



MONASH
University

MONASH CENTRE FOR CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONTEMPLATIVE STUDIES

INQUIRY. HUMANITY. WISDOM.

2025–2026 Annual Report

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Monash Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies acknowledges the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, on whose land we work. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

For a centre such as M3CS, focused on contemplative practices, it is particularly appropriate and important to acknowledge and incorporate into our values and operation, that we operate on the land of the oldest contemplative tradition in the world. We strive to listen to and learn from First Nations about contemplation and connection – connection to ourselves, each other, and country.

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WELCOME



DIRECTORS REPORT

Welcome to the fifth Annual Report for the Monash Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies (M3CS). Reaching half a decade is a major milestone, and over the past five years, our unique approach has proven successful – consciousness science and contemplative studies truly need each other.

This year has again been action-packed with exciting research, inspiring education and engaging community events. All members of M3CS have been busy delivering on our mission of making contemplative studies central to our evolving understanding of consciousness.

Our education team has reached new heights, with strong year-on-year growth in enrolments as Monash students eagerly seek out the innovative offerings conceived by Professor Craig Hassed to help them navigate an uncertain world. Meanwhile, our research team continues to break new ground, contributing significantly to international debates and earning recognition through publications in prestigious journals worldwide. The Wawu First Nations Connection Project led by Associate Professor Cammi Murrup-Stewart is going from strength to strength.

The M3CS team engages widely with organisations and communities around us. We have delivered professional development programs on mindfulness and seminars and training workshops to numerous partner organisations. Our monthly public seminar attracts hundreds of participants, and our reach continues to grow across our social media channels.

The M3CS community is growing and evolving. Six postgraduate students submitted their PhD theses this year, each magnificent and each significantly expanding the Centre's reach and impact. Each year, new teaching associates join the education team, sharing their deep experience and passion with Monash students. We add new international collaborations and partnerships each year. Our team grows alongside the Centre in more ways than one—over the years, we've proudly welcomed no fewer than eight delightful babies into our extended family!

We are grateful for the foresight and generous continued support from Martin and Loreto Hosking through the Three Springs Foundation, which has made all this possible.

What will the next five years look like for M3CS? We believe there is more need for us than ever. Geopolitical upheaval and insecurity put pressure on everyone's well-being and thriving. The tsunami of Artificial Intelligence into all areas of our lives is transforming how we work, play and live. M3CS offers the scientific insights and practical tools we need to navigate this difficult world, staying true to ourselves and allowing us to flourish.

We look forward to the next phase of the Monash Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies—and welcome new partners on our journey.

Jakob Hohwy
Centre Director

GRAPHIC EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EDUCATION

2

RUNS OF
TRUE HAPPINESS
UNDERGRADUATE
COURSE

1

RUN OF *LIVING A
MEANINGFUL LIFE*
UNDERGRADUATE
COURSE

2

RUNS OF MINDFULNESS
FOR WORKPLACE
WELLBEING
& PRODUCTIVITY
POSTGRADUATE
COURSE



COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACES

20,000+
ENGAGEMENT ACROSS
PLATFORMS

3,000+
REACHED THROUGH
THE MONTHLY M3CS
SEMINAR SERIES

1,000+
REACHED THROUGH
MINDFUL MAY AT
MONASH



RESEARCH

43

PEER-REVIEWED
ARTICLES

1

BOOK

16

PHD AND MA
STUDENTS

792

TOTAL ENROLMENTS
IN M3CS 12-WEEK
STAND-ALONE
COURSES

9

MEMBERS IN THE
TOTAL EDUCATION
TEAM

4,250

STUDENTS RECEIVED
IN-CURRICULUM
MINDFULNESS-BASED
TEACHING

6

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS
OFFERED WORLDWIDE

250+

PARTICIPANTS
IN ONLINE
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS

24+

BESPOKE EVENTS
FOR WORKPLACES
AND THE COMMUNITY,

5000+
ATTENDEES

30+

PUBLIC TALKS AND
MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS,

1M+
ESTIMATED AUDIENCE
REACH

100+

ACADEMIC TALKS

17+

MONASH UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENTS AND
TEAMS ENGAGED

5,000+

ATTENDEES REACHED
ACROSS 52 INDUSTRY
AND ACADEMIC
CONFERENCES

6

SUBMITTED PHDS

1

VICE CHANCELLOR'S
PHD THESIS
COMMENDATION

5

POSTDOCS WORKING
ON M3CS MISSION

1

MULTIDISCIPLINARY
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

RESEARCH
PRESENTED AT
DOZENS OF
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCES

