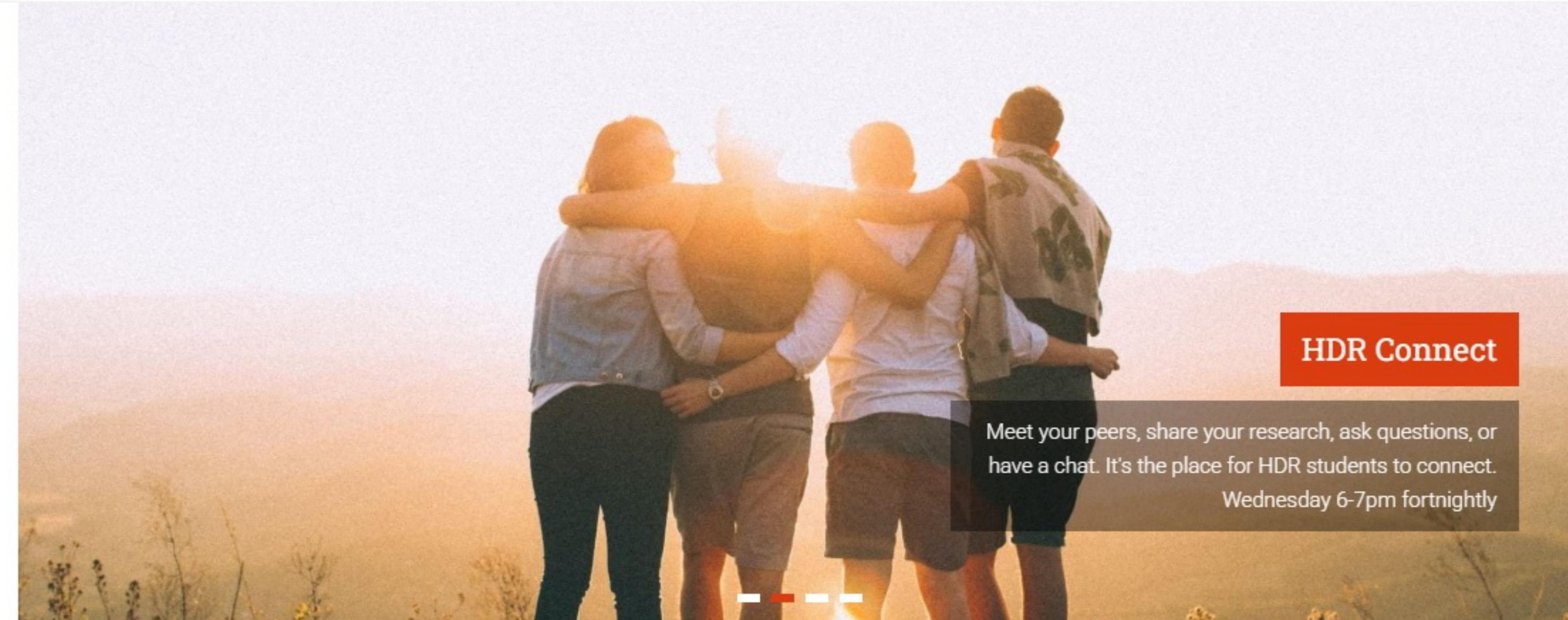
Careers & Industry Engagement

Events

Your Contributions

Training Calendar

Wellbeing and safety



## Stories Behind the Research

Dawn Tukuniu from the Researcher Development team and Liam O'Connell collaborate to produce the *Stories Behind the Research* radio show and podcast. Each show, which is broadcast on 2MCE, Charles Sturt's community radio station and published as a podcast, features Charles Sturt graduate research students who discuss their research, the approaches they use to collect data, the emerging key findings and how their work is changing the world. Don't miss out on these fascinating research discussions – tune in to *Stories Behind the Research*.



