



MONASH
University

ARTS RESEARCH UPDATE

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INTRODUCTION

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	
ARC	Australian Research Council
DECRA	Discovery Early Career Research Award
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DP	Discovery Program Scheme
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
HASS	Humanities, Arts and Social Science
IE	Industry Fellowships
LLCL	School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics
MCCCRH	Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub
MFJ	School of Media, Film and Journalism
MNHS	Monash Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences
MISC	Monash Indigenous Studies Centre
MRFF	Medical Research Future Fund
SASS	School of Arts and Social Sciences
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SoSS	School of Social Sciences
SoPHIS	School of Philosophical, Historical and Indigenous Studies
SZCSOMP	Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music and Performance

PROJECT ICONS	
	First Nations involvement
	International partnerships
	Industry and/or community partnerships
	PhD student involvement



Monash University seeks to foster a society that recognises, respects and supports Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledge. The University will contribute to the creation of this society by partnering with and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and knowledge, as well as Indigenous peoples in Malaysia, Indonesia and other locations where Monash has a campus or major presence.

Research in Monash Arts seeks to foreground and amplify Indigenous cultures, histories, research methodologies, theories and practices. The [Monash Indigenous Studies Centre](#) performs a pivotal role in this amplification across the Faculty and University and has done so since 1964 when it was founded as the Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs. Building on this rich history, the Faculty aims to be an employer of choice for Indigenous research leaders and staff. The Faculty also conducts research of the highest standards in accordance with the [AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#).

CLIMATE CHANGE

The global climate crisis can only be addressed through coordinated structural changes, and the humanities, creative arts, and social sciences are key to sustainable, just, resilient, and healthy futures. Monash Arts research aims to produce an evidence-base that informs policy and fosters partnerships among communities, industry, and government. It aims to develop innovative strategies for climate change mitigation, adaptation, communication, and imagining futures that centre the environment. We create practical tools for the public and policy makers to debunk misinformation, with a clear focus on how media narratives shape public understanding and policy responses.

Our research supports whole-of-government action and fosters international collaboration among industry leaders, academic institutions, and community organisations dedicated to advancing climate solutions and sustainable futures. Through innovative research methods, we aim to reach the public, engage policymakers in climate change action, and work with communities directly affected by climate change disasters.

A hallmark of our work is our commitment to **co-design methodologies** that incorporate lived experiences into every stage of research and solution development. In doing so, we give voice to often marginalised or overlooked communities. Our researchers actively collaborate with communities throughout Australia and the Asia-Pacific region to identify climate-related challenges and co-create strategies that enhance community resilience. Through participatory, place-based, and community-led approaches, we capture local insights to build capacity for effective climate adaptation, advocating for affected communities and for just and sustainable futures.

As a comprehensive Faculty of Arts, our researchers come from disciplines including social sciences (such as human geography, politics, anthropology and sociology), the environmental humanities (history, philosophy, languages, cultural studies), media studies, and creative and performing arts (music, theatre, performance, creative writing). This **combination enables a distinctive perspective on climate change which includes a focus on the environment as an active agent**. Centering Indigenous knowledge and creative arts storytelling, we understand the environment to be an active, interconnected partner in climate action. This perspective deepens public awareness and guides policymakers to holistic understandings of interlinked problems. **Our researchers work globally** and are based in Australia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, collaborating with researchers in Engineering, Medicine, Science, IT, Law, Design, and Education.

We pay particular attention to **everyday experiences of climate change and social justice**, uncovering barriers and enablers in disaster response. Our research acknowledges that understanding systemic climate risks is critical for formulating policies and strategies that are resilient and adaptive. In doing so, we advocate for a shift from traditional, siloed risk assessments to holistic approaches that recognise the interdependencies of national and global systems. This focus allows us to reveal how people-centered political narratives and social practices drive change.

Our research can **support disaster preparedness and recovery strategies to account for social inequities**, an essential element for building resilience and fostering a fairer, more inclusive society. Monash Arts research on climate change can be mapped to these four themes:

- **Community resilience and climate change adaptation** informs policies for climate adaptation and community resilience by addressing cascading hazards affecting infrastructure, public health, and vulnerable populations across local and Asia-Pacific contexts.
- **Climate communication and information integrity: imagining climate futures** advances non-partisan, evidence-based climate communication by leveraging innovative media partnerships and creative digital platforms to counter misinformation, bridge regional literacy gaps, and foster participatory dialogue and policy reform for transformative climate futures.
- **Climate, Technology and Sustainable Transitions** explores how social dynamics, technological innovation, governance, and policy intersect to drive transformative climate mitigation, adaptation, and sustainable resource management across diverse contexts.
- **Voicing the environment as a catalyst for environmental and social awareness** positions the environment as an active, interconnected protagonist, drawing on Indigenous perspectives and immersive creative arts, to catalyse environmental stewardship, social awareness and transformative action.

Latest projects

CLIMATE VOCABULARIES: NEW METHODOLOGIES FOR MUSIC AND SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

[Dr Louise Devenish](#), [Professor Cat Hope](#) (SZCSOMP), [Professor Christian Jakob](#) (Monash Faculty of Science) and [Dr Lucy Richardson](#) (MCCCRH)

ARC DP26



One of the major challenges in tackling the climate crisis today is effectively communicating scientific knowledge. Climate Vocabularies explores how music can enhance science storytelling, aiming to create more compelling and emotionally resonant climate messaging.

This project proposes a radical shift to artistic climate communication, where music is positioned in a driving role in scientific and communication research. The project develops, tests, and shares an innovative framework for interdisciplinary collaboration, assessing its impact on musicians, scientists, and audiences alike. This project delivers significant social and cultural benefits by fostering thriving communities, amplifying diverse voices, and offering new ways to engage with global challenges. The outcomes will be shared with industry, the public and other stakeholders through conferences, articles, a symposium, public performances at major venues and festivals, and community talks. The collaborative framework will be distilled into a freely available online guide for researchers and practitioners worldwide.

SOUNDS OF THE WHITE CONTINENT: SOUNDS AND SIGHTS OF ANTARCTICA

[Dr Anna McMichael](#) (SZCSOMP)

State Library of Victoria



The Climate Futures Artist Fellowship will create an immersive multimedia project which explores the impact of climate change on Antarctica. Drawing on the Library's collection of historic photographs and records of Antarctic exploration, Dr McMichael will also commission new works of music and soundscapes, with a performance of the project at the Library.

The project will create a soundscape against photographs using Antarctic field sound recordings and purposely composed music. It combines evocative music with imaginative visuals and notable scientific findings, featuring new music performed by musicians, against a backdrop of remarkable photographs, words of explorers and voices of scientists.

CLIMATE IMAGINARIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

[Dr Gemma Sou](#) (SoSS) and colleagues from the University of the Philippines Cebu and University of Melbourne

ANU Philippines Institute



The Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. Typhoons, floods, and earthquakes strike with relentless frequency, yet large-scale infrastructure projects, often plagued by corruption and inefficiency, continue to fall short. Instead of reducing risk, these failures deepen vulnerabilities for local communities and fuel political instability.

This project takes a different path. Rather than relying on top-down ‘techno-fixes,’ it explores the local, community-driven solutions that people are already imagining or putting into practice. By working directly with residents and officials in Cebu City, the team is mapping grassroots strategies that reveal how communities themselves are re-shaping resilience in everyday life.

The outcome will be a practical and innovative resource: an Atlas of Climate Imaginaries. This evidence-based guide will capture the diverse ways people envision and build resilience, offering policymakers and planners a grounded perspective that reflects lived realities rather than abstract models. By centering local voices, the project aims to influence future policy and planning in ways that are more effective, equitable and sustainable. It highlights that resilience is not just about infrastructure, it’s about imagination, collaboration, and the capacity of communities to adapt and thrive in the face of uncertainty.

BUILDING A NEW KNOWLEDGE ARCHITECTURE FOR SIDS: RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE ISLANDS INITIATIVE PHASE III

[Professor Jack Corbett](#), [Dr Eliorah Malifa](#), [Dr Lachlan McNamee](#), [Dr Elissa Waters](#) and [Dr Gemma Sou](#) (SoSS)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) (United Kingdom)



Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including those in the Pacific, face overlapping challenges: outdated economic models, intensifying geopolitical competition, and accelerating climate change. The Resilient and Sustainable Islands Initiative (RESI), led by the London-based ODI (formerly Overseas Development Institute), is tackling these issues by collating global research, translating evidence into policy insights, and fostering dialogue among governments, donors, and international organisations.

It is one of the key events that RESI runs in the biennial SIDS Future Forum in conjunction with the UK’s FCDO and the UN Agencies with a direct stake in SIDS development. The centrepiece is the launch of the State of SIDS report, authored by Monash researchers, which will serve as a one stop shop for policymakers seeking evidenced based insights on SIDS and their development challenges. The report responds to the 2024 Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) and represents the first comprehensive synthesis of academic research across all 39 UN member states and 18 associate members.

In addition the Monash team is contributing to RESI’s broader outputs, including training programs for SIDS officials, research publications, and the podcast *Small Islands, Big Picture*. These initiatives aim to strengthen resilience, support inclusive development, and ensure island nations have the tools to navigate an uncertain global future.

ADVANCING NORMATIVE, EPISTEMIC AND DEMOCRATIC CLIMATE AND HEALTH RESEARCH METHODS AND THEORY IN MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA

[Dr Raksha Pandya Wood](#) (MCCCRH), [Dr Azliyana Azhari](#) (SASS), [Associate Professor Grace Wangge](#) and [Dr Gabriella Fernando](#) (Monash Public Health Indonesia)

World Health Organisation



This study, spanning health and social sciences, explores how climate and health research can better connect with the public in Malaysia and Indonesia. By bridging scientific (epistemic) and democratic forms of knowledge, the project aims to strengthen theory while making research more inclusive and impactful.

Events held across both countries will bring together communities, researchers and stakeholders to identify barriers and enablers to public involvement, from shaping research design through to driving real-world impact.

INVESTIGATING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES OVER FIVE CENTURIES ON MOLOKA’I, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

[Dr Ashleigh Rogers](#) (SoPHIS) and colleagues from University of Queensland

National Geographic Society



The project examines long-term sustainability practices in limpet (‘opihi, *Cellana* spp.) harvesting to guide contemporary catch limits, spatial closures and the design of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across the Hawaiian Islands. By analysing shell midden assemblages from archaeological sites on Moloka’i, researchers combine taxonomic profiling, size-frequency data and demographic reconstructions with Native Hawaiian knowledges to model how populations responded to different harvest regimes over the past 500 years.

The research delivers policy-ready guidance for evidence-based size limits, seasonal closures and rotating harvest areas, supporting adaptive co-management with Hawaiian communities. By providing deep-time baselines, the project addresses the challenge of ‘shifting baselines’ in modern marine health assessments and strengthens the design and evaluation of MPAs in Hawai’i and across the Pacific today.

THE ACT OF IMAGINING: CO-CREATING PARTICIPATORY CLIMATE FUTURES METHODS

[Professor Stacy Holman Jones](#) (LLCL), Associate Professor Shanti Sumartojo, Professor Lisa Grocott, Dr Ilya Fridman (MADA) and colleagues from University of Glasgow and Wellcome Trust

ARC DP26



Climate adaptation efforts often focus on technological, infrastructural, and policy-driven solutions, overlooking the role of human motivation, agency, and imagination in driving meaningful change. This project explores how participatory methods, drawn from design and applied theatre, can help people in Australia imagine and plan for a changing climate.

By co-designing and testing participatory workshops, the project seeks to create new methods that climate professionals and communities can adapt and use in their own contexts, building on existing strategies and improving Australia's climate response. This project will provide significant social and environmental benefits by tapping into our natural abilities to imagine, connect and take action, strengthening climate adaptation efforts. The team will work with climate-focused organisations in Australia and globally to develop methods that reduce environmental risks, improving the ability to engage communities directly for collective resilience and democratisation of climate governance.

The project will produce free, practical resources to help climate stakeholders engage communities in creative adaptation efforts. The resources will include an easy-to-read report on the power of imagination, a crowd-sourced playbook for building resilience, and explainer videos for use in government, philanthropy, and community settings.

EMPOWERING HOUSEHOLDS IN RESOURCE-EFFICIENT SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS

[Professor Jo Lindsay](#), [Professor Dharmalingam Arunachalam](#) (SoSS), Professor Rob Raven (MSDI) and colleagues from RMIT and University of Manchester, UK

ARC DP26



Transitioning to a resource-efficient household sector is crucial but requires societal and policy innovation. We have limited knowledge of which households are keen to be resource efficient and why, how they engage with interlinked systems (energy, food, waste and water), and

how to support their transition. The research will contribute long-term solutions to the interlinked sustainability challenges that Australia is currently experiencing.

This project aims to investigate how households can play an active role in system change toward resource efficiency across energy, water, food and waste. The project will contribute environmental, economic and social benefits to Australia by identifying resource-efficient strategies and pathways for householders, community organisations, markets and policy makers. It will deliver practical and affordable bottom-up strategies to build resource-efficient households, cities and towns and generate useful information for householders, policy makers and practitioners seeking to promote energy efficiency, water efficiency, waste reduction and household resilience.

Adoption pathways will be developed by referencing householders, local and state-level policy actors and service providers. Findings will be presented to government departments and industry fora and social media-friendly documentaries, news articles and accessible summaries will be developed to engage the public.

A MILLENIA-SCALE APPROACH TO DOCUMENTING THE LOST SHELLFISH REEFS OF THE GIPPSLAND LAKES, VICTORIA

[Dr Ashleigh Rogers](#), [Dr Jessie Birkett-Rees](#) (SoPHIS)

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation



Shellfish reefs, built from billions of oysters and mussels, are the most threatened marine ecosystem in Australia, with only 8% of historically known reefs remaining. Their loss is profound: these reefs filter water, reduce wave energy and provide vital nursery habitats for fish. Yet, because most reef collapse occurred in the 1800s, beyond living memory, we know little about what healthy reefs looked like or how they functioned. This transdisciplinary project, in partnership with and led by the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, brings together Indigenous knowledges, archaeology, marine ecology and coastal geomorphology to build a long-term understanding of shellfish reef ecosystems that are now functionally extinct.

By researching and reconstructing the environmental conditions and biodiversity that once allowed reefs to thrive, the team will develop a methodology that can be applied nationally and internationally to improve restoration outcomes. Rebuilding shellfish reefs offers several fundamental benefits, including supporting the recovery of fish populations, enhancing biodiversity, mitigating coastal erosion and generating long-term economic and cultural value for Australia's fishing and tourism industries.

BUILDING A MODEL OF FUTURE-PROOFING FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE BY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES (MOFCREC) IN EASTERN INDONESIA

[Associate Professor Sharyn Davies](#) (LLCL), [Professor Narelle Warren](#) (SoSS), [Dr Sabina Puspita](#) (Monash Indonesia), Associate Professor Ronli Sifris, Associate Professor Becky Batagol (Monash Law) and colleagues from the Hasanuddin University, Perdik Disability Organisation and Garamin Disability Organisation

KONEKSI Scheme (DFAT)



How do we create a climate-resilient future that truly includes everyone? That's the driving question behind the *Model of Future-proofing for Climate Resilience by Engaging Communities* project, funded through the Australia–Indonesia KONEKSI program.

The project brings together researchers, governments, and community partners across Australia and Indonesia to tackle climate change in a way that is practical and deeply collaborative. At its heart is a commitment to working alongside those most affected, women, older people, and people with disability, to ensure their voices are heard and actively shape the solutions being developed.

