



The Australian APEC
Study Centre

2015 Annual Review



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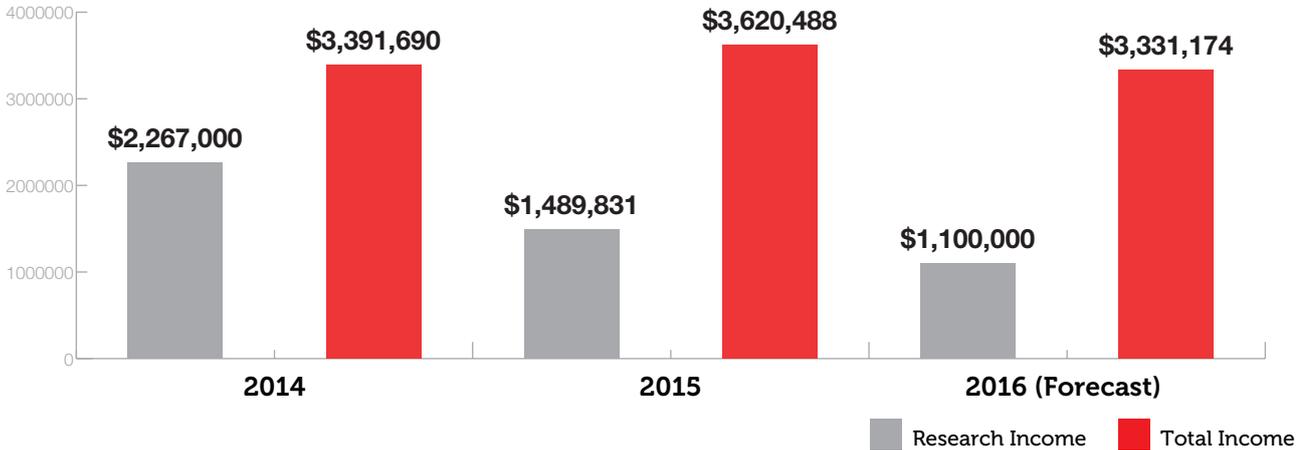


Dedicated to our friend and colleague Elissa Macleod who filled our office with colour and laughter.

Cover image: Iloilo, Philippines. Festival Dinagyang. Philippines hosted APEC in 2015.

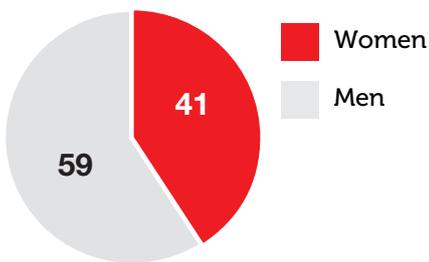
Highlights

Funding

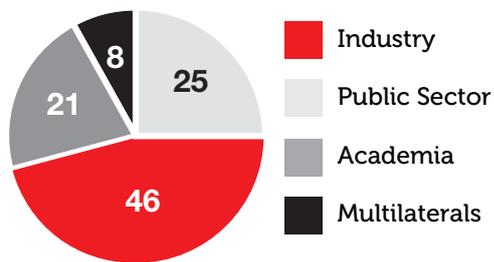


Capacity Building Program Statistics 2015

Gender Breakdown (%)



Presenters Breakdown by Source (%)



Overall rating for our programs = **91%**

Capacity Building Program Participants **139**

Attendees at all Programs **1,128**

Australian APEC Study Centre Global Footprint



Director's Statement

2015 was another successful year for the Australian APEC Study Centre (AASC) at RMIT. We delivered a suite of high calibre activities, supporting APEC's objectives, exemplifying RMIT's global engagement, and demonstrating Australia's commitment to the region.

In 2015, the AASC expanded its research capability with a new Principal Research Fellow and a Research Fellow, allowing us to enhance the depth and scope of our in-house work on APEC issues, initiatives and processes.

The Centre's research outcomes feed into APEC fora, informing APEC officials and strengthening regional policy development. We disseminated our findings on a range of key regional issues in 2015 such as increasing trade and investment, services, the digital economy and urban infrastructure development. We also delivered research on electronic payments systems and contributed to the work of the Asia Pacific Financial Forum.

Capacity building is a long term, continuous process in APEC. The Centre has contributed strongly to these capacity building efforts since 1994. This year we delivered a high quality program of institutional capacity building workshops and specialist training activities. Regional policy makers, regulators and businesses from nineteen countries participated, accessing skills and knowledge to help close some of the development divides which exist in the region. We conducted regional workshops on best practices including in the Operations of a Public Private Partnerships (PPP) Agency in Melbourne.

The growth of the services sector is key to future growth of the region and the Centre has contributed significantly to the ongoing work in this area. 2015 has seen the Centre deliver services symposium focusing on Mining and Energy, and Architecture and Engineering Services.