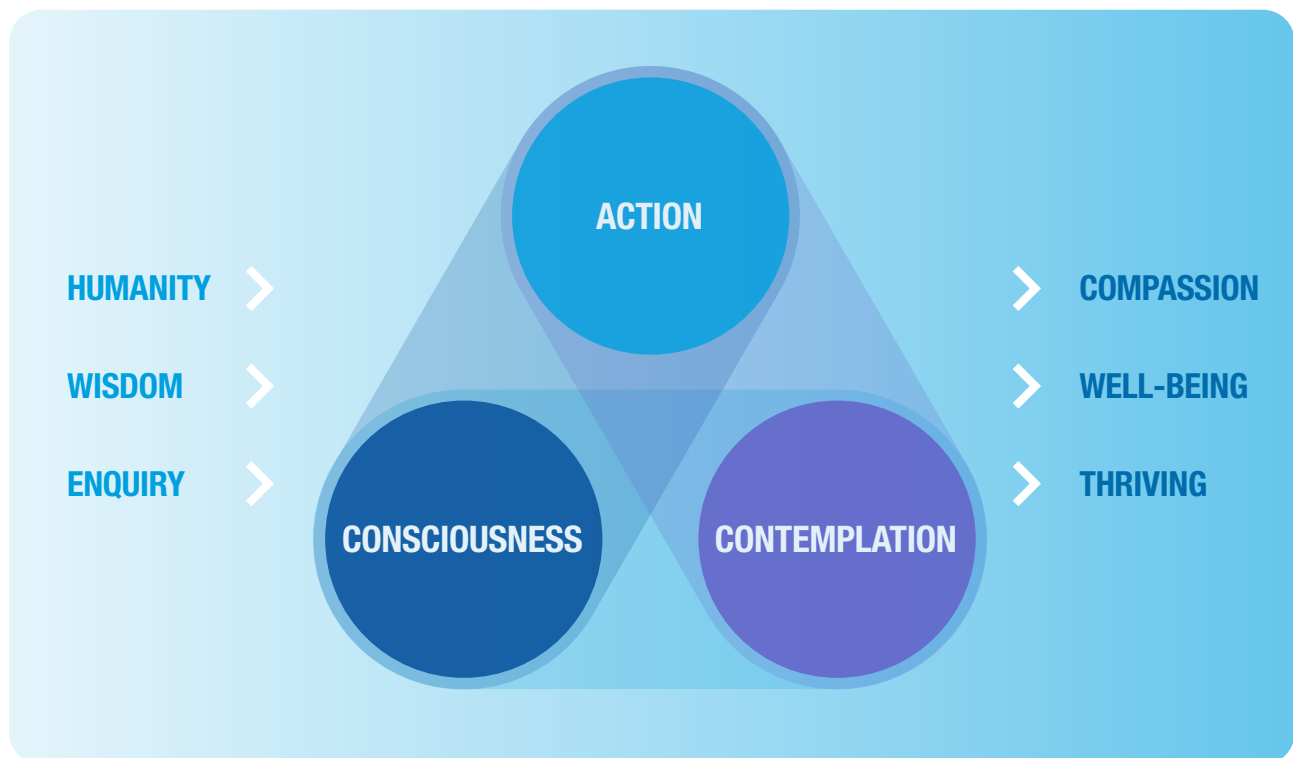
FOUNDATIONS

MISSION

The Centre's mission is to make contemplative practices central to our evolving understanding of consciousness, and to human existence and flourishing. Contemplative practices are not mere ends in themselves. M3CS's mission is to investigate how they may help provide the means to change our conscious connection with each other and our environment, and thus to underpin wiser and more compassionate action in the world.

M3CS focuses its interdisciplinary academic lens on our common humanity while positively impacting student and community wellbeing through the development of experiential and practice-focused education, underpinned by research into both contemplation and consciousness itself. We offer contemplative programs to a broad range of private, public and educational organisations in the wider community. We aim to listen to and engage with contemplative communities.

We take a broad perspective on contemplative practices, and focus on contemplation as a state of consciousness, engaging the whole being, and manifested in different types of activity. We approach this theoretically, through philosophy and conceptual analysis, as well as empirically, through practice, and informed by neuroscience, medicine and psychology.



M3CS brings humanity, wisdom and inquiry to bear on the consciousness-contemplation-action relation, leading to compassion, well-being and thriving

ORGANISATION

M3CS comprises around 30 active members, who each spend all or part of their week in the Centre's physical spaces. Our core team is complemented by a broader network of Centre members, affiliates and regular collaborators who contribute to our research, education and engagement activities. See the full team in the *Who We Are* section.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee for M3CS meets twice a year, asynchronously in the middle of the year and synchronously at the start of the calendar year, providing strategic guidance, expert advice and valuable perspectives on the Centre's direction and activities. Members also continue to engage with and support the Centre between formal meetings. See the Members in the *Who We Are* section.

FIRST NATIONS POLICY

With input and guidance from Advisory Committee members and University and community stakeholders, M3CS, has developed a First Nations policy to guide the Centre's work and engagement.

PHYSICAL SPACES

M3CS is located in a purpose-built space on Monash University's Clayton campus, including labs for behavioural and physiological testing, collaborative meeting spaces and a contemplative space. The Centre also has dedicated facilities within Monash's heritage-listed Religious Centre, providing additional spaces for meetings, activities and contemplative practice.

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

M3CS maintains an active and growing digital presence across our [website](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Bluesky](#), [TikTok](#), and two YouTube Channels, [M3CS](#) and [Monash Mindfulness](#). These channels provide a platform to share our research, events, seminars, educational opportunities, news and the work of our Centre with audiences in Australia and internationally. Our digital presence also includes [The Contemplative Science](#) and [Minds Matter](#) podcasts, offering longer-form conversations on consciousness, contemplative science and related research.