This extension grant builds on powerful earlier achievements. Among them:

- A dual-language children's book, now used in classrooms across Indonesia, helping the next generation understand and respond to climate challenges.
- A Climate Resilience Toolkit, featured on government websites, providing communities with accessible, evidence-based strategies for adapting to change.

The next phase seeks to deepen partnerships and co-create community-led strategies that strengthen resilience from the ground up. By embedding lived experience into research and policy, the project ensures that climate action is not effective, ethical and inclusive.

This project demonstrates how international collaboration can spark innovation and empower communities. It shows that resilience is built not just through infrastructure or policy, but through connection, participation, and shared responsibility.

STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) STANDARDS AND PRACTICES FOR A JUST TRANSITION

[Dr Xiao Han](#) (SoSS) and colleagues from the University of Melbourne (Lead), La Trobe University and Universitas Indonesia

KONEKSI Scheme (DFAT)



The Indonesian government's goal of achieving net zero by 2060 requires a rapid increase in the proportion of energy generation from renewables. With finance and technologies coming from China, Japan, ADB and other multilateral agencies, this is a complex and sometimes opaque landscape for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. The project examines current ESG standards and practices in Indonesia's energy transition through detailed collaborative research of three case studies.

The project will build knowledge of current norms and practices in ESG and how they compare to global standards and strengthen the work of civil society actors where they engage with investors who have diverging ESG standards and practices.

COMMUNICATION AND THE CLIMATE TRANSITION PROGRAM

This research program partners with Australia's largest free-to-air radio and television broadcasters and news organisations to design, deliver and evaluate climate and energy content across much of Australia. Specific projects for 2025 focus on EV misinformation, COPs, gas and electrification, and piloting research with commercial radio and finance/economic commentators.

The projects (see below) are designed for immediate impact – including supporting journalists, presenters and producers to cover climate change and the energy transition – and to make a long-term contribution to knowledge about climate communications and social and environmental change.

ACCELERATING EV ADOPTION AND THE TRANSITION TO NET ZERO WITH COMMERCIAL RADIO

This project investigates commercial radio as a medium to accelerate EV adoption and the transition to net zero in Australia. The aim of this project is to identify and analyse commercial radio's role in Australia's response to climate change and its net zero targets. Working with content directors, producers and presenters across states and regional areas, it will develop content that resonates with commercial radio audiences and people who are vulnerable to misinformation and resistant to the renewables roll out and shift to EVs.

The project is first of its kind and, through evaluation and peer-reviewed publications, will create an evidence base to inform further actions and research in Australia and internationally.

CLIMATE CONNECT

Working with partners across News Corp, commercial and community radio, plus all major television networks, the project will analyse Australian attitudes on the energy transition, including their 'favourability' for renewables, support for ambitious climate and energy policy, and social licence challenges for international leadership and deal-making. Work will be undertaken with media partners to produce content that is relevant, compelling and actionable, highlighting benefits for individuals, communities and the nation.

The efficacy and impact of the content will be evaluated through a research program using content analysis, surveys, focus groups and interviews with audience members, producers and presenters.

[Professor Libby Lester](#), [Amelia Pearson](#), [Zoe Hansen](#), [Dr Lucy Richardson](#), [Alfie Chadwick](#), [Kyle Herbertson](#), [Mara Jorgovic](#) (MCCCRH)

Anonymous donations



BUILDING PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND COUNTERING GAS MYTHS AND DISINFORMATION

Oil and gas companies and other proponents of the gas industry have made a strategic shift in discourses to link 'natural' gas to renewable energy. Gas is framed as essential as renewables for emissions reduction, reinforcing the fossil fuels' role in a cleaner future. This consistent rhetoric means the Australian public, particularly in high gas production and use regions, receives conflicting and insufficient information about gas' climate impacts, economic disadvantages, and inflationary effects.

This project will examine gas mis- and disinformation across media, and equip communities with the knowledge required for informed decision making about our shared energy future.



“

Saving our planet is now a communications challenge.

Sir David Attenborough (2015)

DARK OCEANOGRAPHY: PERFORMING ARTS TURNING CLIMATE DATA INTO PUBLIC ACTION

Arts-Based Knowledge Translation (ABKT) transforms research into emotionally resonant experiences that connect with communities beyond traditional academic and policy channels. By partnering researchers with artists, ABKT supports inclusive dialogue, public understanding and evidence-informed decision-making.

In considering climate, this approach offers a powerful tool to overcome disengagement and scepticism by transforming data into lived, emotional experiences. ABKT invites fresh perspectives and reframes climate change as a shared human story, not just a scientific issue.

From Ocean Data to Sonic Storytelling

Dark Oceanography is a striking example of ABKT in action. Created by *The Sound Collectors Lab* in partnership with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Weather of the 21st Century, the work is a collaborative effort of the Project lead and performer [Dr Louise Devenish](#), composer [Kate Milligan](#), music technologist [Aaron Wyatt](#), and oceanographer [Dr Navid Constantinou](#) (University of Melbourne).

Using output from Australia's ACCESS-OM2 climate model, the team translated the movements of ocean currents and eddies into sound. The circular motion of eddies informs every element of the work, from instrument choice and performer technique, to notation and audience seating.

Translating eddies: Science Meets Art

Ocean eddies are vast, circular currents, sometimes up to 200 kilometres wide that transport heat, energy, and nutrients through the ocean. Though invisible from land, they are vital to ocean circulation, and research shows their behaviour is changing as the ocean warms. Yet, they are often absent from climate projections.

Dark Oceanography transforms eddy datasets into an enveloping sonic experience. Three percussionists perform live, their sounds captured and diffused through a multi-channel spatial audio system. Seated in the round, surrounded by acoustic percussion stations and a 63-channel digital audio system, the audience is immersed in 360-degree sound, an auditory journey inside the swirling heart of an eddy.

In *Dark Oceanography*, ocean climate model data is re-imagined as an immersive percussion and electronic sound performance. Instead of charts and graphs, audiences hear the ocean, feel the turbulence of eddies, and experience the urgency of climate change in real time.

Where climate data can feel abstract or overwhelming, Dark Oceanography offers audiences a way to experience science through listening.

Finding a Common Language Between Science and Art

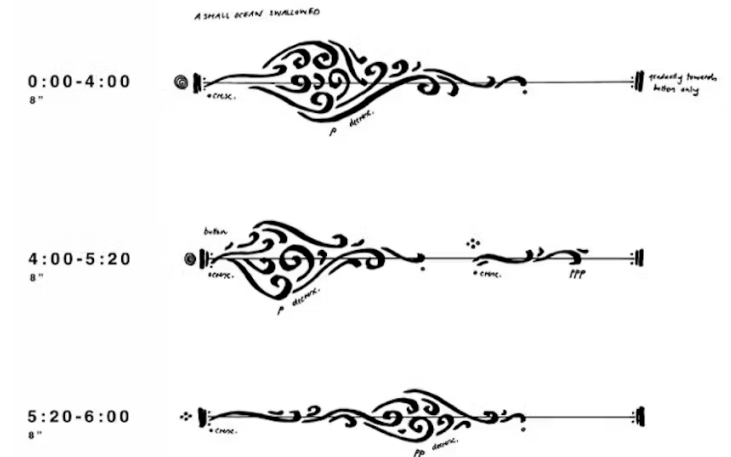
Developing a common vocabulary allowed scientists and artists to view techniques, concepts and data through each other's lens, ensuring that ocean eddy datasets were not simply added to the music but became an active, integral part of the performance itself. Collaboration posed its own technical challenges: the team spent considerable time selecting suitable datasets, experimenting with artificial 'stunt eddies' to test sonic behaviour and trialling instruments and materials to capture the turbulence of ocean currents. These processes ensured the final performance conveyed both scientific accuracy and artistic impact, transforming complex climate data into an immersive, emotionally resonant experience.

Reframing Climate Communication

For oceanographer Dr Navid Constantinou, *Dark Oceanography* has reshaped the way climate science can be communicated, shifting it from a transfer of information to a shared emotional and experiential act that sparks curiosity and conversation. He found the artistic process strikingly familiar to science, with its emphasis on curiosity, exploration and uncovering hidden patterns. This collaboration challenged assumptions about science communication by showing that clarity can emerge through unconventional artistic forms.

It highlighted the value of emotional experiences such as music in creating common ground and fostering community, reminding scientists that shared understanding can be just as important as precision. In this state of openness, audiences are more receptive to scientific detail, **making art a powerful pathway to deeper engagement with climate research.**

DARK OCEANOGRAPHY - PERCUSSION 1



Excerpt of the musical notation by Kate Milligan, based on eddy movement.
Image: Kate Milligan

Looking ahead

The next stage of development focuses on integrating underwater film footage with the sound performance, scaling the spatial audio design for touring, and recording the work despite the complexity of its 63-channel system.

These steps aim to broaden the reach of *Dark Oceanography*, bringing its immersive experience to new audiences and venues.

“

I was mesmerised because the notation itself was an artwork: it embodied the ocean motion itself and captured both creativity and rigour abstraction and precision. This challenged my assumptions about science communication by reminding me that reproducibility and clarity can emerge even in highly unconventional artistic forms.

Dr Navid Constantinou

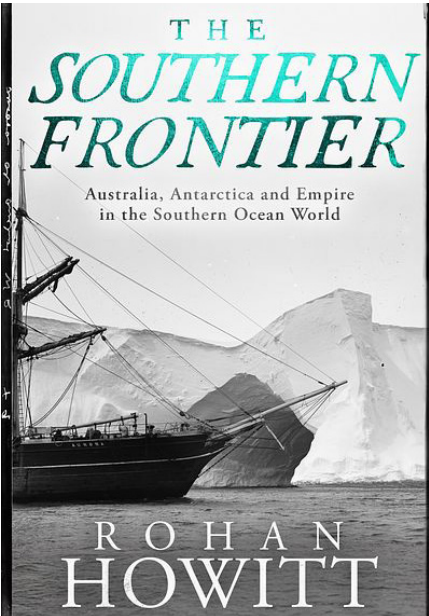


Dr Louise Devenish playing a waterphone
Photography by Darren Gill

Publications

SELECT BOOKS

Monash Arts research demonstrates that climate change is a defining challenge for both people and the planet. Monash Arts scholars are developing responses that combine scientific insight with social justice and creative vision. Our work connects energy innovation, equitable governance, and cultural understanding to the shared task of adaptation. Together, these studies embody a vision of climate action grounded in fairness, collaboration and the imagination of sustainable futures.



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GEOPOLITICAL SECURITY

Australia's security environment is increasingly shaped by interconnected challenges intersecting defence, diplomacy and development. Strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific, the accelerating impacts of climate change, weakening global governance and the rise of disinformation demand integrated responses that combine military capability with diplomatic engagement and societal resilience.

Monash Arts academics seek to advance a whole-of-government approach to geopolitical security, generating evidence-based insights that strengthen strategic partnerships, build resilience and enhance decision-making across domains. This work provides insight into the political, cultural and social dimensions of security, seeking to ensure Australia's strategies remain effective, legitimate and sustainable. Working through an extensive network of partnerships, researchers co-design approaches with policymakers, communities and institutions to support translation into practical, context-sensitive solutions. With global relevance, the research informs both Australia's national security priorities and international debates on governance, resilience and strategic competition. We apply gender sensitive approaches to stability and security building efforts in Asia-Pacific and globally and undertake specific transformative research to understand the problem of violence against women addressing the structural drivers that cause and compound it.

We explore Australia's relations with its regional neighbours, its role in regional and global stability, and the factors that shape post-conflict or disaster resolution and community reconciliation. **Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Stabilisation** research expertise contributes critical perspectives on inclusive peace processes and post-conflict/ disaster stabilisation, with particular attention to community trust-building and the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the Asia-Pacific. This work generates evidence-based insights into alliance management, multilateral engagement and the informal diplomatic networks that underpin trust and interoperability with partners, while highlighting the importance of legitimacy, ethics and reconciliation in sustaining stability and preventing institutional erosion.

Complementing this, our **diplomacy and international relations** expertise explores how regional partnerships can expand defence, intelligence and cyber cooperation.

We explore digital disruption felt within and across borders and create evidence-based, innovative approaches to counter coercive activities such as disinformation campaigns and dissemination of conspiracy. Our research explores the underlying ideological, religious and political factors and the role of community/media dialogue that might contribute to extremist attitudes and actions and forms of community violence. This work is complemented by research into civilian resistance, militias and the importance of civic education, offering nuanced understandings of how communities navigate and counter coercive power.

Monash Arts is advancing knowledge on **humanitarian, climate-linked and security challenges** in the Indo-Pacific. Research tracks the movement of people, goods and information to build Defence capability in disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and climate adaptation. This work examines how climate pressures drive conflict, migration and terrorism, while also addressing the destabilising effects of disinformation and information warfare to protect trust and resilience. Expertise in strategic competition and non-proliferation adds further depth, with analysis of nuclear proliferation risks, treaty compliance and export control regimes informing both regional preparedness and global security dialogues.

Monash Arts expertise in **Enhanced Decision-Making** brings together ethical foresight, cultural understanding and technological innovation to support decision-makers in navigating uncertainty. This interdisciplinary research strengthens operational and strategic choices in complex environments, ensuring responses are not only rapid and effective but also socially responsible and grounded in resilience.

Latest projects

EMPIRE'S EDGE: MIGRATION, CONFLICT AND THE POLITICS OF DECOLONIZATION

[Dr Lachlan McNamee](#) (SoSS)

ARC DECRA 2026



Across the Pacific, former colonial powers like France, New Zealand and the United States face pressure from the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization to grant self-government to distant island territories. The decolonisation of the Pacific region has major implications for Australia's security environment as small, independent island states have recently become key sites of geostrategic competition. Yet, we have no framework for understanding why some islands have active anti-colonial movements (e.g. New Caledonia, Guam) whereas others (e.g. American Samoa, Tokelau) do not.

This project will develop a new framework to explain the three-decade deadlock in global decolonisation and address the gap in understanding why some colonies have independence movements whereas others do not. Through survey experiments, supervised text analysis and fieldwork in five Pacific non-self-governing territories, we expect to generate new knowledge on how migration drives contemporary anti-colonial conflicts. This work will benefit Australia's security by investigating how different institutional arrangements around migration control and political representation of migrants may address the roots of anticolonial conflicts, informing evidence-based policy approaches for strengthening regional stability. The findings of the project will be shared with the Australian public, officials, and policymakers at the United Nations.

ADDRESSING LONG-TERM CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

[Dr Colette Mortreux](#) (SoSS)

ARC DECRA 2026



It is estimated that 22,000 Australians are displaced by climate-related disasters every year, and this is expected to increase significantly as climate change intensifies. We know from international research that displacement can have long-term impacts on the social and economic stability of communities, with risks of homelessness, trauma and social division which can disrupt community stability and functions.

This project aims to investigate the long-term impacts of internal climate displacement in Australia and identify effective policies to support community resilience. It will generate insights into how climate disaster displacement impacts people's social and economic stability over time. By assessing patterns of climate-induced displacement and evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies, the project will provide evidence to strategically strengthen Australia's management of climate displacement. Research outcomes will be shared with displaced persons, policy makers and stakeholders through a series of workshops and meetings, allowing them to collaborate, co-design and co-produce evidence-based policy recommendations, as well as developing an interactive Story Map illustrating displacement impacts.



RESPONDING TO TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: AUSTRALIA-KOREA PARTNERSHIP

Dr Hyein Ellen Cho (LLCL), **Sungshin Bae**, **Associate Professor Bridget Harris** and **Benjamin Scott** (SoSS)

DFAT- Australia-Korea Foundation



This international collaboration brings together partners in Australia and Korea to address the intersection of AI, gender-based violence and digital safety. The project responds to the critical need for evidence-driven and collaborative approaches to counter the misuse of AI in perpetrating gender-based violence, while safeguarding digital safety and upholding the rights of women and girls. Through its cross-national lens, it generates collaborative insights and solutions that contribute to global dialogues on AI ethics, digital safety and social justice.