The AASC hosted meetings to promote investment in the region and

a workshop to launch the Regional Investment Analytical Group (RIAG) which will advise APEC policy makers on the value of quantitative indicators of investment performance. The Centre established the Secretariat for RIAG and partnerships with the World Bank, OECD, UNCTAD, ADB, ADBI, the APEC and ASEAN Secretariat, and academics from RMIT University.

The launch of the innovative Australia-APEC Women in Research Fellowships was an additional highlight for 2015. Designed and implemented by the AASC, ten leading researchers from developing APEC economies were awarded fellowships at Australian institutions, completing cross border research projects with support, introductions and international publication opportunities. The Centre will extend the reach of this program over the coming four years.

The AASC has continued its direct support for a number of APEC bodies and programs during the year. A prime example is in the nexus with industry as the provider of Secretariat support for the Australian members of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC).

In August, the Centre organised and convened the third ABAC meeting for 2015. More than 600 business representatives from Australia and the region participated in four days of high-level policy discussions at the meeting in Melbourne. A number of industry sessions promoted the Asia Region Funds Passport, measures to improve retirement and health provisions in the region's developing economies, urban infrastructure development, planning and financing and labour mobility policies.



Commonwealth and State Ministers participated, as did senior officials including the Secretary to the Treasury.

Going forward, it is critical that we continue to reinforce our capacity building and research activities to support APEC and RMIT's strategies 'Ready for life and work' and 'Global reach and outlook'. The Centre's strategic direction for 2016 will focus on driving global engagement through all activities and relationships.

We maintain an enviable web of high calibre links with Australian government agencies, regional fora, and international organisations. This means new opportunities can be readily grasped and shaped as they present themselves. There is also further potential for these connections to benefit College of Business and the wider university.

I acknowledge the support that the AASC receives from RMIT University, and in particular from the Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor, Industry Engagement, and the Advisory Group. I also thank the Centre's stakeholders for their valued support.

The Centre continues to provide RMIT and its key stakeholders with powerful and tangible evidence of its value. Our financial position is sound and relatively secure for the period ahead. We are the major provider of research funding to the College of Business within RMIT.

The AASC depends on our team and in 2015, they delivered our programs and projects with an outstanding level of professionalism, enhancing the Centre's and RMIT's status in the Asia-Pacific region and in the APEC community.

Ken Waller
Director, Australian APEC Study Centre

About the Australian APEC

The AASC supports APEC's strategic, economic, social and educational objectives throughout the Asia-Pacific region through institutional capacity building and applied research.

Background

APEC is the premier forum for facilitating economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. Since its inception in 1989 it has grown to encompass 21 members spanning four continents and represents the most economically dynamic region in the world, accounting for approximately 40% of the world's population, 57% of world GDP and 47% of world trade. APEC's aim is to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.

At the APEC Leaders' Summit in 1993, it was agreed to establish APEC Study Centres in the higher education sector to promote APEC's goals and objectives. The AASC was established in 1994 by a consortium of Monash University and the University of New South Wales. In 2009, the AASC moved to RMIT.

RMIT is a global university of technology, design and enterprise with 83,000 students. It enjoys an international reputation for excellence in professional and vocational education, applied research, and engagement with the needs of industry and the community. One of the world's most globalised universities, 15% of students are



Study Centre (AASC)

international students in Australia and 23% are international students outside Australia including at RMIT Vietnam.

The Centre's scope is broad and varied. It incorporates the following areas:

- Trade and investment.
- Infrastructure financing and managing risk.
- Economic integration and structural reform.
- Risk and governance in finance sectors.
- Food security.

- Global value chains and logistics.
- Services, the digital economy and innovation.

The AASC is a leading capacity building institution in the region. To date we have trained over 3000 officials from over 30 countries. These workshops, along with the Centre's conferences and symposia, facilitate the exchange of information and experiences between policy makers, regulators, business and academia.

In all its activities the Centre collaborates with partners from industry, government, academia and key international multilateral organisations (World Bank, OECD, ADB, UNCTAD, APEC and ASEAN Secretariats).

The Centre is also the Australian APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) Secretariat. ABAC is a leading regional forum for public-private sector collaboration on policy issues of importance to the Asia-Pacific region.



Key Activities 2015

The focus of the Centre's work remains on the core objectives of APEC – open markets for trade in goods and services, investment flows and the promotion of regional integration. The Centre works to achieve these goals through the strengthening of policy and regulatory institutions in the region's economies.

The Centre develops and delivers value through its participation in APEC meetings such as the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), the Asia Pacific Financial Forum (APFF), the Asia Pacific Infrastructure Partnership (APIP) and the Investment Experts Group (IEG). The Centre itself has led and initiated a number of proposals that have been adopted by APEC forums and leaders.

2015 Program Highlights

Capacity Building

The Centre delivered several major capacity building programs in 2015.

Investment policy and promotion

Senior leaders from APEC and ASEAN discussed key policy issues relating to quantitative indicators for investment, investment by state owned enterprises and sovereign wealth funds and the role of international and bilateral treaties.