### Episode #17 with Michael Elwan

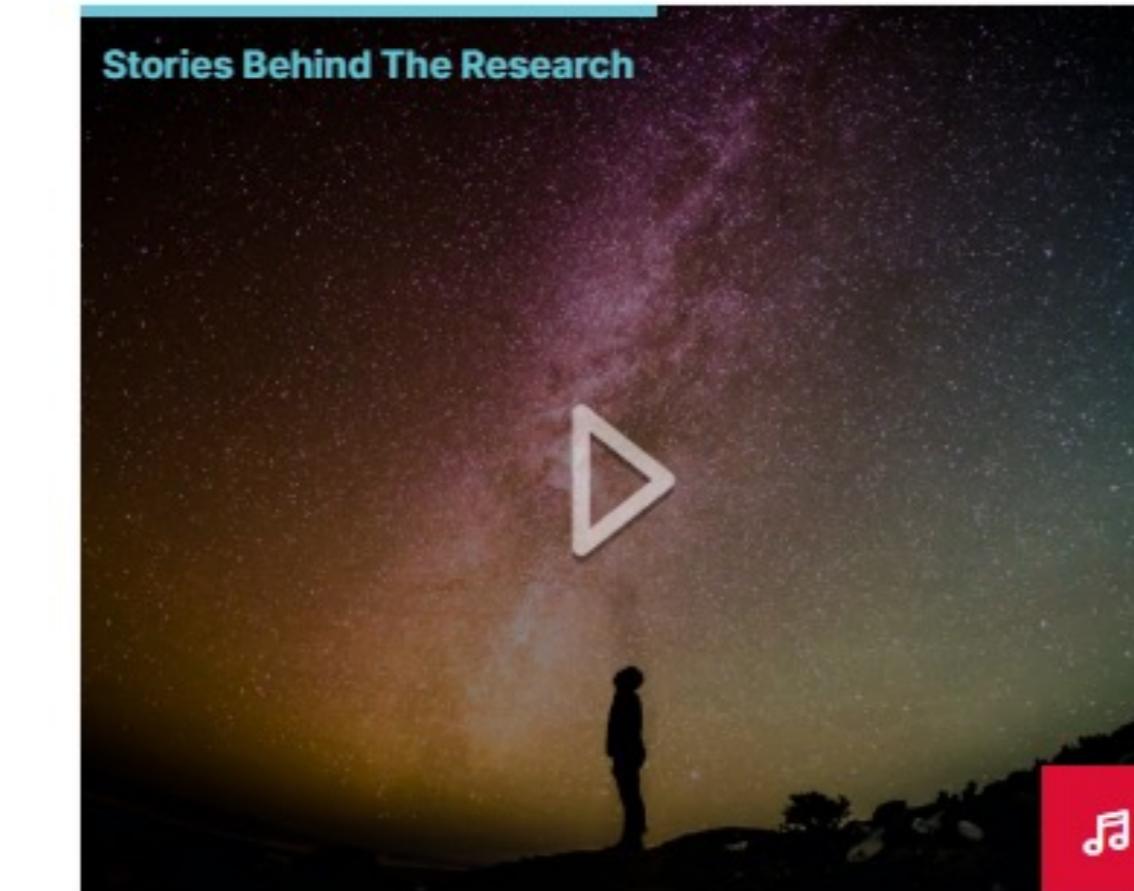
In this powerful episode, Michael Elwan discusses his research, Lived Experience Leadership in Mental Health, where he opens up about how personal tragedy led him to become a passionate advocate for mental health reform.

With a deep sense of purpose, he has channelled his lived experience into academic research and professional leadership, working to create lasting change in the mental health space. Join us as we delve into his research, the importance of lived experience in leadership, and the personal insights that continue to shape his journey.

Trigger Warning: Suicide.

This episode contains references to suicide, which some listeners may find distressing. If you or someone you know needs support, please reach out to Lifeline Australia: 13 11 14

[Listen now to hear Michael's inspiring story and thought-provoking research.](#)



Michael Elwan



**Charles Sturt  
University**