The project engages nine Korean partner organisations, including the Ministry of Justice, Seoul Metropolitan Government and the Seoul Digital Sexual Violence Support Centre.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AS A NEW AGENDA AND MEDIATOR OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: FOSTERING KOREA-SOUTHEAST ASIA COLLABORATION

Dr Taesik Kim, **Koh Chien Aun**, **Dr Chirshandra Sebastiampillai**, **Dr Stefan Bächtold**, **Associate Professor Emma Baulch** (SASS)

Korea Foundation



The project investigates lessons from transnationally networked platforms in Southeast Asia to address limitations in South Korea's domestic platform environment. It examines how public diplomacy, through sociotechnical imaginaries, can facilitate cooperation and competition between Southeast Asian and Korean platforms, and propose strategies to overcome the risks of isolation in Korean digital platforms by fostering regional and global collaboration for sustained technological growth.

EVIDENCE-INFORMED DRUG POLICY IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Professor Adeeba Kamarulzaman, **Associate Professor Claudia Stoicescu**, **Dr Thaatchaayini Kananatu** (SASS) and colleagues from the **University of Sheffield** and **Ateneo Manila University**

The British Academy



This research project tests theory and develops knowledge on evidence use by studying the use and non-use of evidence in the making of policy on illicit drugs in South-East Asia. Focusing on issues such as decriminalisation, compulsory treatment and the death penalty, the team is conducting scoping reviews and stakeholder interviews to understand the dynamics of evidence use in policymaking. It will generate new theoretical insights and practical knowledge to inform more effective, humane and evidence-based drug policies in South-East Asia.

STRATEGIC POLICY GRANTS, AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

The Strategic Policy Grants Scheme funded by the Australian Department of Defence are competitive research grants that support independent projects designed to inform and strengthen Australia's defence and strategic policy. These prestigious, category 1 research grants aim to deepen public debate, strengthen Defence's international and domestic partnerships and enhance strategic policy advice. Monash Arts Faculty was successful in leading and taking part in [three out of the 23 awarded projects](#) in the 2026 Strategic Policy Grants Program round.

NUCLEAR-CONVENTIONAL ENTANGLEMENT RISKS: AUSTRALIA AND ALLIED CRISIS MANAGEMENT INTEROPERABILITY

Dr Ben Zala (SoSS) and colleagues from **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**, **University of Tokyo**, **Korea Institute for Defense Analyses**

Australian Department of Defence



This project will explore how Australia and its closest regional partners – Japan, South Korea, and the United States can build coordinated approaches to crisis signaling in the Asia-Pacific. As the risks of conflict increase in Australia's region, concerns are growing about the links between advanced conventional weapons systems and strategic stability between the major nuclear-armed powers. The research is designed to help the Department of Defence to navigate the complex challenge of maintaining deterrence while avoiding dangerous nuclear crises as Australia joins these allies in acquiring increasingly capable weapons systems.

The project led by Monash University, involves a team of international partners who will examine the specific conventional weapons systems relevant to potential nuclear crises in Asia in the years ahead, and identify mechanisms for coordinating effective crisis signaling. The outcomes include production of a briefing paper, an international dialogue held in Australia and blog posts and podcast episodes to raise awareness of the increasingly important role of conventionally-armed US allies in potential nuclear crises in Asia.

CHINA'S EXPORT CONTROLS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL DEFENCE STRATEGY

Colleagues from the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** and **Dr Ben Zala** (SoSS)

Australia Department of Defence



The use of export controls, particularly relating to dual-use items and critical minerals, have become a key tool of statecraft and geopolitical competition. This project brings together researchers from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, a think tank in the field of conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament, with Monash University. In response to US restrictions on transfers of technology to China, Beijing has taken initiatives that challenge the multilateral export control regimes that underpin non-proliferation efforts, and disrupt the global trade in materials critical to the production of military equipment that Australia is seeking to procure.

This project will seek to clarify the motivation, content and implications of China's export control-related initiatives and their impact on global non-proliferation efforts and Australian Defence procurement. It will highlight potential policy responses and suggest strategies of engagement aimed at aligning China's export controls policies with global norms and objectives.

OUR DEFENCE FORCE: YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE ADF'S SOCIAL LICENSE

Colleagues from **ACU** and **Associate Professor Zareh Ghazarian** (SoSS)

Australia Department of Defence



What might motivate, or stop, young Australians from joining the Australian Defence Force (ADF)? To advance our understanding of these factors, the project will look at the ADF's perceived legitimacy, trust, and representativeness and examine young people's knowledge and beliefs about the ADF. We will also examine the perceived fit of the ADF with young people's attitudes, beliefs, skills, and aspirations. The project will focus on people aged 15 to 24 and include targeted engagement with women, CALD, and First Nations peoples, as well as non-citizens from Five Eyes nations residing in Australia.

The project will advance knowledge about the relationship between the ADF and Australian society and generate public debate which will shape youth engagement methods for future recruitment efforts.



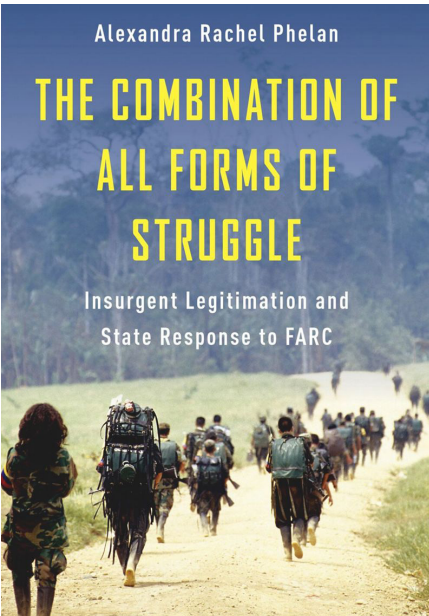
Publications

SELECT BOOKS

Geopolitical security today reaches beyond borders and military strength to include the systems of governance, technology, and identity that sustain global stability. Monash Arts researchers are redefining security through studies of power, ideology, and cooperation and tackling issues from extremism and digital surveillance to gendered violence and democratic accountability. Our work advances a vision of security grounded in justice, inclusion, and shared responsibility in an increasingly uncertain world.



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Williams, B 2025, [‘Daggy dads and state daddies: theorising the masculinities of Australian men political leaders’](#), Men and Masculinities

[View all outputs published by Faculty of Arts](#)

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Monash Arts research explores the mechanisms of building and sustaining stronger, more resilient communities. Co-designed with communities locally, nationally and internationally, our work provides the evidence base for practice and policy improvements that drive systemic and institutional change. Importantly, the traditional owner-led partnerships forged with Monash Arts academics are leading to new knowledge and insights into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples history and cultural heritage.

We explore issues of **identity, belonging and intercultural competence** and how these factors help to develop an inclusive national identity. We examine how personal perceptions and cultural values shape connectedness, and how respect, openness and curiosity can overcome barriers to inclusion. By deepening understanding of cultural awareness and sensitivity, our researchers highlight the shared values that underpin resilient communities and provide pathways for more inclusive dialogue and decision-making.

Aimed at prevention of division and extremism, our research on **social exclusion, safety and cohesion** investigates the drivers of inequality, intolerance and marginalisation and explores how ideological, religious and media narratives can fuel division or extremism. Our work with interfaith and multi-faith networks demonstrates how dialogue can mitigate radicalisation and strengthen national security, while collaborations with government, law enforcement and media inform better policy and practice in areas such as counter-terrorism, community safety and violence prevention.

Arts research on **youth, education and democratic resilience** aims to contribute to civic participation and development of respectful communities. We recognise that intellectual resilience equips young people to think independently and responsibly, counter misinformation and foster democratic engagement.

Our research supports schools and youth organisations to build critical thinking skills and constructive dialogue, empowering the next generation to respond constructively to destructive narratives and social pressures. In doing so, this work strengthens civics and citizenship education by fostering a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, while also building trust in democratic institutions. By equipping young people with the knowledge and confidence to participate meaningfully in civic life, our research helps ensure that Australia's future citizens are prepared to uphold inclusive values and sustain resilient, trustworthy institutions.

Finally, our research advances **social cohesion, wellbeing and equality of opportunity**, directly addressing national and state priorities for **equitable access to resources and participation**. We examine how education, healthcare, housing and employment shape resilience, connectedness and trust in institutions across diverse communities, from Indigenous peoples to newly arrived migrants. By working with policymakers and service providers, Monash Arts researchers define best practice and improve social infrastructure, ensuring services are responsive to diverse needs and contribute to long-term community wellbeing. This work also tackles systemic issues of inequality, disadvantage, intolerance, discrimination and violence, creating community-informed and ethically focused health and wellbeing interventions.

In particular, our research on the **prevention of gender and family violence and the advancement of gender equality** provides an evidence base for transformative policy change, supporting and protecting those experiencing violence while addressing the cultural and economic drivers that sustain it.

Latest projects

GEN26: A SURVEY OF THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

[Associate Professor David Slucki](#) and [Dr Adina Bankier-Karp](#) (SoPHIS)

Donors: Besen Family Foundation, Cher Family Foundation, Cranbourne Foundation, ERDI Foundation, Gandel Foundation, Pratt Foundation Spotlight Foundation, Szalmuk Singer Family



The Gen26 survey, led by Monash ACJC and the Jewish Communal Appeal (NSW), and implemented in collaboration with Jewish community organisations around Australia, is the latest iteration in ACJC's once-in-a-decade study, targeting 10,000+ responses in Australia and New Zealand. The study maps changes in Jewish identity, participation, wellbeing and experiences of antisemitism, over the past decade, factoring in major upheavals since the COVID-19 pandemic and the Israel-Gaza war. The project builds on the outcomes of the two previous surveys, [Gen08](#) and [Gen17](#).

Beyond creating the most current picture of the community, Gen26 will produce actionable outcomes: detailed demographic and attitudinal datasets, segmented analyses for age cohorts and regions, validated indicators for monitoring community wellbeing and evidence-based briefs tailored to service providers. These outputs will support policy development within Jewish communities and in government by supplying policymakers and funders with robust evidence to: identify emerging vulnerabilities and service gaps; design targeted programs for education, aged care and mental health; shape anti-discrimination

and community-safety interventions; and evaluate the impact of investment over time. The survey's public reports and stakeholder consultations will also inform advocacy, strengthen sector planning, and provide a rigorous platform for cross-sector collaboration.

It provides an evidence base to support teachers in designing civics classes and build momentum towards crafting resources and tools for practice and impact.

PLURALIZING POLITICAL LEGITIMACY: BUILDING COMMON GROUND IN A DIVIDED WORLD

[Associate Professor Matteo Bonotti](#) (SoSS) and colleagues from University of Melbourne

Australian Political Studies Association (APSA)



Legitimacy is a cornerstone of modern politics, shaping law, democracy, and the international order. Yet today, ideals and practices of legitimacy face mounting crises: declining trust in institutions, political polarisation, and critiques of Western-centrism and colonial legacies. Against this backdrop, Monash Arts delivered a workshop, supported by APSA and the Society for Applied Philosophy, to explore the perils and promise of political pluralism in theories and practices of legitimacy. Participants examined how pluralisation of concepts and institutions can both deepen contestation and, when constructively harnessed, strengthen governance responses to global change and diversity.



The workshop participants included academics and PhD researchers from Australian universities and institutions, and international partners from the Asia-Pacific. A highlight was strong representation of First Nations scholars, alongside perspectives from mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, enriching dialogue with diverse philosophical traditions from Confucian to democratic thought. This diversity of voices created a rich and generative exchange, laying the groundwork for new approaches to legitimacy that reflect global and Indigenous perspectives.

DITRDCA PROGRAM ON REGIONAL RELIGIOUS LITERACY

[Dr Susan Carland](#) (SoSS) and [Dr Aydogan Kars](#) (SoPHIS)

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)



DITRDCA in Western Australia is working with unique communities of religious and cultural background, as in the case of Christmas Island and Cocos Islands. The Department commissioned Monash University to design and deliver an in-person program of religious and cultural literacy to help DITRDCA employees in Western Australia to better engage with these local communities. The program provides participants with a deeper understanding of the practice of Islam in society, politics and culture, with a focus on Western Australia, developing their general awareness of the value of religious and cultural traditions. Building upon the team’s success in cooperating with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) during 2018-2024, the DITRDCA Program contributes to the improvement of the Australian Public Service employees’ ability to understand the complex ways in which religion and culture function in society.

DEMOCRACY’S KNOWLEDGE PROBLEM: FROM POLARIZATION TO COLLECTIVE WISDOM

[Professor Toby Handfield](#) (SoPHIS) and colleagues from Massachusetts Institute of Technology

ARC DP26



Democracy depends on open debate to reveal truth through disagreement, yet this process is breaking down. Across issues like climate science and public health, Australians, like citizens elsewhere, are increasingly polarized, unable to agree on basic facts.

Beliefs are becoming markers of group identity rather than reflections of evidence, while social media platforms amplify these divisions through algorithms that reward engagement over accuracy.

This project seeks to understand and address this crisis. It will develop formal mathematical models to explain how beliefs function both as representations of reality and as signals of social belonging. Combining formal epistemology, agent-based simulations, and game theory, the research will identify why rational individuals maintain false beliefs, how social networks shape collective reasoning, and which democratic institutions remain resilient under polarization. Findings will be tested against large-scale social media data to ensure real-world relevance. The project will offer new insights into polarization, misinformation, and democratic resilience. Its results will inform policymakers, media organizations, and digital platforms, positioning Australia as a leader in evidence-based approaches to information governance and democratic innovation.

BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

[Dr Daniel Heller](#) (SoPHIS) and [Dr Farid Zaid](#) (MNHS)

Donors: Evelyn Perks and Joel Cohen, the Humanity Foundation, Loti and Victor Smorgon Family Foundation, and Marcia and Dr Henry Pinski



How can we talk across our deepest divides without silencing, shouting down, or walking away? At a time when polarisation is intensifying on campuses and beyond, the [Brave Conversations Project](#) equips students and educators with the skills to turn conflict into an opportunity for growth, respect and innovation.

A joint initiative of the M3CS and the ACJC, the project blends workshops, fellowships, leadership retreats, and curriculum design to build a culture where difference is not feared but engaged. Educators are supported through programs like Teaching Through Tension, where over 300 Monash staff have learned strategies to transform classroom flashpoints into teachable moments. Students take the lead through our Brave Conversations Fellows program, co-designing programs and gaining hands-on experience in constructive disagreement facilitation. A national retreat in February 2026 will bring together student leaders from across Australia to launch their own constructive dialogue and disagreement projects.

The project’s team partners with researchers across the university to develop and trial innovative interventions to promote the core pillars of constructive dialogue: curiosity, humility, compassion, emotional awareness and conflict management skills. The anticipated outcomes include scalable models for student-led dialogue, enhanced leadership capacity and improved campus culture. The project’s impact extends beyond academia, informing policy and community engagement strategies through partnerships with government departments and cultural institutions.



INDONESIA IN THE GLOBAL GEOGRAPHY OF ISLAMIC KNOWLEDGE

[Professor Julian Millie](#) (LLCL) and colleagues from Emory University, New York University and Deakin University

ARC DP26



Indonesia has branded itself on the global stage as the home of ‘moderate Islam’, yet in the world of Islamic learning, Indonesia is a consumer in a one-way flow. Indonesian students still flock to centres of learning in the Middle East, where Indonesian thought is not studied.