EDUCATION

We're empowering the next generation with the knowledge and practical contemplative skills to thrive, navigate life's challenges and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.

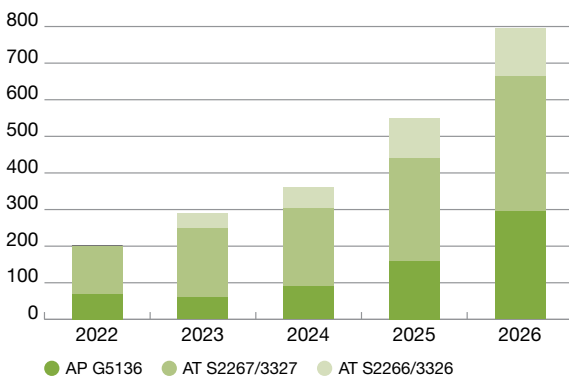
"I found mostly all aspects of this unit effective. It was amazing to have such an experiential unit taught by such an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and compassionate teaching team."

(APG5136 Postgraduate Student)

A key part of the success of these units is our highly committed tutoring team, whose skill, dedication and care continue to be reflected in excellent student ratings.

This year, we have taught nearly 5000 students at Monash. We have delivered to 792 students our core contemplative studies units, *True Happiness* (ATS2267/3327), *Living a meaningful life* (ATS2266/3326), and our postgraduate course *Mindfulness for workplace wellbeing and productivity* (APG5136). Over the five years since M3CS was formed there has been steady growth in enrolment numbers as indicated by the graph below.

M3CS unit enrolments 2022-26

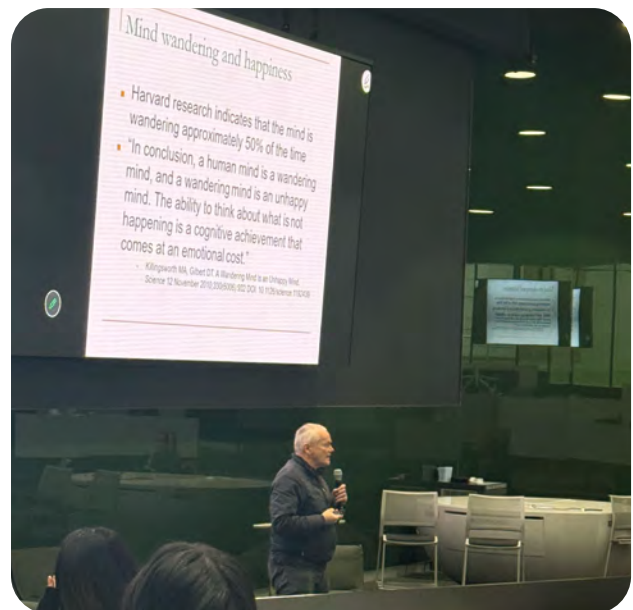


Due to the success of the undergraduate *True Happiness* unit we are currently in the process of translating it into a postgraduate unit with the aim of working professionals being able to use the skills in their personal lives and professional work. This unit, *Happiness and Human Flourishing*, along with another new postgraduate unit, *How to Shape and Deliver Mindfulness Programs*, will be delivered in 2026.

"I've started seeing things from new perspectives, which is helping me better understand myself and the world. For example, I've noticed I'm much calmer now, less overwhelmed, and not overthinking as much."

(ATS2267 Undergraduate Student)

We continued to deliver in-curriculum mindfulness modules, reaching approximately 4,250 students across Biomedical Science, Business, Dietetics, Education, Engineering, MBA, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Psychology, Paramedicine and Medicine.



Prof. Craig Hassed Teaching

"A well-structured and thoughtful exploration of mindfulness, its role and benefits in life."

(Mindfulness for Wellbeing and Peak Performance Participant)

Alongside our core curriculum, our professional development short courses engaged more than 200 participants this year. Delivered fully online, the courses attracted a diverse range of learners, including university staff and students, healthcare professionals, lawyers, paramedics, police officers, educators and army personnel, providing practical ways to deepen their understanding of mindfulness and apply contemplative principles in their personal and professional lives.



COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACES

At M3CS, we bring research-backed contemplative science and practice beyond the university, working with communities and organisations to translate interdisciplinary research into accessible and practical programs, conversations and resources.

“Although this is my first time taking this course, what stands out is the integration of neuroscience with mindfulness practice. The expert talks are concise yet deeply informative, and the meditations are thoughtfully designed to complement the learning.”

(Participant from Mindfulness for Wellbeing and Peak Performance)

This year, we collaborated with around 20 organisations across government, health, justice, education and the community to deliver talks, workshops and training. These included the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission, Magistrates’ Court of Victoria, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, and the Public & Global Health Team at AMSA International.