This project explores the journeys undertaken by contemporary Indonesian Muslims to centres of learning in the Middle East. Although these journeys are a long-standing feature of the region, they are not part of the growing nation-to-nation cooperation between Australia and Indonesia. Instead, they are embedded within Indonesia’s collaborations with Middle Eastern countries, particularly Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. They are significant because, despite Indonesia’s efforts to assert leadership in the Muslim world through its form of ‘moderate Islam’, many Indonesians still value the authenticity of renowned centres of learning in the Middle East. Graduates of these centres, especially those who become prominent preachers, form a conservative political bloc within Indonesia.

The project will add our region’s links with Middle Eastern centres of Islamic learning to the map of Australian self-awareness and will provide a stronger foundation for Australia’s relationship with its closest neighbour by focusing on those parts of our neighbour that do not closely resemble Australian civic and political realities. The project will deliver a showcase event at which Indonesians and Australians who have participated in the study routes researched in this project will share their experiences.

**LOST IN TRANSLATION? UNDERSTANDING THE
ROLE OF MIGRATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT,
IMPACT AND MANAGEMENT OF AN
OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE**

Associate Professor Ryan Hoy (Lead), Dr StellaMay Gwini, Dr Dee Tomic, Dr Tessa Keegel, Dr Monica O'Dwyer, Professor Karen Walker-Bone (MNHS), [Dr Rick Qi](#) (LLCL) and [Alex Avella](#) (Arts Research and Enterprise) with colleagues from Alfred Hospital Occupational Respiratory Diseases Clinic, National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), Migrant Workers Centre, Vietnamese Australian Professional Network

WorkSafe Victoria



What happens when safety rules don't translate across borders? As thousands of skilled migrants join Victoria's construction and manufacturing industries, understanding how language and cultural differences affect workplace safety is urgent. The project, led by the Monash Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health (MonCOEH) in collaboration with Monash Arts, explores how migration influences the risk and management of occupational diseases. Focusing on Vietnamese workers in Victoria's stone benchtop industry, researchers are uncovering why this group has been disproportionately affected by silicosis, a serious lung disease caused by silica dust exposure. As a partner from the Vietnamese Australian Professional Network explains,

"For many migrant workers, the challenge isn't just the job—it's understanding the safety systems around it. This project helps make those systems accessible to everyone."

Through interviews with workers, clinicians, community leaders and industry experts, the study explores how language and cultural differences influence access to safety information from arrival in Australia to employment in high-risk industries. By integrating medical, social and linguistic perspectives, the project will generate culturally informed strategies to improve occupational health and safety communication, informing WorkSafe Victoria, employers and community organisations, while offering a collaborative model that connects researchers, translators, unions and migrant networks.

Though based in Victoria, the findings have global relevance, highlighting how migration journeys intersect with workplace safety and how inclusive approaches can create safer, fairer workplaces across multicultural societies.

**ETHICAL, SOCIAL AND REGULATORY
IMPLICATIONS OF INFORMAL SPERM DONATION**

[Professor Catherine Mills](#), [Dr Molly Johnston](#) (SoPHIS), [Dr Karin Hammarberg](#) (MNHS) and colleagues from Deakin University and the University of Queensland

ARC DP26



For many people, donor sperm provides the only viable pathway to parenthood. While Australia maintains a well-regulated system of sperm donation through fertility clinics and sperm banks, an alternative practice has emerged of accessing and donating sperm through the internet and social media. Despite its growing prevalence, little is known about the motivations of those who participate in this unregulated practice or its implications for parties involved.

This project is the first Australian study systematically investigating online sperm donation. Through qualitative research combined with ethical and legal analysis, it examines why individuals choose to donate or seek donors outside regulated clinical settings. It will identify gaps in the current regulatory framework and generate evidence-based recommendations to improve the safety, accessibility, and ethical governance of sperm donation systems.

The project addresses questions about reproductive autonomy, the welfare of future children, and donor-recipient protections. Findings will inform policy development and will be disseminated to stakeholders, regulatory bodies, and communities through workshops, reports, and scholarly publications. This work seeks to enhance assisted reproduction practices in Australia, ensuring that pathways to parenthood are accessible and appropriately safeguarded for donors, recipients, and donor-conceived people.

**SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE PSYCHEDELIC
THERAPIES WITH ETHICAL RISK MANAGEMENT**

[Associate Professor John Gardner](#) (SoSS) and [Professor Adrian Carter](#) (SoPHIS)

ARC DP26

Nearly half of Australians will face mental illness in their lifetime, costing the nation \$220 billion annually—10% of its GDP. With over 30% of patients unresponsive to current treatments and nearly 3,000 lives lost to suicide each year, psychedelic-assisted therapy (PAT) is emerging as a potential solution. In 2021, Australia became the first country to allow prescribed psychedelics for depression and PTSD under strict conditions. Their powerful effects, however, raise significant ethical concerns. Ethical violations not only harm PAT recipients, therapists, and communities but undermine public

and political support for this treatment at a critical moment in its development.

This project aims to help PAT practitioners routinise good ethical conduct in clinical service settings, thereby reducing the risk of moral harm to patients, therapists, and communities. This project will identify key ethical issues and bring together practitioners and individuals with lived experience to develop management strategies. The primary social and ethical benefit will be an Ethical Risk Management Tool, enabling PAT practitioners to systematically and transparently address ethical concerns in busy, resource-constrained healthcare settings to reduce harmful social outcomes and build public trust. The outcomes will be shared with bioethics and medical sociology communities, PAT practitioners, stakeholders, and the public via reports, conference presentations, and news publications. It will be presented to clinics for future adaptation.

**REIMAGINING THE LEPROSY HERITAGE IN
INDONESIA: HISTORY, STIGMA, AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

[Dr Ravando Ravando](#) (SoPHIS)

John Legge Fellowship



Leprosy remains one of the most stigmatised diseases worldwide, and Indonesia, home to the third-highest number of cases, continues to grapple with its social and cultural legacies. This project asks how history can help reduce stigma and reframe leprosy as part of our shared medical heritage rather than a marker of exclusion.

The study centres on the Donorojo Leprosy Hospital in Central Java, one of Southeast Asia's oldest leprosaria, established in 1916. By tracing its colonial and postcolonial past, the project seeks to uncover stories that highlight resilience, care and community, shifting the narrative away from isolation and towards recognition of heritage value. The work brings together archival research, fieldwork and interviews with stakeholders to document Donorojo's historical significance and co-design community-based heritage practices. Drawing on the growing popularity of urban history tours in Indonesia, a prototype historical walking tour will be developed, offering new ways for the public to engage with this history.

By combining scholarship with community engagement, the project aims to transform how leprosy heritage is understood — not as a symbol of stigma, but as a vital part of Indonesia's cultural and medical history.

**ADDRESSING SKILLS GAPS IN THE NEWS
INDUSTRIES IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE**

[Associate Professor Emma Baulch](#), Premesh Chandran, Professor Meera Sivasothy,

Rubin Khoo, [Dr Benjamin Loh](#) (SASS)

Google



This project aims to identify skills set gaps across a range of newsroom journalists in Singapore and Malaysia and to devise recommendations for addressing these. The study employs interviews for data gathering and content analysis for data analysis. Three cohorts will be interviewed to assess skills needs and gaps: newsroom leaders and journalists and academic program leaders. Recommendations to Google for actionable interventions (for example, executive education in collaboration with a higher degree institution, collaboration with existing degree programs, or collaboration with news outlets to conduct training) will be drawn from the findings.

**AUSTRALIA'S FIRST HISTORY OF DISABILITY:
MAKING A MORE INCLUSIVE AUSTRALIA**

[Dr Kate Murphy](#), [Emeritus Professor Alistair Thomson](#) (SoPHIS) and colleagues from the University of Melbourne, Open University, UK, Flinders University, ACAP University College Pty Ltd

ARC DP26



Disability has a significant and growing impact on Australian society. More than 20 percent of Australians (5.5 million) live with disability and 3 million Australians are unpaid carers. However, we have no historical account of the effects of disability on Australian lives and how these experiences contributed to the creation and shaping of Australian disability policy. This project aims to uncover the lived experience of disability in Australian families between 1945 and the Disability Royal Commission of 2019–23, using innovative methods to co-produce data with people with disability and their families. It will deliver the first national history of disability in Australia, focusing on the diverse stories of families living with disability of the study scope using inclusive methods to co-produce data with people with disability and their family members.

Through accessible and publicly available writings, podcasts, public lectures, workshops and an interactive website, the Australian community and policymakers will gain critical insights into how barriers to inclusion have shaped the lived experience of people with disability and their families, and the factors that have brought positive change. The project will inform initiatives and policy aimed at creating a more inclusive Australia, and bring new insights to public conversations about the future of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

MUSIC IN ME

[Professor Margaret Barrett](#), [Dr Katie Zhukov](#)
(SZCSoMP)

Australian Youth Orchestra



The Music in Me (MiM) program is transforming the way teachers experience professional learning. This latest study, the third in a series, looks beyond classroom practice to investigate how participation shapes teacher wellbeing, career satisfaction, retention, and professional growth.

Earlier research has shown MiM's power: boosting children's music learning and singing capacity, and pioneering a specialist-generalist mentoring model that fosters collaboration and self-development for teachers and mentors alike. Building on these findings, the project asks how the program supports teachers themselves, helping them thrive personally and professionally.

The need is urgent. Music provision is in decline nationally and globally, driven not only by gaps in education policy but also by challenges facing teachers: limited career pathways, poor wellbeing, and low satisfaction. By analysing outcomes across diverse participants, this project will provide fresh evidence on how MiM can counter these trends, strengthen the teaching workforce, and ensure music continues to enrich children's lives.

MONASH ART ENSEMBLE: COMMISSIONING,
PERFORMANCE AND SCHOLARSHIP

[Associate Professor Robert Burke](#), [Dr Paul Williamson](#), [Professor Paul Grabowsky](#), [Dr Anna McMichael](#), [Dr Nicole Canham](#), [Dr Aaron Wyatt](#)
(SZCSoM)

The Robert Salzer Foundation



The Monash Art Ensemble (MAE) is a large-scale experimental group dedicated to commissioning, performing and documenting new Australian music. Its work embraces multiple styles and thrives on improvisation, pushing the boundaries of contemporary practice.

Support from the Salzer Foundation enables research into the meeting point of composition and improvisation, exploring how notation, spontaneous creativity and collaborative performance intersect in real time.

The impact is tangible: new works emerge and performances appear at major platforms including the Melbourne International Jazz Festival (MIJF), the Melbourne International Women's Jazz Festival (MWIJF) and the Australasian Jazz and Improvisation Research Network (AJIRN). Collaboration with world-class artists such as Nat Barsch, George Lewis and Miya Masaoka ensures Australian music continues to innovate and resonate on the global stage.

THE FREDA FREIBERG FILM AND SCREEN
STUDIES LIBRARY

[Associate Professor Constantine Verevis](#),
[Associate Professor Deane Williams](#) (MFJ)

Leo & Mina Fink Fund



The Freda Freiberg Film and Screen Studies Library is a research collection located at the School of Media, Film and Journalism, Monash University, Caulfield. This remarkable collection brings together books, journals, and papers generously donated by Melbourne-based film critic and arts writer Freda Freiberg, whose legacy continues to shape the field.

A new work is underway to catalogue and selectively digitise these holdings, opening the doors to online access for researchers across Australia and beyond. Alongside this, the project initiative will launch an annual study grant to support projects that draw on the Library's unique resources, particularly those exploring the work of feminist film pioneers.

By expanding access and fostering fresh scholarship, this project will further unlock the full potential of the Freiberg Library, ensuring its impact resonates across national and international film studies communities for years to come.

THE SEMIOTICS OF KOREANNESS IN THE
ASIA-PACIFIC

[Associate Professor Lucien Brown](#), [Dr Daniel Pieper](#) (LLCL) and colleagues from the University of Western Australia and Curtin University

Academy of Korean Studies



Cultural symbols don't stay put—they cross borders, shift shape, and take on new meanings as they move. This project looks at how language and other cultural signs flow across the Asia-Pacific, and how communities reinterpret them in their own local contexts.

With a focus on Koreanness, the research explores how ideas and images tied to Korean identity are picked up and reshaped by people in Southeast Asia and Australia, creating fresh forms of belonging and cultural expression. Bringing together experts in semiotics, linguistics, and cultural history, the project is building a new way of studying how cultures travel and transform. It also sparks collaboration between universities and communities across the region, offering insights into more ethical and inclusive cultural exchange. The project shows that meaning is never fixed—it's constantly remade through movement, connection, and interpretation.

21ST-CENTURY IRISH FICTION IN AUSTRALIA

[Dr Chris Murray](#) (LLCL)

21st-Century Irish Fiction in Australia



Contemporary Irish fiction has a big following in Australia, yet university attention here often leans on history and nineteenth-century migration. This project is changing that. Backed by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with support from the Embassy of Ireland in Australia, it brings fresh academic insight on today's Irish writing to a wider audience.

At the heart of the project is the [Irish Books Podcast](#), born out of a lively reading group at Melbourne's Celtic Club. The podcast opens up conversations about new Irish writing, featuring guests from Monash Arts, such as Kevin Foster and Penelope Russon, alongside voices from the University of Chicago, the University of Otago, and Trinity College Dublin. By spotlighting contemporary Irish literature, the project positions Australia, and Monash in particular, as a hub for forward-looking Irish Studies. The first episodes of Irish Books will launch in late 2025, offering listeners a fresh way to connect with Ireland's vibrant literary scene.

UNSHACKLED: THE TRUE CONVICT STORY

[Professor Tony Moore](#), [Dr Monika Schwarz](#), [Dr Kyle Harvey](#), [Dr Daisy Bailey](#) (MFJ) and colleagues from UNE, UNSW, ACU, Griffith University, University College Dublin and University of South Wales

Mineworkers Trust



Unshackled reimagines convict transportation as one of the world's largest forced labour migrations, comparable to the slave trade and reveals how Australia's first involuntary workforce resisted exploitation and helped shape the political direction of the colonies. Far from passive, convicts fought back, leaving a legacy that still resonates today. Led by Professor Tony Moore in partnership with Roar Film and major cultural institutions, Unshackled is a groundbreaking ARC Linkage Project outcome. The [immersive exhibition](#) opened at Hobart's Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in 2024, attracting over 40,000 visitors and will tour Australia, the UK and Ireland, through both full installations and mobile pop-up versions. Combining multimedia storytelling, historical artefacts, and cutting-edge data mapping of UNESCO-listed convict records, Unshackled uncovers hidden patterns of collective resistance, strikes, sabotage, and rebellion that rivaled later labour movements. The exhibition draws connections to present-day challenges such as insecure work, surveillance and restrictions on protest, showing how the struggles of convicts remain relevant to contemporary debates on rights and justice.



HURRIED CHILDHOODS, SLOW NARRATIVES AND THE ECOLOGY OF ATTENTION

[Dr Penelope Russon](#) (LLCL)

ARC DECRA 2026



This research advances the understanding of how deliberately slowed-down children’s narratives foster deep, sustained engagement with stories. In an era of rapid change and increasing pressures to accelerate childhood, this project investigates how slow narrative practices can support sustained attention, intrinsic motivation, and a sense of belonging in educational settings.

This project aims to establish slow narrative practices that promote deep engagement. Through collaboration with educators and young people, exploring how children co-create stories across diverse learning environments, the project is expected to reveal the role of children’s literature and creative writing in shaping their relationship with the world around them and their ability to imagine and build hopeful futures. It will benefit Australia’s literary and cultural landscape by deepening knowledge of how creative writing supports flexible thinking, creative resourcefulness and future imaginaries. This research will be promoted through scholarly and public engagement, generating new understandings of how slow narrative, slow learning, and unhurried childhoods intersect across literature, education, and creative practice.

This work will demonstrate that storytelling is not just a tool for literacy but a vital practice for shaping how we learn, connect, and imagine the future. In doing so, it will position Australia as a leader in innovative, research-led approaches to education, creative writing, and the role of narrative in a changing world.

SOCIAL, ETHICAL AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA PORN INDUSTRY

[Dr Emily van der Nagel](#) (MFJ)

ARC DECRA 2026



We know that most Australians consume porn, and that social media porn creation is an increasing choice of work for young women in particular. But little is known about how it is created and sold through emerging porn-based social media services, such as OnlyFans.

This project aims to map the social, ethical, and regulatory challenges for creators, audiences, and intermediaries in Australia’s emerging social media pornography industry. It will generate new insights

into social media porn work, using qualitative methods that centre the experiences of porn creators and audiences. This project will equip policymakers and the porn creation industry with information on the current landscape in Australia. The research outputs will include scholarly journal articles and a scholarly book, as well as an open-access report for policymakers, journalists, and educators that will reveal and analyse the implications of this remunerated yet stigmatised labour. The report will inform policy on how Australians are taking advantage of new opportunities in the digital economy while balancing personal freedoms, economic growth, and legal oversight.

BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE GAPS: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

[Dr Leah Gerber](#), [Dr Ellen Hyein Cho](#) (LLCL), [Associate Professor Bridget Harris](#) (SoSS) and [Alex Avella](#) (Arts Research and Enterprise)

Family Safety Victoria



Interpreters play a crucial role in the area of family violence prevention and service responses within multicultural communities, helping both victim-survivors and perpetrators gain access to relevant legal/court, medical/health and Government-provided support services. Yet often, they are not trained specifically to deal with the context of sexual violence, when working with Victorian multicultural communities.

Monash researchers, with the support of Sexual Assault Service Victoria (SASVic), will develop and deliver a training package for interpreters and the sexual violence workforce, to support the sexual violence sector when working with multicultural communities.

The goal is twofold to ensure the sexual violence system is accessible, culturally responsive and safe, client centred, non-discriminatory and inclusive for Victorians from all communities and faiths and that victim survivors understand the options available to them and feel confident to access support when and where they need it.

Participants will develop a better understanding of sexual violence, types of sexual violence and sexual violence in the context of family violence, identify the multiple barriers that prevent reporting sexual violence and the myths and community attitudes towards reporting sexual violence. The outcome is better preparedness to work with victim-survivors and people using sexual violence, and a better understanding of the interpreting practices in challenging environments related to sexual abuse.

The training package will assist Victorians with the provision of language services in specific family violence contexts, including training on ‘working with interpreters’ for service providers.

HOW DO YOU MANAGE YOUR SAFETY ON AUSTRALIAN BEACHES?: EXPLORING SAFETY MANAGEMENT OF LOW-RISK AND HIGH-RISK MIGRANTS ON AUSTRALIA

[Dr Masaki Shibata](#) (LLCL)

Surf Life Saving Australia



In 2024/25, surf lifesavers carried out over 8,000 rescues and 2.2 million preventative actions, yet 154 coastal drownings were recorded, the highest in two decades. Around one-third of victims were born overseas. While some migrant groups are considered high-risk beachgoers, others, including rapidly growing Brazilian and Colombian communities, show remarkably low drowning rates.

This study, conducted with Surf Life Saving Australia and Life Saving Victoria, explores how Brazilian and Colombian migrants manage beach safety and compares their practices with those of higher-risk groups. Using surveys and interviews, the research identifies both risk factors and effective safety behaviours.

The findings will guide governments and safety organisations in designing targeted, culturally relevant campaigns, drawing lessons from low-risk communities to benefit all Australians. Importantly, the study contributes to the Australian Water Safety Strategy 2023, supporting the national goal of reducing drownings by 2030.

POLLIES IN THE GLOSSIES: HOW AUSSIE WOMEN’S MAGAZINES FRAME THE POLITICAL

[Dr Blair Williams](#) (SoSS)

ARC DECRA 2026



Women’s magazines provide a unique viewpoint on political issues, yet their role in Australian politics remains critically under explored. In line with the Australian government’s “Working for Women Strategy”, this fellowship will investigate how these magazines have shaped political communication, women’s voices and voter engagement.

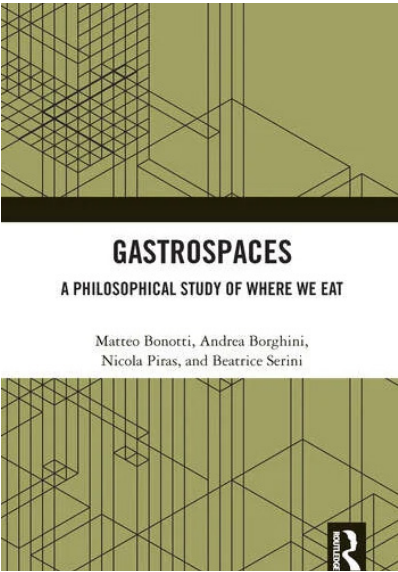
At a time when women’s participation in politics is crucial, this project aims to explore the role of Australian women’s magazines in shaping political discourse. By combining archival research, focus groups and interviews, this project expects to generate new knowledge on how women’s magazines frame politics, how politicians use these platforms, and how they impact women’s political engagement.

The project will provide social, cultural and political benefits to Australians by revealing the historical and ongoing contributions of women’s magazines to shaping women’s political engagement and representation, ultimately enriching public knowledge of how central women’s voices, women’s issues and women voters have been to Australian political history. It will enhance Australia’s academic reputation for leading gender equality research, promoting women’s representation and voices in the media, politics and society. Research outcomes will be shared widely to achieve broader awareness of increasing women’s participation in politics, leadership roles, and active citizenship.

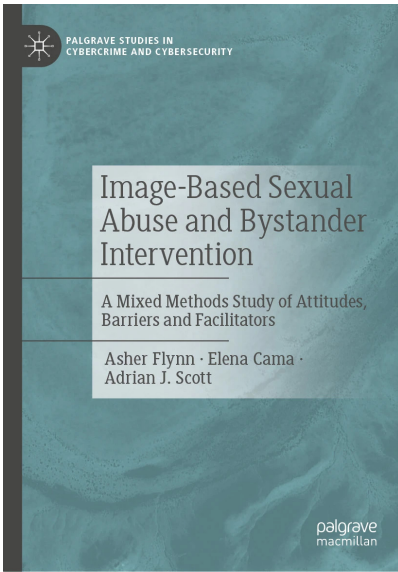
Publications

SELECT BOOKS

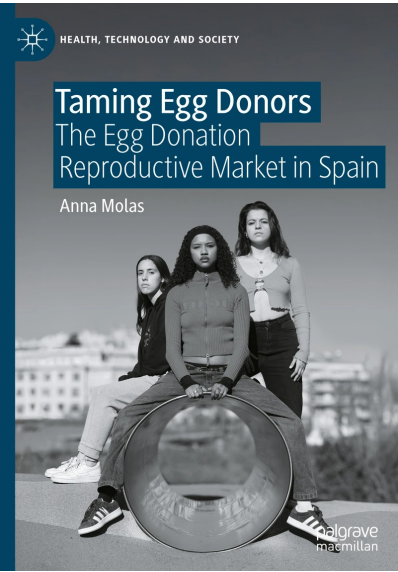
Our work addresses the structures, relationships and everyday practices that support inclusion, justice and wellbeing in an increasingly complex world. From health and social care to digital life, family systems and creative expression, this research demonstrates how people sustain one another through cooperation, empathy, and innovation.



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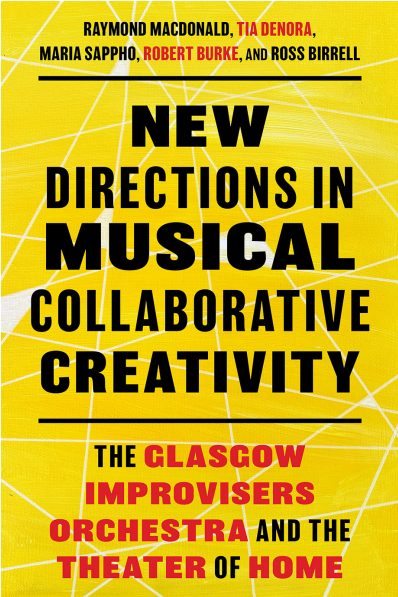
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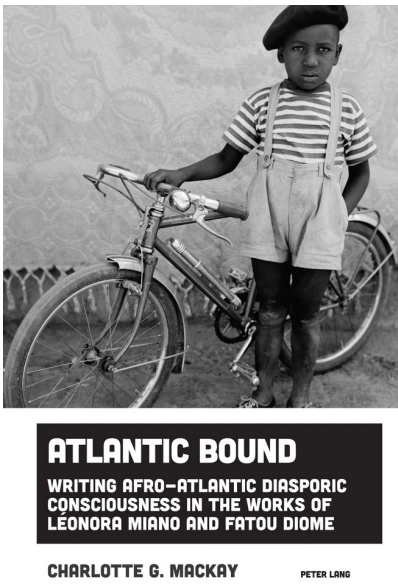
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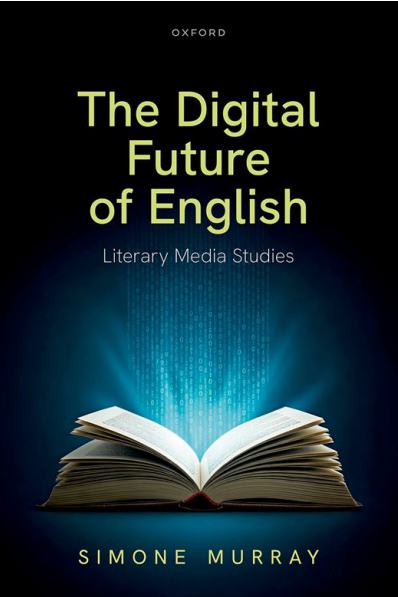
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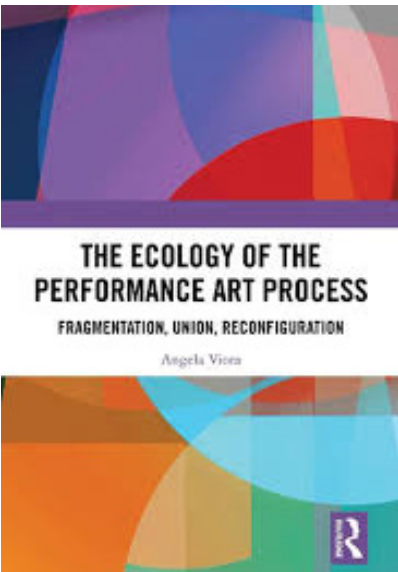
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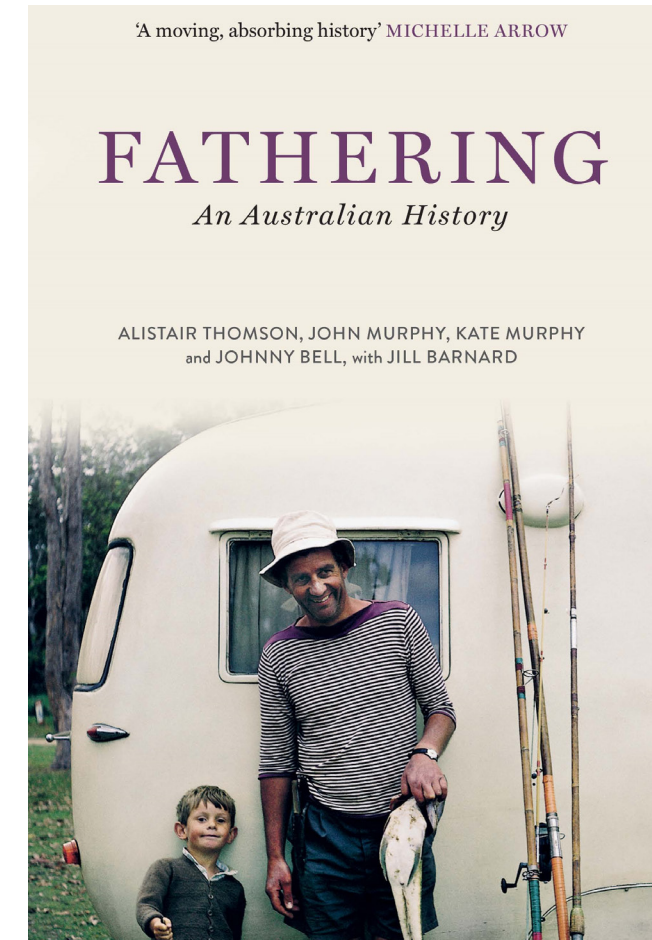
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[View all outputs published by Faculty of Arts](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON ARTS PUBLICATION

Rewriting the Story of Australian Fatherhood



[Fathering: An Australian History](#) offers the first comprehensive account of what it has meant to be a father in Australia, from 1919 to the present day.

Co-authored by Emeritus Professor Alistair Thomson and colleagues Emeritus Professor John Murphy, [Dr Kate Murphy](#), Dr Johnny Bell, and Dr Jill Barnard the book traces how ideas and practices of fatherhood have shifted through social, economic, and cultural change.

Focusing on lived experience and drawing upon a century of personal accounts, *Fathering* shows how fathers have participated in raising their children as the world changed their family roles and the relationships they form with their children. It situates personal experience within broader histories of migration, war, labour, welfare, and gender reform.

It uncovers the tensions between public expectations and private realities, showing how fatherhood has been a site of both continuity and transformation.

Drawing on rich archival research, oral histories and family records, the authors reveal how Australian men have navigated care, work, emotion, and authority across generations. From early twentieth-century breadwinners and post-war disciplinarians to today's fathers seeking balance and connection, *Fathering* captures the lived complexity of being a dad, and its significance for Australian society.

Beyond Academia

Fathering speaks to the heart of public debate on care, equity, and family life. By uncovering how notions of "good fathering" have changed over time, it offers valuable perspectives for policymakers, educators, and community organisations seeking to support inclusive approaches to parenting and gender equality.

Combining historical depth with human insight, *Fathering: An Australian History* is both a work of scholarship and a reflection on the everyday, reminding us that how men nurture, work, and connect within families lies at the centre of Australia's social fabric, past and future.

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This is a moving, absorbing history. Fathering will have an important social and cultural impact because it speaks to crucial concerns about fatherhood, masculinity and parenting in the twenty-first century.

Michelle Arrow

FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT: MONASH INITIATIVE FOR RAPID RESEARCH INTO ANTISEMITISM

The first report from MIRRA examines how antisemitism is affecting Australia's cultural and creative industries.

A Rapid Response to a Growing Challenge

Launched in 2024, the [Monash Initiative for Rapid Research into Antisemitism \(MIRRA\)](#) is changing the way Australia understands and responds to antisemitism. Led by [Associate Professor David Slucki](#) and a multidisciplinary team at the [Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation](#) (ACJC), MIRRA delivers fast, evidence-based insights that inform policy, shape practice and strengthen community safety.

Research in Action

The MIRRA project delivers a series of three-month research initiatives, each designed to generate datasets that enhance our understanding of the nature and extent of antisemitism, and to inform the development of best-practice responses to combat it. MIRRA works closely with cultural institutions, universities, government, the legal sector and community organisations to identify systemic challenges and capture lived experiences. [Each project](#) delivers actionable recommendations for decision-makers.