Now in its third year, our *Meditation, Meaning and the Mind* seminar series continued to grow, with individual sessions attracting up to 500 registrations. This year’s guests included actor and performer Josh Piterman, Venerable Robina Courtin exploring Buddhist perspectives on meditation and meaning, and psychologist Michael Carr-Gregg discussing the needs and challenges of growing up in the 21st century. The series continues to create an accessible public space connecting research, contemplative traditions and lived experience.

EXPLORING MEDITATION, MEANING AND MIND

M3CS Seminar Series



Breaking Bad Habits

*A conversation with
Professor Judson Brewer*



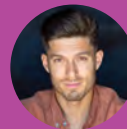
Meditation Dose

*A conversation with
Dr Sarah Strohmaier*



A Buddhist Understanding of Meditation, Meaning and the Mind

*A conversation with
Venerable Robina Courtin*



Behind the Mask

*A conversation with
Josh Piterman*



Bringing Mindfulness to the Community

*A conversation with
Angie Chew*

“Dear M3CS Thank you so much... This particular webinar was revealing and pertinent for me and again I thank you because you have no idea how truly helpful this has been in my life.”

(M3CS Seminar Series Attendee)

Our work across Monash also continued to expand, with workshops and training delivered for teams including Residential Services, Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute, Monash Sustainable Development Institute, SPARKS Day and eSolutions. A highlight was *Mindful May at Monash*, delivered in collaboration with Monash Health, Safety and Wellbeing, the Matheson Library, Monash Sport and the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music. M3CS delivered four practical workshops exploring workplace wellbeing, resilience, optimism, connection and burnout.

Our research and expertise also reached growing public audiences through national media and podcasts. Postdoctoral Research Fellow Dr Kelsey Perrykkad’s research challenging the concept of “baby brain” generated significant national attention, with more than 170 media mentions and coverage across *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Herald Sun*, 7NEWS, 3AW and ABC Radio and News. M3CS researchers also contributed to broader public conversations through outlets including *The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the *FitMind Podcast*.

Whether through workplaces, public conversations, research or media, our focus remains on making rigorous contemplative research accessible and relevant to the challenges people and communities face today.

FEATURED EVENTS

Basser Memorial Public Lecture on Consciousness and Free Will: Professor Peter Godfrey-Smith on *Evolution and Animal Minds*

The Centre presented the second Basser Memorial Public Lecture on Consciousness and Free Will in November 2025, welcoming author and philosopher Professor Peter Godfrey-Smith (University of Sydney) to the State Library of Victoria. Speaking to a booked-out audience, Professor Godfrey-Smith drew on his influential work in philosophy of biology and philosophy of mind to explore the evolution of sentience and consciousness across the animal world.

The event received a strong public response, reflecting significant the community interest in fundamental questions about consciousness and the minds of other animals.



Professor Tim Bayne and Professor Godfrey-Smith in conversation for the Basser Memorial Public Lecture

The Basser Memorial Public Lecture

The bi-annual Basser Memorial Public Lecture on Consciousness and Free Will was established through a bequest in memory of neurologist Dr Leon Samuel Basser (1925–2019) and his lifelong curiosity about the brain and mind. A pioneering neurologist, Basser was the first to describe Benign Paroxysmal Vertigo of Childhood and made important contributions to understanding the relationship between migraine and epilepsy. In his later years, his curiosity turned increasingly to the nature of consciousness, inspiring this lecture series in his legacy.

Held every two years, the lecture brings leading thinkers to Melbourne to share ideas and research on consciousness and free will with the wider community.

Australasian Society for Philosophy and Psychology Conference

In November 2025, M3CS organised and hosted the biennial conference of the Australasian Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ASPP) at Monash University's Caulfield campus. The conference was chaired by ASPP President and M3CS centre director, Prof Jakob Hohwy. Over two days, the conference brought together 120 researchers from across philosophy, psychology and related disciplines to share research, exchange ideas and build new collaborations.

Five keynote speakers explored topics spanning philosophy of mind, compassion, animal minds, whole-brain science and Indigenous-led research, reflecting the breadth and interdisciplinary nature of the ASPP community and M3CS's work.



M3CS PhD candidate Ema Demšar presenting at ASPP

WAWU GRANT IN INDIGENOUS CONTEMPLATIVE STUDIES

WAWU FIRST NATIONS CONNECTION PROJECT

During 2025–26, the Wawu First Nations Connection Project completed data collection and moved into Phase Three: collaborative analysis and research translation. The stories entrusted to the project provide rich and sometimes challenging accounts of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience, sustain and reclaim connection across diverse identities, histories and circumstances.

Data collection concluded in August 2025, with 51 survey responses and 10 long-form, one-on-one yarns. Participants contributed written reflections, artwork, poetry, photography and longer-form stories. Together, these contributions describe connection as lived through relationships with Country, culture, spirituality, family, community, identity, memory and everyday practice.

Participants' experiences were shaped by intersecting circumstances, including disability, chronic illness, neurodivergence, gender and sexuality, geographic distance, disrupted family histories and the ongoing effects of the Stolen Generations. Their stories show that cultural connection may be adapted, held privately, expressed creatively or reclaimed over time.