[The first report](#), developed in close consultation with a range of government and arts sector leaders and stakeholders, was released in August 2025 and examined antisemitism in Australia's cultural and creative industries. It revealed challenges such as bullying, harassment, doxxing, exclusion from diversity frameworks, cultural boycotts and a climate of "ambient antisemitism".

The project developed a number of interventions, training programs, toolkits and policy guidelines, to support diversity, equity and inclusion in the creative arts sector.

Turning Evidence into Practice

MIRRA's research highlights the importance of lived-experience data, which captures impacts often missed in surveys. This includes tangible incidents of antisemitism, and the pervasive sense of unease described by Jewish stakeholders. What makes MIRRA's work distinctive is the way these insights are turned into action. Training programs are tailored to each organisation's policies and processes, helping leaders and staff recognise where antisemitism may be embedded and how to address it.

This co-design approach means solutions are practical, relevant and immediately usable. The result is not just greater awareness, but tangible improvements in workplace culture and safer, more inclusive environments for Jewish communities.

Training That Makes a Difference

One of MIRRA's most immediate impacts has been its training program. Already, **more than 1,000 university leaders and staff across Australia and internationally** have been trained to better understand the manifestations and impacts of antisemitism.

The program is expanding rapidly, with new facilitators, tailored resources and sector-specific modules in development. For universities, government agencies and community organisations, this training is building confidence, improving responses and making campuses and workplaces more robust for all students and staff.

Building Partnerships That Matter

MIRRA's strength lies in collaboration. From government ministers and major arts organisations to philanthropists and community groups, partners are engaging with MIRRA's research and recommendations. Creative Workplaces, part of Creative Australia, are exploring adapting policy based on MIRRA's findings demonstrating how research is driving sector-wide change.

Future Directions

The long-term vision for MIRRA is to help create respectful and inclusive spaces across Australian society, with every step grounded in evidence and driven by impact. Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach, MIRRA works sector by sector to uncover how antisemitism manifests in different parts of society, from the arts and universities to workplaces, government and community organisations. This method ensures that the voices and lived experiences of Jewish Australians are translated into practical insights that inform the responses of policymakers, industry leaders, institutions and the wider public.

Building on its first projects, MIRRA is now expanding into new areas where antisemitism has significant consequences but remains under-examined. Research is underway into the targeting of Jewish-owned businesses, community sport, healthcare, law and Holocaust education, each offering fresh opportunities to understand how prejudice operates and how it can be addressed.

MIRRA is supported through a combination of Monash University funding and philanthropic contributions. This support bolsters our research capacity and program delivery. Our work remains fully independent, evidence-based and guided by the principles of academic freedom, scholarly integrity and rigorous ethical standards.

Our supporters include: 6a Foundation, Alan and Elizabeth Finkel Foundation, Anita Castan Foundation, David Kenley OAM, Dr Christian Behrenbruch, Dr Nathan and Susan Pinski in memory of Leizor Pinski, ERDI Foundation, Farrel Meltzer, Gandel Foundation, Handelsman Charitable Foundation, Jagen Nominees, Jasmine and Robert Dindas, Leo and Mina Fink Fund, Loti and Victor Smorgon Family Foundation, Lousje and Steven Skala AO, Michelle and Warren Fineberg and others.

TURNING RESEARCH INTO ACTION: PROTECTING INDIGENOUS HERITAGE AND STRENGTHENING CULTURAL FUTURES

Co-creating Knowledge Through ARC Linkage

The ARC Linkage Projects scheme is designed to bring researchers and partners together to tackle real-world challenges and deliver lasting change. Monash Arts' most recent award *Uncovering Aboriginal Culture and Histories through Artefact Collections*, reflects this mission by showing how cultural institutions can work in respectful partnership with Traditional Owners.

Working alongside Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Elders and knowledge holders, Museums Victoria and a network of partners, the project is re-examining neglected Aboriginal artefacts from southeast Australia. Many of these items, crafted from stone, bone and wood, have been stored away for decades. Through genuine co-design, they are now being reinterpreted to reveal new insights into Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung culture, Country and history.

Building Partnerships That Honour Culture

This collaboration has grown steadily over several years. In 2019, [Dr Chris Urwin](#) worked as a curator and began unpacking the First Peoples archaeology collection at Museums Victoria, recognising its immense potential. "These artefacts had stories to tell about culture and Country and Indigenous leadership was needed to determine their future," he recalls.

The project has been shaped through consultations with Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Elders and listening and responding to community priorities. These meetings created space for Elders to share their stories about artefacts, outline research priorities, and express their hopes for Victorians and Australians to better understand and appreciate Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung culture.

The strength of the partnership lies in combining many knowledges: Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung cultural leadership, archaeological science and museum archives. Together, the team is uncovering how artefacts such as boomerangs and stone axes were sourced, made and used and what they can tell us about stewardship of Country.

Insights Into Impact

Advanced techniques including stone sourcing, archaeobotany, carbon dating and microscopic residue analysis are helping build a richer picture of Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung life. These findings will inform cultural heritage assessments, strengthen protection of Aboriginal places and lay the groundwork for future Aboriginal Keeping Places.

The outcomes will be shared widely and directly by Traditional Owners. The Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation has designed a suite of community-focused outputs: educational videos, a children's book, posters and school resources,

alongside a major exhibition at Melbourne Museum. As Dr Urwin reflects "The project's strength is that it combines many knowledges, traditional knowledge, archaeological science and museum archives, to see how artefacts were made and used, and what they can tell us about Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung culture and Country".

Shaping Practice Across the GLAM Sector

This project sets a new benchmark for Indigenous-led research in museums. Two Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung representatives are present at all research activities, providing cultural leadership and building capacity in archaeological sciences. While Indigenous leadership is now standard in on-Country heritage research, museums have often lacked funding for such approaches. "We hope this project is an example that inspires more Indigenous community-led research in museums, where there are many incredible but underused collections," notes.

A Nationally Significant Achievement

This project has secured the **largest national budget allocation within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture, Language and History discipline code** in its round. It is also a standout achievement for Dr Urwin, who is the **only Early Career Researcher in the past five years** to obtain funding of this scale in this discipline.

Beyond the numbers, this success underscores the critical role of the Humanities in shaping impact for the broader community. Humanities research provides the tools to listen deeply, interpret cultural knowledge, and translate lived experience into practical outcomes. In this project, that means ensuring artefact collections are not only studied but cared for in ways that respect cultural significance, strengthen inclusion, and build safer, more cohesive communities. Together, these milestones highlight academic excellence and the **transformative value of Humanities research for partners, communities and the nation as a whole.**

Looking Ahead

As discoveries continue, the project will strengthen cultural futures by ensuring artefact collections are interpreted and shared in respectful partnership with Traditional Owners. For Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people, this means stories are told by those to whom they belong. For cultural institutions, it provides a model of collaboration that demonstrates how respectful partnerships can reshape practice, build trust and inspire change across the sector. For Australia, it represents research turned into action, protecting Indigenous heritage and building a more inclusive cultural landscape.



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The project's strength is that it combines many knowledges, traditional knowledge, archaeological science and museum archives, to see how artefacts were made and used and what they can tell us about Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung culture and Country.

Dr Chris Urwin

SHAPING INCLUSIVE FUTURES: RESEARCH ON ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AUSTRALIA

[Dr Susan Carland](#), a sociologist of religion, leads a national program investigating Islamophobia in Australia and its effects on Muslim communities. Drawing on years of collaboration with community organisations, policymakers and academic partners, her research delivers evidence-based strategies for building inclusion.

The program is shaping policy, amplifying Muslim voices and driving measurable change.

Co-designed Community Approaches

A cornerstone of this program is the partnership with the **Islamophobia Register Australia (TIRA)**. Together, the team has refined reporting tools, strengthened data collection and produced national reports that capture the lived reality of Islamophobia. The most recent publication, [Islamophobia in Australia Report V \(2023–2024\)](#), documents the highest number of incidents since the Register began.

In addition to partnership with TIRA, community engagement is national in scope, with the program working closely with Muslim organisations across states and territories. The impact of this co-designed approach is clear. It demonstrates to Muslim communities that their experiences are being systematically documented and taken seriously, while also amplifying their voices in national debates. As Dr Carland notes, “Our work provides systematic documentation that cannot be ignored, showing the community their experiences are being taken seriously.”

Informing Better Policy Outcomes

The program’s findings are not confined to academic circles, they are actively shaping policy conversations. *The Islamophobia in Australia Report V* has been cited in the [NSW Legislative Council \(Hansard\)](#) and referenced in the [Special Envoy to Counter Islamophobia’s report](#). State and federal politicians continue to engage with the research team and community partners, seeking collaborative ways to track and tackle Islamophobia.

This visibility has been reinforced by a sustained media campaign accompanying the report launch, which reached an estimated **743 million people globally**.

Capacity-building is a key outreach aspect of the program. Dr Carland and [Dr Aydogan Kars](#) deliver tailored training for government departments on Muslims and Islam, equipping staff to engage effectively both domestically and in Muslim-majority countries. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants describing the program as “the most engaging and insightful training day” they had attended in the public service and emphasising its direct relevance to their professional roles.

“

Our work provides systematic documentation that cannot be ignored, showing the community their experiences are being taken seriously.

Dr Susan Carland

Future Directions

The program has recently secured funding via the ARC Linkage scheme to undertake the study *Tracking Islamophobia and its Impacts on Australian Muslims Lives*, led by Dr Carland with [Professor Kerry O’Brien](#) and [Dr Zarina Vakhitova](#). Partner organisations on this project include the Islamophobia Register Australia, The Trustee for the Foundation for the Islamic Museum of Australia, The Trustee for Scanlon Foundation, Australian Multicultural Foundation Limited, Bachar Houli Foundation Ltd, MCCA Limited and the Department of Home Affairs. This study will establish a longitudinal cohort to map experiences of interpersonal Islamophobia and examine links to social, economic and mental health outcomes. It will also track social media, news and international events to understand how these shape Islamophobic attitudes and incidents.

Through the combined efforts of community co-design, policy engagement, capacity-building and longitudinal research, the program continues to expand its reach. This work centres on one purpose: advancing inclusion, cultivating resilience, and shaping responses to Islamophobia through evidence and lived experience.

UNESCO CHAIR IN INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS- ASIA-PACIFIC

Established in 2004 and launched by former Indonesian President H.E. Abdurrahman Wahid, the UNESCO Chair in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations - Asia-Pacific brings universities and communities together through UNESCO’s [UNITWIN network](#). Its purpose is straightforward and urgent: to strengthen understanding, respect and practical collaboration between people of different faiths and cultures across the Asia-Pacific.

The Chair pairs rigorous research with hands-on engagement, translating evidence into usable tools for educators, policymakers and community leaders. Work focuses on proven strategies to foster inclusion, reduce prejudice and rebuild social cohesion, helping communities navigate cultural differences with confidence and care.

Advancing Dialogue Through New Leadership

In 2024, [Professor Yasmin Haskell](#) assumed the role of UNESCO Chair in Intercultural and Interreligious Relations – Asia-Pacific, ushering in a new chapter for this long-standing initiative. Haskell, who held the inaugural Cassamarca Foundation Chair in Latin Humanism at UWA for over 20 years, is a distinguished scholar of intercultural and intellectual history. She brings a unique lens shaped by decades of research into the cultural, educational, and emotional dimensions of human exchange.

Advancing the Vision

With strong international networks and a cross-disciplinary approach, Professor Haskell is scaling the Chair’s engagement across the Asia-Pacific, linking educators, policymakers and community leaders through evidence-based initiatives that promote respect, inclusion and shared purpose.

A core priority is the preservation of human languages and language arts - poetry, drama, debate and dialogue - as a response to the challenges posed by large language model AI. Under the theme *Glossanthropy: Prospects for a New Intercultural Humanism*, the Chair will involve students, early-career and established researchers in projects on language education and the arts in historical and contemporary settings.

The Chair’s research will inform policy, produce teaching resources for schools and universities, and support intercultural dialogues led by citizen humanists from multicultural communities, creating practical tools that boost cultural literacy and social cohesion across the region.



NEWS FROM ARTS GRADUATE RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS TO DOCTORS OF PHILOSOPHY (JUNE 2025–NOV 2025)

Dr Abdurrosyid

LLCL, Thesis: [Islamic Responses to the Rise of English Language learning in Indonesia](#)
Supervisors: Prof Julian Millie, Dr Howard Manns

Dr Maria Velegrinis

LLCL, Thesis: [Finding Matthew’s voice: an autoethnography of a child’s multimodal communication using AAC](#)
Supervisors: Dr Anna Margetts, Prof Carolyn Stevens

Dr Remart Dumlao

LLCL, Thesis: [Citizenship Under Debate: A Corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of Australian Citizenship Legislative Inquiries 2007-2017](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Louisa Willoughby, Assoc Prof Matteo Bonotti

Dr Eleanor Yacopetti

LLCL, Thesis: [Strategies of Spatial Reference in Kune \(Bininj Kunwok\)](#)
Supervisors: Prof Alice Gaby, Dr Jill Vaughan

Dr Adara Luis

LLCL, Thesis: [Desiring Monstrous Heroes in YA Supernatural Romances](#)
Supervisors: Dr Leah Gerber, Assoc Prof Michelle Smith

Dr Janice Keynton

LLC, Thesis: [Motivations for studying Mandarin in Australian universities: a three-year longitudinal study of factors that affect enrolment](#)
Supervisors: Dr Robyn Spence-Brown, Dr Hui Hang

Dr Anna Pane

LLCL, Thesis: [Writer Friendship Novels: The Depiction of Female Friendship in Elena Ferrante’s Neapolitan Novels, Sally Rooney’s Conversations with Friends and Doris Lessing’s The Golden Notebook](#)
Supervisors: Dr Melinda Harvey, Assoc Prof Michelle Smith

Dr George Sarantoulis

LLCL, Thesis: [In Pursuit of the Political: Marcel Gauchet and the Crisis of Democratic Culture in Western Liberal Democracies in the Post-COVID Era](#)
Supervisors: Dr Natalie Doyle, Assoc Prof Andy Jackson

Dr Harley Dunolly-Lee

LLCL, Thesis: [The Dja Dja Wurrung Language Ecology](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof John Bradley, Prof Alice Gaby

Dr Mahin Wahla

LLCL, Thesis: [Memoirs by Political Muslim Women in the Post-9/11 Settler Colonial United States and Australia](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Stewart King, Dr Mirdula Nath Chakraborty

Dr Jonathan Graffam-O’Meara

LLCL, Thesis: [Fat Dramaturgies: Strategies and methodologies in staging Australian fat performance](#)
Supervisors: Prof Stacy Holman-Jones, Prof Jarrod Hayes, Assoc Prof Zachary Dunbar (External)

Dr Rachael Anderson

MFJ, Thesis: [“This is not the kindness that transforms”: Terrorism, national identity and news coverage of the 2019 Christchurch attacks](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Fay Anderson, Dr Stephanie Brookes

Dr Shirley Xue Chen

MFJ, Thesis: [Queer reality TV and the boundaries of belonging: Tracing the affects of progressive citizenship through Queer Eye and RuPaul’s Drag Race audiences](#)
Supervisors: Dr Claire Perkins, Dr Kate Fitch, Dr Akane Kanai

Dr Daisy Bailey

MFJ, Thesis: [Emotions of Activism and Exile: A study on Chartist and Young Ireland political prisoners transported to the Australian colonies in the nineteenth century](#)
Supervisors: Prof Tony Moore, Prof Paul Long

Dr Trang Thi Hien Le

MFJ, Thesis: [Feminism in the shadow of Big Data: Feminist counter-data practices and their relations](#)
Supervisors: Prof Mark Andrejevic, Dr Verity Trott, Dr Thao Nguyen Phan (External)

Dr Rangga Saptya Mohamad Permana

MFJ, Thesis: [Indonesian Cultures of Critique: A Study of Kabayan Films in Indonesia](#)
Supervisors: Prof Julian Millie, Prof Belinda Smaill, Prof Olivia Khoo

Dr Adrian Yong Tat Yao

SoASS, Thesis: [Vodcasts as digital instructional objects in learning Malay as a foreign language: Examining its effects amongst international students](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Andrew Hock Soon Ng, Dr Melissa Wong (Associate), Dr Neethiahnanthan Ari Ragavan (External)

Dr Gwendolyn Bellinger

SoASS, Thesis: [Trickster Spirits and Ghostly Echoes: A Cultural Exploration of Trauma, Memory, and Haunting in Literature](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Andrew Hock Soon Ng, Dr Charlotte Mackay, Dr Chrishandra Sebastiampillai

Dr Tessa Holzman

SoPHIS, Thesis: [Writing One’s Own Story, Until the Very Last Page: An Ethical Examination of an Autonomy-Only Approach to Voluntary Assisted Dying](#)
Supervisors: Prof Justin Oakley, Prof Catherine Mills, Assoc Prof Suzy Killmister

Dr Elizabeth Fisher

SoPHIS, Thesis: [Towards an understanding of optimism bias: a computational approach](#)
Supervisors: Prof Jakob Hohwy, Dr Claire Fold

Dr Harrison Croft

SoPHIS, Thesis: [Becoming Birrarung: More-Than-Human Histories with an Australian River](#)
Supervisors: Prof Lynette Russell, Dr Leigh Penman, Dr Rohan Howitt

Dr Simon Cox

SoPHIS, Thesis: [How Does the Skeletal Body Contribute to the Making of Indigenous Personhoods in the Southern Massim?](#)
Supervisors: Prof Bruno David, Prof Ian McNiven, Dr Ben Shaw (External)

Dr Chantal Knowles

SoPHIS, Thesis: [Artificial Assemblages in Museum Storage: new object communities and the shaping of narrative](#)
Supervisors: Prof Bruno David, Prof Lynette Russell

Dr Jasmine Walter

SoPHIS, Thesis: [Subjective Experience in Disorders of Consciousness](#)
Supervisors: Dr Jennifer Windt, Dr Thomas Andrillon

Dr Isabelle Guenther

SoSS, Thesis: [How Do State Leaders’ Emotions Indicate Their Confidence in Security Relationships and Security Guarantees? Australia and The United States Nuclear Umbrella](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Benjamin MacQueen, Prof Maria Rost Rublee (External), Assoc Prof Constance Duncombe (External)

Dr Ruby O’Connor

SoSS, Thesis: [Imagining Future Relationships Between AI, State, and Society](#)
Supervisors: Prof Michael Mintrom, Prof Robert Raven, Dr Mitzi Bolton, Prof Sarah Pink

Dr Nuan Song

SoSS, Thesis: [Engaging with China’s Belt and Road Initiative: Understanding Why States Participate](#)
Supervisors: Dr Tom Chodor, Dr Narelle Miragliotta, Dr Lachlan McNamee

Dr Emily Dang

SoSS, Thesis: [He Didn’t Know How Strong I Was: Family Violence Experiences of Vietnamese Women on Partner Visas in Australia](#)
Supervisors: Prof JaneMaree Maher, Prof Nathalie Nguyen

Dr Frank Algra-Maschio

SoSS, Thesis: [Election Promises in Australia 2010-2022](#)
Supervisors: Prof Jack Corbett, Assoc Prof Matteo Bonotti, Bonotti, Dr Narelle Miragliotta (External)

Dr You Zhou

SoSS, Thesis: [Policing Cyber Fraud in China: Challenges, Responses, and Crime Displacement](#)
Supervisors: Dr Ross Hendy, Dr Zarina Vakhitova

Dr Buddhima Padmasiri

SoSS, Thesis: [Development, Capital, and Local Responses: Women's Resistance and Agency in Rural Sri Lanka](#)
Supervisors: Dr Sara Niner, Dr Samantha Gunawardana, Prof Narelle Warren

Dr Lucas Lakeman

SoSS, Thesis: [Assessing the Impacts of Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Crime Concentration in the Greater Melbourne Region](#)
Supervisors: Dr Kathryn Benier, Dr Ross Hendy, Prof Rebecca Wickes (External)

Dr Victoria Scheyer

SoSS, Thesis: [Gender Politics of the Far Right in Germany - A Feminist Analysis](#)
Supervisors: Prof Jacqueline True, Assoc Prof Matteo Bonotti, Dr Simone Wisotzki (External)

Dr Lauren Stewart

SZCSoMP, Thesis: [From Recreation to Profession: A Heuristic Inquiry into the Learning and Development of Early-Career Songwriters](#)
Supervisors: Dr Rodney Davies, Dr Paul Williamson, Prof Margaret Barrett

Dr Joseph Callaly

SZCSoMP, Thesis: [On Transversal Creativities: Figures of a Sonic and Machinic Apparatus](#)
Supervisors: Prof Margaret Barrett, Dr Louise Devenish

CONGRATULATIONS TO DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (THEATRE PERFORMANCE) GRADUATE (JUNE 2025–NOV 2025)

Dr Paris Balla

LLCL, Thesis: [Imagining Queercrip Theatre: Queer Futurity, Hope and Worlding ~ or ~ It Starts With Fire and Ends With a Bunch of Worms in a Forest](#)
Supervisors: Prof Stacy Holman Jones, Prof Lisa Grocott, Dr Christopher Cottrell

Dr Karissa Taylor

LLCL, Thesis: [Becoming otherwise: transformative justice as](#)

[emergent creative collaboration](#)

Supervisors: Prof Stacy Holman Jones, Dr Clare Hall

CONGRATULATIONS TO DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (JOINT AWARD MONASH - WARWICK) GRADUATE (JUNE 2025–NOV 2025)

Dr Carl Reinecke

MFJ, Thesis: [The unrepresentable and the sublime: theorising the dense absences of First Nations Australian Filmmaking](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Deane Williams (Monash), Dr Michele Aaron (Warwick)

Dr Claire Rioult

SoPHIS, Thesis: [War by Other Means? British and French Commercial Diplomacy in Spain \(1783-1808\)](#)
Supervisors: Prof Julie Kalman (Monash), Prof David Garrioch (Monash), Prof Charles Walton (Warwick)

CONGRATULATIONS TO DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (JOINT AWARD INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BOMBAY - MONASH) GRADUATE (JUNE 2025–NOV 2025)

Dr Sania Mariam

SOSS, Thesis: [Representative Democracy in India: The Making, Breaking, and Fulfilment of Campaign Promises](#)
Supervisors: Prof Robert Thomson (Monash), Assoc Prof Matteo Bonotti (Monash), Prof Rowena Robinson (IITB), Prof Shishir Kumar Jha (IITB)

CONGRATULATIONS TO DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (MUSIC) GRADUATE (JUNE 2025–NOV 2025)

Dr Chloe Smith

SZCSoMP, Thesis: [White Noise: Rethinking Cultural Practices Through More-than-human-music](#)
Supervisors: Dr Catherine Hope, Dr Iran Sanadzadeh, Prof Jon McCormack

CONGRATULATIONS TO MASTER OF ARTS GRADUATES (JUNE 2025–NOV 2025)

Samuel Miles

SoSS, Thesis: [Colombian Students in Melbourne: A Study of Their Settlement Experiences](#)
Supervisors: Prof Helen Forbes-Mewett, Prof Alan Petersen

CONGRATULATIONS TO MASTER OF ARTS AND MASTER OF ARTS (RESEARCH TRAINING) GRADUATE (JUNE 2025 – NOV 2025)

Vivian Lam

MFJ, Thesis: [Asian Motherhood and Intergenerational Trauma](#)
Supervisors: Dr Claire Perkins, Dr Earvin Cabalquinto

Julia Faragher

LLCL, Thesis: [Girls' School Stories in Twenty-First Century Australian Young Adult Literature](#)
Supervisors: Dr Claire Perkins, Dr Earvin Cabalquinto

Kelly Wong

SoPHIS, Thesis: [National Libraries and Their Histories: The British Library and National Library of Australia as Sites of Negotiation](#)
Supervisors: Prof Julie Kalman, Assoc Prof David Slucki

Leah Anderson

SoPHIS, Thesis: ["I Just Went Gay All of a Sudden": Homosexuality in Hollywood During the Pre-Code Era \(1930-1934\)](#)
Supervisors: Dr Michael Hau, Assoc Prof Tim Verhoeven

Susanna Zheng

SoPHIS, Thesis: [National Heritage and Identity in Japan's National Museums in the Post-war, 1952-64](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Bea Trefalt, Dr Koji Hirata

Sarah Comley

SoPHIS, Thesis: [Mobilities of Relief: Chinese Australian Responses to the North China Famine, 1878](#)
Supervisors: Assoc Prof Bea Trefalt, Dr Koji Hirata.

SPOTLIGHT ON NATIONAL INDUSTRY PHD

Congratulations to [Professor Kerry O'Brien](#), School of Social Sciences, and Paul O'Neill, CEO of [Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative](#) on being awarded the Faculty of Arts' second [National Industry PhD](#).

The project and collaboration has been in the making for over 12 months. The project was co-designed by Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative and Arts, after preliminary scoping discussions with key community people, Indigenous athletes and sporting codes. The collaboration draws on First Nations community expertise and research questions along with research and subject matter expertise from Monash University researchers, to address problems with sport governance, policy and leadership that see First Nations peoples harmed or excluded from sport.

There are significant social, structural and cultural barriers to First Nation participation in Australia's largest sports despite the Australian Government aims of addressing culturally inappropriate behaviours and prejudice. The creation of an inclusive sporting culture for First Nation peoples begins with the development of culturally informed governance structures and leadership.

Titled *Enhancing Culturally Appropriate Governance for First Nations participants in Australian Sports*, the project aims to detail the lived experience of First Nation athletes, its role in hampering participation and community health and thriving, the gaps in governance and leadership structures in the AFL, NRL, Cricket, Netball and Football.

The research will produce new First Nations community informed recommendations for better governance structures and policies for improving First Nations sport participation and outcomes. Paul and Kerry hope to see their research produce tangible benefits right across Australian Indigenous communities in terms of community identity and belonging, financial and employment opportunities.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: PRIZES AND EXTERNAL RECOGNITIONS

We are proud to highlight a selection of recent external accolades and prizes that enhance Monash Arts' reputation and underscore our commitment to pioneering research. These national and international recognitions celebrate the impactful contributions of our work and its transformative influence on communities, driving innovation and discovery beyond boundaries.

- [Professor Alice Gaby](#) — Elected a Fellow of the [Australian Academy of the Humanities](#), one of the nation's highest honours recognising outstanding contributions to humanistic scholarship. This fellowship acknowledges Professor Gaby's influential work in linguistics and cultural knowledge, who has supported language reclamation efforts in communities around Australia.
- [Dr Ben Moffitt](#) — Named [Australia's Leading Researcher in Political Science for 2026 by The Australian Research Magazine](#). This accolade reflects Dr Moffitt's pioneering scholarship on populism and political communication, positioning him at the forefront of national and international debates on democracy and governance.
- [Professor Megan Farrelly](#) — Appointed to the [prestigious ARC College of Experts](#), where she will help shape the future of Australian research funding and policy. Her expertise in urban sustainability and water governance will guide national priorities and support the next generation of transformative research projects.
- [Professor Cat Hope](#) — [Awarded Distinguished Creative Researcher 2025 by the Australian Council of Deans and Directors of Creative Arts \(DDCA\)](#). This award celebrates her groundbreaking contributions to experimental music and creative practice.
- [Dr Penni Russon](#) — Recognised with a Commendation for Innovation in Creative Arts as part of a collaborative team honoured by the [Australian Council of Deans and Directors of Creative Arts \(DDCA\)](#). This commendation highlights her imaginative contributions to creative writing and interdisciplinary practice.
- [Associate Professor Andrew David Jackson](#) — has been awarded the prestigious [2025 Prime Minister's Commendation by South Korea's Prime Minister](#), for his contributions to promoting and advancing the Korean language.
- [Dr Angela Viora](#) — Recipient of the [Jo-Anne Duggan Prize from the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies \(ACIS\)](#). This award acknowledges her innovative research in Italian visual culture and performance, advancing cross-cultural understanding and creative scholarship in the humanities.
- [Professor Margaret Barrett](#) — Named Honorary Life Member of the Australian Society for Music Education, recognising her lifelong dedication to advancing music education nationally and internationally. This distinction celebrates her leadership in shaping curriculum, pedagogy and research that enriches the cultural fabric of society.
- [Dr Koji Hirata](#) — Awarded the [2025 Reid Prize](#) for his book *Making Mao's Steelworks: Industrial Manchuria and the Transnational Origins of Chinese Socialism* (Cambridge University Press, 2024). The prize honours his meticulous historical research, which reframes understandings of industrialisation and transnational socialism in East Asia.
- [Professor Mark Davis](#) — His book *Selling Immunity: Self, Culture and Economy in Healthcare and Medicine* (Routledge) was shortlisted for the Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness Book Prize 2025. This recognition highlights the book's critical insights into the intersections of health, culture, and economy and its contribution to global debates on medical sociology.
- Dr Geraldine Fela, former PhD student — Winner of the 2025 Prime Minister's Literary Award (Australian History) for her book *Critical Care: Nurses on the Frontline of Australia's AIDS Crisis*. The book offers a powerful account of the vital role nurses played during one of the nation's most challenging public health crises, transforming academic research into a work of national significance.

SHAPING AUSTRALIA AWARDS

Two Monash-led initiatives have been recognised for their outstanding social impact, with projects shortlisted in both the Future Builder and Community Champion Award categories, showcasing the Faculty's commitment to advocacy, inclusion, and transformative change.

- [Activism for Academic Freedom: Students Taking a Stand for Global Scholars](#) — Shortlisted in the *Future Builder Award* category. Led by [Dr Kate Murphy](#), [Associate Professor Suzy Killmister](#), and [Tony Williams](#), this initiative highlights the power of student activism in defending academic freedom worldwide, amplifying voices at risk and championing global scholarly exchange.
- [Breaking Barriers in Communication: Transforming Access for Deaf and Deafblind Australians](#) — Shortlisted in the *Community Champion Award* category. Spearheaded by [Associate Professor Louisa Willoughby](#), this project is recognised for its groundbreaking work in improving communication access, reshaping inclusivity, and driving systemic change for Deaf and Deafblind communities across Australia.

AND THE APRA GOES TO...

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DECIBEL NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Awarded the [APRA AMCOS Art Music Luminary National Organisation Award 2025](#), *Decibel* has been recognised for its bold and sustained commitment to reshaping the Australian music landscape. Through fearless innovation, deep collaboration, and boundary-pushing creative practice, the ensemble continues to expand what contemporary music can be.

This national honour celebrates the collective vision and artistry of [Professor Cat Hope](#), [Dr Louise Devenish](#), [Dr Aaron Wyatt](#), Lindsay Vickery, Stuart James and Tristen Parr, whose work has redefined performance and inspired audiences across Australia and beyond.

“This award affirms *Decibel's* vision to transform Australian music through collaboration, experimentation and sustained creative practice.”

Professor Cat Hope



MONASH VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARDS 2025: HONOURING EXCELLENCE ACROSS RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT

The Vice-Chancellor's Awards recognise researchers and teams whose work exemplifies innovation, impact and leadership. This year's recipients showcase the extraordinary breadth of scholarship across Arts, from redefining archaeological practice with Indigenous communities, to transforming communication access for Deaf and Deafblind Australians, to uncovering centuries of global encounters with First Nations peoples, and building world-class cultures of postgraduate supervision. Together, they highlight Monash's commitment to research that is rigorous, collaborative, and socially transformative.