Emerging findings position connection as an ongoing and sometimes non-linear journey. For some participants, it was nurtured through community participation or time on Country. For others, it was carried through quieter practices such as creating art, feeding birds, speaking with ancestors, remembering family, engaging with waterways or holding an internal



Wawu project-lead, Associate Professor Cammi Murrup-Stewart presenting her keynote at the Australasian Society for Philosophy and Psychology Conference.

sense of culture and identity. These accounts extend understandings of Social and Emotional Wellbeing by illuminating connection as embodied, spiritual and relational.

The Co-Design Working Group has continued to provide essential cultural and methodological governance. Quarterly meetings create space for collaborative yarning, deep listening and reflection on the analysis and translation activities. The group's diverse cultural, professional and lived knowledges guide how findings are interpreted, communicated and returned.

As research team member Dr Tess Ryan reflected:

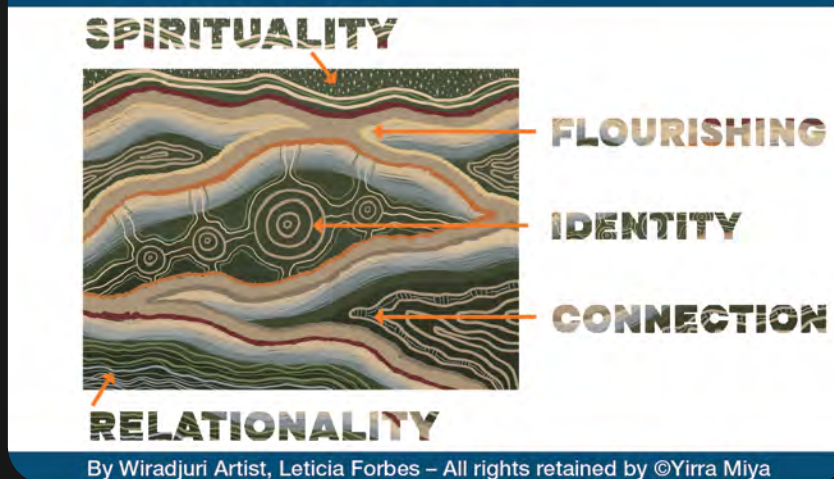
"I am very proud of the work we have done with Wawu to date. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, connection and belonging can be such a complex process. This project has allowed many mob to articulate this in meaningful ways, and get beyond just feeling lost and isolated to actually thinking about what it means for them to feel as though they have connected and belong. I also feel that art and expression has a way of speaking what can be unspoken, or we don't have the words for. Our webpage is a wonderful representation of internal processes that connection and belonging to culture can give us and that in turn gives an overall positive sense of wellbeing." – Tess

Research translation is now the project's central priority. Working with Indigenous graphic designers, Aboriginal clinical psychologists, researchers and community members, the team is developing:

- A Monash-hosted Wawu Project website containing project information, emerging findings and participant-approved stories and creative works.
- A primary peer-reviewed manuscript, provisionally titled "Disconnection and Reconnection in First Nations Communities: The Wawu Study".
- A peer-reviewed publication presenting vignettes of Aboriginal (re)connection.
- The chapter "Understanding First Nations Disconnection" for Routledge's forthcoming Handbook of Embodied Knowledge in the Health and Medical Humanities.
- Clinical guidance for psychologists and other mental health practitioners, developed with Aboriginal clinical psychologist Mary Goslett.
- Five graphic symbols developed by Yirra Miya, representing cultural journeys, inclusion, adaptation, Country and relationships among people, other living beings, ancestors and place.
- A completed King's College London Master's thesis by Mady Wills, focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge holders aged 18–28.

Developed with Jaq Froud, the Wawu website (going live soon!) will provide an accessible public home for the project and a carefully designed space in which approved stories, quotations, artworks, poetry and photography can be shared and celebrated as expressions of knowledge, identity and connection.

MEANINGS



The clinical guidance will support practitioners to engage more carefully with Social and Emotional Wellbeing, recognise diverse experiences of connection and understand the particular cultural relationships, histories and strengths each person brings. The publications and book chapter will bring Wawu's findings into wider health, psychology and medical humanities scholarship while remaining grounded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and experiences.

Indigenous Data Sovereignty and relational accountability continue to guide all translation activities. Participants retain authority over whether their contributions are attributed or shared anonymously. Consent for publicly sharing stories and creative works is treated as an ongoing relationship, supporting participants to make informed choices about how their knowledge travels.

As Wawu moves towards completion, our focus is on keeping this knowledge living, accessible and connected to practical change. The stories affirm that connection

and belonging can be carried and expressed in many ways, and that every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person has the right to seek, sustain and practise connection in ways that honour who they are.

The Wawu team extends our deep thanks to M3CS and the Three Springs Foundation for continuing to walk alongside us. We are especially grateful to the knowledge holders and Co-Design Working Group members who have shared their stories, insights, creativity and care.

– Cammi, Tess, Jaq, Ollie, Mady and the Co-Design Working Group members

For a description of Leticia Forbes' Wawu artwork, see page 21



RESEARCH

We drive high-quality, interdisciplinary research in consciousness science and contemplative studies – creating new knowledge that we can turn into practical impact.

Our fifth year has again been full of rich and productive research activities. M3CS's large cohort of brilliant and passionate PhD and MA students are leading the way. They have presented their work at dozens of prestigious international conferences across several continents, and have published more than 15 papers in high quality international peer reviewed journals. From the group of 16 students during this year, 6 have submitted their PhD theses. Thesis topics range over meaning in life, meditation and morality, computational modelling of meditation states from defabrication to selflessness, microphenomenology, and computational neuroscience of delusions in schizophrenia. The postgraduate program at M3CS is having an outsized impact on the field of consciousness and contemplative studies.

M3CS's research program continues to explore and expand our understanding of consciousness and contemplation. Research ranges from philosophical work on the metaphysical implications of our best theories of brain function and the physics of non-self experience, to the role that mindfulness practice might play for the ethical behaviour of scientists and how mindfulness may help coping with the fear of cancer recurrence. In between, there is research showing the role of the heart for perceptual experience, and work mapping out the nature and role of mindwandering, spontaneous thought, dreams in healthy people and people with disorders of consciousness. We did much to understand and develop different theories of consciousness, which is a contested area of debate. We published cutting-



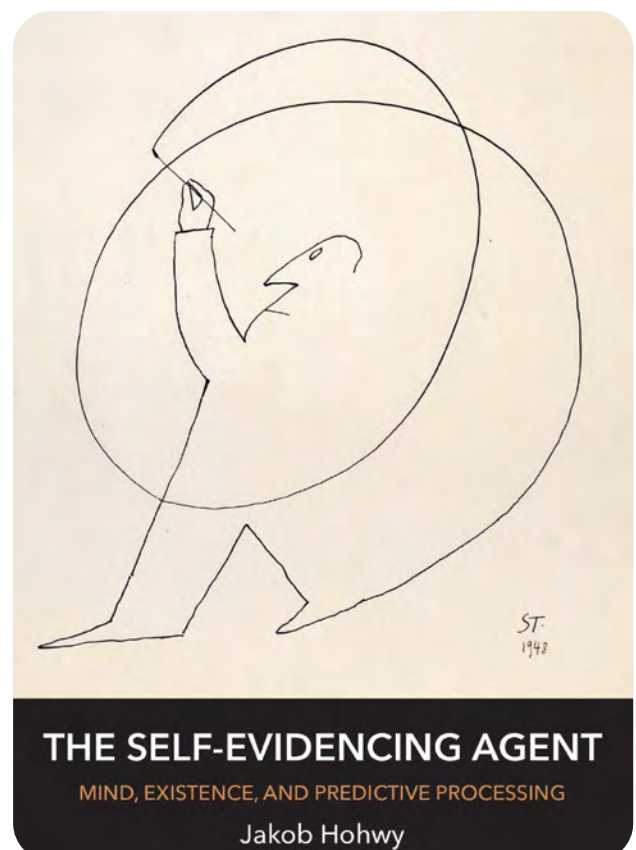
World-renowned Professor Alison Gopnik (UC Berkeley) speaks at the M3CS research seminar.



M3CS members presenting research at conferences around the world.

edge works that computationally models aspects of conscious experience, such as gratitude and meditative defabrication. Several studies add to the evidence that our courses are useful and integrate well into educational contexts. New work looked at transformative experiences, in particular the mother's experience during and after pregnancy – casting the first scientific light on mothers' experience of "baby brain".

M3CS research community comes together every week for our centre seminar, to try out our new research and to hear invited guest speakers in consciousness science and contemplative studies from around the world. We make our mark on the international research community too. In the last year, M3CS researchers have presented more than 100 times international and domestic conferences, across South America, Canada, Europe, and Asia.



Jakob Hohwy's new research monograph, *The Self-Evidencing Agent*, was published with MIT Press (Open Access) in February 2026.

WHO WE ARE



The M3CS team, 2026

M3CS TEAM



Jakob Hohwy
Centre Director;
Director of Research



Craig Hassed
Director of Education;
Professor, General
Practice; OAM



Jessica Weijers
Centre Manager



Jennifer Windt
Senior Lecturer,
Philosophy



**Sherelle
Connaughton**
Education Coordinator



Tim Bayne
Professor, Philosophy



Luke Smith
Neuropsychologist,
Mindfulness
Practitioner, Program
Facilitator



Aydogan Kars
Senior Lecturer in
History; Islamic and
Interreligious Studies



Kevin Berryman
Postdoctoral Research
Fellow and Teaching
Associate



Anikó Kusztor
Postdoctoral Research
Fellow



Ema Demšar
Postdoctoral Research
Fellow



Daniel Heller
Co-Director Monash
Lab for Brave
Conversations; Senior
Lecturer



Farid Zaid
Co-Director Monash
Lab for Brave
Conversations;
Lecturer



Kelsey Perrykkad
Postdoctoral Research
Fellow



Beth Fisher
Postdoctoral Research
Fellow

PHD AND MA STUDENTS



Kevin Berryman

"I do conceptual and empirical research to explore if meditation in fact makes us more moral"



Tom Darling

"I attempt to integrate philosophical approaches and cognitive scientific approaches to well-being"



Nejra Salihbegovic

"I combine intellectual history, religion, and philosophy to make a case for a trans-religious "science of letters" in medieval Sufi and Kabbalistic texts from the Iberian Peninsula"



Shawn Prest

"I work on how sustained meditation practices can affect mechanisms of attention, perception and learning in the brain using both fine-grained phenomenology and a computational neuroscience framework called active inference"



Gaia Mizzon

"My work explores the relationship between dreaming, autobiographical memory, and the self. I am interested in the dynamics by which dreaming and waking spontaneous thought might contribute to the integration and maintenance of the sense of self and to psychological adjustment during experiences of personal change"



Cammy Mitchell

"My research explores the intersection of mindfulness and psychedelics, asking how we can harness their combined potential to increase health and wellbeing?"