DR CHRIS URWIN VICE-CHANCELLOR'S EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR

[Dr Chris Urwin](#) is redefining how archaeologists work with Indigenous communities to understand place-making, memory, and cross-cultural encounters. His research foregrounds oral traditions and reveals long-overlooked histories, including early Asian–First Nations connections. In five years, Chris has secured ~\$1.85 million in funding, including an ARC DECRA and Linkage Project, published an award-winning monograph, and built enduring partnerships across Australia and Papua New Guinea.

His projects deliver outcomes in heritage protection and education. Through ethical collaboration, mentoring, and public engagement, Dr Urwin defines a new generation of humanities researchers committed to research that is rigorous, community-led and socially transformative.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR LOUISA WILLOUGHBY VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

[Associate Professor Louisa Willoughby](#) is an ARC Industry Fellow leading a nationally transformative program of research reshaping communications access for Deaf and Deafblind Australians. Her work is establishing new national standards, digital tools and education reforms with global relevance. Her collaborative, community-led research has produced Australia's first credential for Deafblind interpreters, innovations such as the AuslanSpell 3D fingerspelling generator, revitalised Signbank dictionary, and major Auslan curriculum reforms.

Addressing interpreter and teacher shortages and barriers for Deafblind and CALD learners, Willoughby delivers co-designed, scalable solutions embedded in policy and practice, redefining language equity and establishing a model for inclusive systems change worldwide.

GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS AND FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES: 1000 YEARS OF INTERACTION (GEM) VICE-CHANCELLOR'S RESEARCH TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Team members: Sir John Monash Distinguished [Professor Lynette Russell](#) AM, [Dr Leonie Stevens](#), Dr Leigh Penman, Dr David Haworth, [Dr Chris Urwin](#), [Dr Jacinta Walsh](#), [Professor Ian McNiven](#) (SoPHIS)

The Global Encounters Monash (GEM) team has uncovered powerful new stories about Australia's past, revealing centuries of connection between First Nations peoples and Southeast Asian visitors well before British colonisation. Running from 2020 to 2025, this interdisciplinary project brought together researchers across Australia, the Pacific, Europe, and Southeast Asia to challenge the myths of an isolated continent.

GEM's impact spans scholarly and public domains, reshaping historical narratives, informing international policy, inspiring exhibitions, and shaping diplomatic conversations. Its legacy endures through international collaborations, including the Marege-GEM Institute, and the adoption of "Global Encounters" in academic and cultural discourse.

PROFESSOR CAT HOPE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SUPERVISION

[Professor Cat Hope](#) is a national leader in practice-based artistic research supervision. With an extensive record of successful completions across diverse disciplines and complex circumstances, she has built an outstanding graduate research culture grounded in innovation, interdisciplinarity, and care. Her students regularly win prestigious prizes and secure sought after academic roles globally.

Through initiatives like the Monash Animated Notation Ensemble and international engagement with institutions across Europe, Professor Hope provides graduate researchers with rigorous academic training, creative opportunities, international experiences, and pathways to long-term success. She exemplifies Monash's commitment to research excellence and student-centred supervision.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: LEADING WITH CULTURE AND CONNECTION

“A thriving community isn’t just about physical and mental health. It’s also about cultural health, being proud of your culture, sharing it your way and doing so safely.

Dr Shannon Faulkhead

Meet Dr Shannon Faulkhead

From Country Victoria to Cultural Leadership

From Mildura to Melbourne’s cultural heart, Dr Shannon Faulkhead has dedicated her career to ensuring First Peoples voices and knowledge remain central in research and museum practice. A proud Koorie woman and Monash PhD graduate and recipient of Monash’s Distinguished Alumni Award, Dr Faulkhead is responsible for the care and community access to the Museum’s Australian and international First Peoples collections, including repatriation. Her work ensures that cultural materials are not only preserved but reconnected with communities in ways that respect cultural protocols and aspirations.

Dr Faulkhead’s journey of identity was unexpected. “I didn’t even know I was Aboriginal until I was a teenager,” she recalls. “Someone told me my grandfather was Aboriginal. Growing up, I never thought about how that would influence my life.”

Her academic path began almost by chance. “I barely passed my HSC,” she laughs. “University wasn’t on my radar. A friend encouraged me to apply for librarianship because I loved books. I got in and that changed everything.” From those early days at Ballarat University, Dr Faulkhead’s career unfolded through roles at the Koorie Heritage Trust, research fellowships and leadership positions that have shaped cultural institutions across Victoria.

Monash and the Power of Research

The decision to pursue a PhD was another turning point. “It wasn’t something I sought out,” Dr Faulkhead says. “I started at a different university but it wasn’t the right fit. Professor Lynette Russell suggested Monash and that’s where it all came together.”

In 2009, Dr Faulkhead graduated with a PhD titled *Narratives of Koorie Victoria*, exploring the access, interpretation and integration of Koorie narratives from oral traditions and archival institutions, while interrogating cultural and political bias in mainstream narratives. Her research also examined the location of Indigenous Australian peoples and their knowledge within Australian society and collective memory.

“It wasn’t just my story. It held the voices and knowledge of many Elders and community members. They trusted me to share their experiences and I’ve always been respectful of that.”

Driving Cultural Innovation and Community Leadership

Prior to returning to study, Dr Faulkhead worked for nine years at the Koorie Heritage Trust, including as CEO from 2002 to 2003. Since completing her PhD, she has held influential roles including Research Fellow at Monash and now Head of First Peoples Research and Collections at Museums Victoria.

In 2011, Dr Faulkhead became the Finkel Fellow with the Monash Country Lines Archive program, researching the use of 3D animation to preserve endangered languages and knowledge for intergenerational learning. This innovative work combined technology and cultural heritage, creating new ways to safeguard knowledge that might otherwise be lost.

An established author and cultural critic, Dr Faulkhead co-authored *Power and the Passion: Our Ancestors Return Home* with Gunditjmara Elder, Uncle Jim Berg, a landmark publication on repatriation, revised in 2022 to include new chapters.

Thriving Communities and Cultural Health

For Dr Faulkhead, thriving communities go beyond physical and mental wellbeing - they include cultural health.

“A thriving community isn’t just about physical and mental health. It’s also about cultural health, being proud of your culture, sharing it your way and doing so safely.”

Institutions like Museums Victoria play a key role in this vision. “We want the next generations to see and touch the cultural materials made by their ancestors. That tangible connection makes my heart sing. I think about my own nieces and nephews and what it means for them.”

Recognition and Advice

In 2024, Dr Faulkhead received Monash’s Distinguished Alumni Award, a moment she describes with humility. “Honestly, I felt embarrassed. I thought, ‘I’m a fraud.’ But then I realised the award wasn’t just for me. It was for everyone I work with. It shows the community that someone like me can get here.”

Her advice to emerging researchers and cultural leaders? “Be yourself. Be proud. I never imagined I’d be an academic or leave country Victoria. There are so many opportunities now for First Peoples, more than I ever dreamed.”

Looking Ahead

What does the future hold? “Museums need to keep supporting communities to have their cultural material on country, not just in Australia but also internationally. That’s how we help communities thrive”.

Through her leadership, Dr Faulkhead ensures cultural health remains central to thriving communities - today and for generations to come.



NEW APPOINTEES



The School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS)

[The School of Arts and Social Sciences \(SASS\)](#) is a dynamic, interdisciplinary research environment based in Kuala Lumpur with collaborations extending across Asia, to Australia, the US and Europe. The future focus of research at SASS includes participatory research and dialogues with civil society, governments, corporations, and marginalised groups; building capacity to communicate climate science; engaging in public, accessible conversations about digital tech and society in national, regional and transnational contexts; and using creative immersive methods and mediums to raise public awareness about complex public health, human rights and legal issues. The four research entities taking these initiatives forward are Southeast Asia Research Centre for Digital Technology and Society (SEADS), Monash Climate Communication Hub (MCCH), Transactional Interactions East Asia-Southeast Asia (TIES), and Law, Politics, Society and Space (LaPSS).

SASS staff are active in collaborations with colleagues across Monash's campus network, with strong concentrations in the School of Media Film and Journalism and the School of Social Sciences in Melbourne, and with Monash Indonesia. In recent years, researchers in SASS have focused on public-facing events at our campus in Kuala Lumpur and in venues across the city—ranging from film festivals to panels to exhibitions—to bring the School's research out into the public sphere with vibrancy and frequency.

PROFESSOR MCDUIE-RA

[Duncan McDuie-Ra](#) is Professor and Head of School of Arts and Social Sciences at the Monash Malaysia campus. Duncan's work has been primarily interested in relationships between mobilities—of people, objects, technologies; borders—the barriers that halt or redirect mobilities; and surveillance—the monitoring and intervention in mobilities. His work has been based in cities, with a particular focus on so-called 'ordinary cities', cities that are rapidly growing but lack the resources and attention afforded to large metropolises. For much of his career, Duncan has explored cities in the frontier regions of Asia, with a long-standing interest in Northeast India, where India shares borders with five other countries and many communities live on both sides of current international borders. An emerging theme in Duncan's research is the ways people archive their cities, mostly through video and other media, to create alternative records of urban space, challenging the standard ways of understanding cities based on official archives. Duncan works closely with practitioners in non-governmental organisations, independent media and local government on issues emanating from his research, from the provision of playable public space to migrant representation in urban law enforcement and critiques of surveillance practices.

Duncan works with ethnographic methods including conventional ethnographic methods such as interviews and observations and more hybrid, experimental methodologies. He has worked extensively with walking methodologies as ways of getting to know complex urban spaces, both alone and with research collaborators and respondents. Sensory approaches are part of this too, the ways that different sensory registers give insights into the urban experience, especially in rapidly growing urban areas where sound, light, smell, and air quality are all major determinants of wellbeing and equity. In work on urban play, Duncan pioneered the method of 'rolling ethnography' to understand what it is like to experience urban spaces, surfaces, and surveillance on wheels, and how these experiences are captured, shared and emulated in peer-to-peer media. Recent work with collaborators in the Eastern Himalaya is experimenting with understanding 'atmospheres' of living in rapidly constructed urban environments in steep, vertical cities subject to erratic weather and changing climate conditions.

Duncan has worked closely with collaborators in Australia, India, the US, and Denmark. He has been a visiting researcher at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, Leiden), the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (Halle, Germany), the Asia Research Institute (ARI, National University of Singapore), Aarhus University (Denmark), and the University of Texas, Austin. Duncan is a member of the Australian Research Council's College of Experts (2023-) and holds a number of editorial board roles for both journals and book series. He is currently part of a substantial project 'Climate and Contemporary Transformations of Vernacular Architecture', led by the Austrian Academy of Social Sciences and funded by the European Research Council Consolidator scheme. The project explores dynamic relationships between climatic conditions, climate change and vernacular architecture in the Alps and the Himalayas. He contributes to the Himalayan part of the project.



PROFESSOR CLAIRE COLEBROOK

[Professor Claire Colebrook](#) joined Monash in 2025 after working at Penn State since 2008. Claire has published on literary theory, literary history, queer theory, gender studies, contemporary European philosophy, Anthropocene studies, extinction studies and the philosophy and legacy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Her most recent book, *Who Would You Kill to Save the World?*, explores the politics and aesthetics of post-apocalyptic cinema and fiction. She is currently completing two book-length projects: *Literary Trans* (for Routledge), which undertakes a genealogy of the poetics of sexual difference, and *Fragility* (for Duke UP), which argues for a geopolitical reckoning with fragility in response to the new fundamentalism of the twenty-first century.



DR JADE WONG

[Dr Jade Wong](#) is a Lecturer in Public Policy at the School of Social Sciences. She draws on interpretive, qualitative methods to examine how professionals, employed in public and nonprofit organisations, negotiate the political and moral stakes of their everyday work. In doing so, she contributes to the literature on (street-level) bureaucracies, policy work, and policy alienation.

In collaboration with scholars in the United States, United Kingdom, and China, her research has three strands: (1) playing with new metaphors to illuminate different shades and implications of policy work, (2) examining how shrinking budgets and marketisation shape service-delivery work and organisations in China and the United States, (3) unpacking the role and effects of politics in bureaucracies that are normatively considered 'apolitical'. The practical aim of her research is to help public-spirited professionals better navigate and make sense of the contradictions (and occasional absurdities) of their work.



DR BEN ZALA

[Dr Ben Zala](#) is a Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Monash University. His work focuses on the politics of the great powers and the management of nuclear weapons. This work advances the field of International Relations by shaping scholarly debates on the changing distribution of power and the evolving “Third Nuclear Age.” His research contributes to global policy discussions on strategic stability, informing efforts to manage and mitigate risks of conflict escalation and the use of nuclear weapons.

His scholarship has appeared in over a dozen different peer-reviewed journals including Review of International Studies, Journal of Global Security Studies, Third World Quarterly, Cooperation & Conflict, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and The Nonproliferation Review. He is co-author of The Global Third Nuclear Age (Routledge, 2025), author of Power in International Society (forthcoming 2026 with Oxford University Press) and editor of National Perspectives on a Multipolar Order (Manchester University Press, 2021).

Ben is a regular contributor to Australian and international media on issues of great power relations and nuclear dangers, including outlets such as the BBC, Financial Times, The Australian, The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald, ABC, and SBS. He is also a regular guest speaker for military colleges, government departments, and international organisations including, recently, the Australian Defence College, the Australian Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence, and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Ben joined Monash in 2025 from the Australian National University and has previously been a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at Harvard University as well as holding positions at the University of Leicester, UK and Chatham House. From 2020-2025 Ben was an Honorary Fellow at the University of Leicester where he contributed to the 5-year, European Research Council-funded project, Towards a Third Nuclear Age.



DR ANNA MOLAS CLOSAS

[Dr Anna Molas](#) is a social anthropologist and ethnographer whose work focuses on reproduction, health, and society. Her research interests include reproduction studies, biotechnologies, and environmental reproductive justice. Molas is a Lecturer in the Human Geography, Anthropology & Development Studies (HGADS) program.

Her research focuses on three main areas: 1) Global dynamics of expanding reproductive markets, 2) preterm birth and the social implications of the Artificial Placenta technology, and 3) maternal and child health in relation to environmental exposure, climate change and preeclampsia.

Her PhD project focused on the egg donation bioeconomy in Spain and resulted in the publication of the book Taming Egg Donors: The Egg Donation Reproductive Market in Spain (Palgrave, 2025), which was supported by the First Book Grant from the Independent Social Research Foundation (ISRF).

After completing her PhD at Monash University, she was awarded a Juan de la Cierva postdoctoral fellowship, which she carried out at the AFIN Research Group at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. During that time, she worked on different projects related to maternal health and perinatal technologies in collaboration with health care workers and medical research teams at public hospitals in Spain. She also lead two projects as Chief Investigator which resulted in the creation of a podcast series she hosted (“Conversaciones Afines”) and an ethnographic film currently in post-production, which foregrounds the perspectives of egg donors in Spain.

Anna has published in leading journals such as BioSocieties, Science, Technology & Human Values, or Social Science & Medicine. She is co-editor of the recent special issue “Reproductive labourers: Centering the voices of egg donors and surrogates in the global bioeconomy” (2024) in Medical Anthropology.

She maintains ongoing collaborations with institutions including the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Complutense University of Madrid and has also been a Visiting Scholar at the University of Bern and the Center for Science, Technology, Medicine and Society (CSTMS) at the University of California, Berkeley.

Her research has attracted the attention of various media outlets, with appearances on the Spanish Public Radio, the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation and The Conversation Weekly Podcast, among others.

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