Lars Sandved-Smith

"I am developing computational models of meditation to better understand how these practices impact our (meta) cognitive abilities"



Davide Aldé

"Simple qualities of experience have varying degrees of similarity to each other. This allows us to define similarity structures, which I use to try to understand what is the nature of these simple qualities"



Jovan Stojkovski

"I investigate structural limits in investigating consciousness from a philosophical perspective. I am interested in how epistemic barriers bear on the issues of non-human animal and artificial consciousness, and more broadly on proposed explanations of consciousness"



Adam Manoogian

"I develop computational models to elucidate the behavioral and biological differences in mental disorders, focusing on how memories, retrospection and introspection affect our current and future mental states"



Vismay Agrawal

"I am investigating what kinds of suffering meditation reduces and how it does so by integrating insights from contemplative traditions, psychology, and computational cognitive science"



Mengting Zhang

"My research focuses on understanding human cognition from the perspective of capacity-limited agents. Using the active inference framework, I develop a unified computational account of how the trade-off between adaptivity and accuracy is manifested across cognitive activities such as cognitive effort and mind wandering"



Simone Anthes

"I investigate the continuum of mental imagery and its experiential components across wakefulness and sleep, with a current focus on the definition and phenomenal structure of dreaming"



Lukas Grozdanovski

"I work on a natural philosophy of psychedelics to understand the therapeutic mechanisms of classic psychedelics and build a conceptual account of the psychedelic experience by focusing on selflessness, insight, and its comparison with meditation"



Ema Demšar

"I am exploring what happens when one becomes aware that they are dreaming by combining conceptual analysis and empirical investigation of the structure and dynamics of dream experience"



Joe Melling

"I study the background philosophical assumptions of theories of consciousness in a way that aims to provide a new perspective on our relationship to the world"

ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Cathy Freeman OAM



Richard Cogswell SC



Ian Gawler OAM



Shannon Harvey



Martin Hosking



Amishi Jha



Thomas Metzinger



Andreas Roepstorff



Heleen Slagter



Angie Chew



Chris Ruane

To find out more: https://www.monash.edu/consciousness-contemplative-studies/people#graphite-tabs_2739130-02

M3CS MEMBERS

Gidi Ifergan, Adjunct Research Fellow, Indian Philosophy and Tibetan Buddhism; M3CS, Monash University

Monima Chadha, Professor, Philosophy, Oxford University, Adjunct Professor Monash University

Neil Bailey, Adjunct Research Fellow, Department of Psychiatry (CCS)

Claire Foldi, Research Fellow, Physiology, Monash University

Paul Liknaitzky, Research Fellow, Psychiatry Monash Health, Monash University

Adeel Razi, Associate Professor (Research), Psychology, Monash University

Nao Tsuchiya, Professor, Psychology, Monash University

Antonio Verdejo-Garcia, Professor (Research), Psychology, Monash University

Thomas Andrillon, Adjunct Associate Professor, M3CS, INSERM, Paris Brain Institute

Shaun Nichols, Professor, Director of Cognitive Science, Sage School of Philosophy, Cornell University; Monash University Adjunct Professor

Shian-Ling Keng, Associate Professor, Monash Malaysia Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences

Simon van Baal, M3CS Alumni

Kelsey Perrykkad, M3CS Alumni, Monash University

Manuela Kirberg, M3CS Alumni, Teaching Associate and Research Assistant, Monash University

Niccolò Negro, M3CS Alumni, Tel Aviv University

Larissa Bartlett, M3CS Affiliate, University of Tasmania

Antoine Lutz, M3CS Visitor, INSERM CNRL

Alex Kiefer, M3CS Affiliate

Iwan Williams, M3CS Alumni, Teaching Associate and Research Assistant, Monash University

Andrew McKilliam, M3CS Alumni, Teaching Associate and Research Assistant, Monash University

Toby Woods, M3CS Affiliate, Monash University

Richard Chambers, Clinical Psychologist, Adjunct Professor, Monash University

John Bradley, Professor, Wunungu Awara (a strong and healthy country) Animating Indigenous Knowledges, M3CS Affiliate, Monash Indigenous Studies Centre

Andrea Phillips, M3CS Teaching Associate, Monash University

Tracie Kellock, M3CS Teaching Associate, Monash University

Emily Amos, M3CS Teaching Associate, Monash University

Dhevaksha Naidoo, M3CS Teaching Associate, Monash University

Milan Andrejević, M3CS Alumni, UNSW

David Lie, Lecturer, Department of Marketing, Monash University

Jonathan Robinson, Affiliate, M3CS Alumni, Monash University

Mark Miller, Monash Alumni, Monash University

AWARDS AND RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE

We congratulate the students who have submitted their PhD theses during 2025–2026: Tom Darling, Kevin Berryman, Lars Sandved-Smith, Ema Demšar, Shawn Prest, Adam Manoogian.

Education Director Professor Craig Hassed was recognised with the Vice-Chancellor's Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning for a mindfulness train-the-trainer program delivered with Andrew Brown for developmental psychology students and pre-service teachers.



Left to right: Andrew Brown and Professor Craig Hassed

M3CS postdoctoral fellow Dr Elizabeth Fisher was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Commendation for Thesis Excellence for her PhD thesis, "Towards an understanding of optimism bias: a computational approach".



Dr Fisher and Professor Megan Farrelly

Centre Director Prof Jakob Hohwy was appointed Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Professor for his international pre-eminence in research and leadership.



Professor Jakob Hohwy, named an inaugural Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Professor

M3CS member Dr Aydogan Kars won the Vice Chancellor's Industry Education Award for The Art of Global Diplomacy: DFAT Islamic Literacy Education Program.



Monash Vice-Chancellor and President Sharon Pickering and Dr Aydogan Kars

M3CS donor Martin Hosking was awarded an Honorary Fellowship to Monash University by the Vice-Chancellor and President of Monash University, Professor Sharon Pickering.



Martin Hosking (right), with his brother at the award of the Monash Honorary Fellowship

COMPLETED M3CS POSTGRADUATE (PHD AND MA) THESES

1. Dr Niccolo Negro "The Integrated Information Theory of consciousness: a philosophical assessment"
2. Dr Simon van Baal "Manifestations of Impulsivity and Self-Control"
3. Dr Iwan Williams "Concepts and Representational Format: The Structural Limits of Conceptual Representation"
4. Dr Andy Mckilliam "Mechanisms, Naturalism, and Progress in Consciousness Science"
5. Dr Anikó Kusztor "Transient changes in the sense of presence: exploring dissociative experiences"
6. Dr Manu Kirberg "Comparing spontaneous thoughts across the sleep-wake-cycle"
7. Dr Jasmine Walter "Subjective Experience in Disorders of Consciousness"
8. Dr Beth Fisher "Towards an understanding of optimism bias: a computational approach"
9. Dr Tom Darling "Toward a naturalistic account of meaning in life"
10. Dr Kevin Berryman "Meditation and Moral Change"
11. Lars Sandved-Smith "A physics of meditation phenomenology"
12. Ema Demšar "The dynamics of meta-awareness across sleep and wakefulness: A neurophenomenological investigation of lucid dreaming, dream yoga, and attentional fluctuations"
13. Shawn Prest "How Meditation Transforms Experience: Towards a Computational Mechanistic Understanding"
14. Adam Manoogian "Putting Schizophrenia into Context"

Available at the Monash University thesis repository <https://bridges.monash.edu/>



M3CS excursion

‘FROM WITHIN, FOR ALL’

By Wiradjuri Artist, Leticia Forbes



ARTWORK STORY

For the Wawu First Nations Connection Project, the artwork ‘From Within, For All’ by Wiradjuri Artist Leticia Forbes welcomes a sense of belonging, flourishing identity, and a deeper connection, relationality, and spirituality for all. The journey paths represent a continuum rather than an endpoint on one’s journey. The artwork embodies five key pillars – spirituality, relationality, flourishing, connection, and identity and the all-encompassing interconnection of the pillars.

Spirituality reflects the depth of spirituality in self, Country, and all beings. It honours what comes from within and allows us to draw on knowledge and intuition that encompass us as people from Country and from our ancestors, leading the way as their spirits live within the stars. Relationality is reflected through the flow of water and movement of land as grounding elements for connection, community, trust, and safety. Flourishing reflects growth and the many ways of being without forcing everyone into one fixed version of belonging, reflected through the different paths they take and finding their home. Connection recognises disconnection, reconnection, and new connections, and the significance of being grounded in Country, kin, and community, represented through land lines, movement, and journey lines. Identity sits at the core of the artwork, reflecting internal sovereignty and self-permission to regain wholeness. It acknowledges that identity and honouring come from within and grow through interconnectedness with all the pillars.

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M3CS PUBLICATIONS

Representative publications from the M3CS team since July 2025. The [website](#) also lists a series of preprints and papers under submission to journals, which gives an up-to-date picture. See also our [individual pages](#) for full publication lists.

BOOKS

Hohwy, J. (2026). [The Self-Evidencing Agent](#). MIT Press. (Open Access).

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“Over five years, you have created better human beings and better advances in human consciousness. You’ve made a real contribution to humanity. If that was for one or two people, that would be significant, but you’ve done it for thousands. The second thing is that you’ve established an academic institution dedicated to consciousness and contemplative living as a viable program to be taken seriously. Congratulations!”

Richard Cogswell SC, M3CS Advisory Committee Member

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