Government Partnership for Development (GPDFD)

The Centre continues its program to develop the capacity of Asia Pacific agencies to design, finance and implement PPP infrastructure projects and to develop a best practice policy framework and action plans to help drive the delivery of sustainable urban infrastructure through the Urban Infrastructure Network (UIN):

- Three work-streams of regional specialists in the UIN prepared analysis and recommendations which were presented in ABAC's 2015 report to APEC Leaders.
- Concurrently, a training program was delivered on PPP for officials involved in infrastructure policy, planning and implementation from across regional economies.

- A dialogue of the Asia Pacific Infrastructure Partnership (APIP) was held in Tagaytay City, in conjunction with the Philippines Ministry of Finance hosting an APEC PPP Experts Advisory Panel meeting.

In delivering these outputs the Centre worked closely with regional policy makers, international organisations, academics, business groups, major think tanks, and Australian government representatives.

The Centre continued the delivery of a series of regional symposia (in partnership with DFAT) to promote good regulatory practice in the services sector.

Promoting good regulatory practice in the services sector

Building upon the work of previous symposia in this series (legal, accounting, financial, higher education, transport and logistics, telecommunications and ICT) the Centre delivered two symposiums in 2015; 'Good Policy and Regulatory Practices for Facilitating Trade and Investment in Mining and Energy Services' held in Perth, Australia and 'Good Policy and Regulatory Practices for Facilitating Trade and Investment in Architectural and Engineering Services' held in Singapore.

Both symposia focused on:

- Building the capacity of policy officials and regulators to understand the current regulatory environment.
- Developing good practice principles for sector specific services.
- Exploring barriers to women's economic participation through services-related policies and regulations to facilitate greater participation by women in the service sector.

The work of these symposia was drawn from the work of the STAR Database www.servicestradeforum.org and the symposia have been developed into a compendium of Good Practice Principles that were endorsed by the APEC Group on Services.

In 2016 this work will be drawn together in a final wrap-up Symposium that will develop a broad set of regulatory principles and good policy practices for trade and investment in the APEC Services Sector and contribute significantly to the development of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap.

Research and Consultancy Work

- An APEC E-Payment Readiness Index was constructed to gauge the readiness and capacity of each of the 21 APEC economies to engage in e-payment (including both e-payment and m-payment services), and to further develop their overall e-payment ecosystem. This joint study was completed with TRPC, a specialist technology research consultancy, and was funded by PayPal.
- A project on Enhancing Labour Mobility in the APEC Region researched push and pull factors of migration patterns, and presented policy recommendations, funded by the Australian Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.
- The Centre, supported by DFAT and endorsed by ABAC and APEC Finance Ministers and Leaders, established the Regional Investment Analytical Group (RIAG) to provide analysis and relevant quantitative indicators as a means of improving sustained investment flows to

economies in the region. The Centre will act as a Secretariat and draw on research support from partnerships with the World Bank, OECD, UNCTAD, ADB, the APEC Policy Support Unit, ASEAN Secretariat, academics from RMIT and Victoria Universities, the Australian Treasury and the Productivity Commission.

- The Australia-APEC Women in Research Fellowship provided financial support for 10 high-achieving female researchers from developing APEC economies to pursue research opportunities in partnership with Australian education and research institutions.

Philippines APEC Chairmanship

The agenda of the Philippines focused on promoting and advancing inclusive growth in the Asia-Pacific region. For 2015, the four nominated priority areas were:

- Investing in human capital development.
- Fostering Small and Medium Enterprises' (SME) participation in regional and global markets.
- Building sustainable and resilient communities.
- Enhancing the regional economic integration agenda.



Site visit of Singapore's Marina Bay at the 'APEC Architectural and Engineering Services Symposium' led by Architect Phillip Cox AO and Mr Larry Ng Lye Hock from the Urban Redevelopment Authority.

The Centre and ABAC Australia worked with the Philippines' and ABAC Chair Doris Ho to deliver on these priority areas, particularly through capacity building activities and AASC work on regional economic integration.

Impact and Funding

RMIT's role as a global university focuses on high impact research and collaboration, by embedding industry and enterprise into everything it does, and by ensuring global reach and outlook. The Centre works to help solve regional public policy problems, to develop long-term thinking with

evidence, and to work together with government and institutions in the Asia Pacific region to improve policy outcomes.

The AASC continues to contribute to the Australian and international research funding of the College of Business. In 2015, the Centre contributed \$1.49 million in research to the College amounting to approximately 40% of the total achieved by the College of Business.

Capacity Building Programs 2015

	Funding	Dates	Location
Training Program: Enhancing the investment environment in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economies (Year 3)	DFAT	2-6 March 2015	Melbourne, Australia
Asia Pacific Infrastructure Partnership (APIP) Dialogue	DFAT	4 March 2015	Tagaytay City, Philippines
Training Program: Establishing Best Practices in the Operations of a PPP Agency: Structuring and Resourcing PPP Project Teams	DFAT	9-12 June 2015	Melbourne, Australia
Regional Symposium: Facilitating Good Regulatory Practices in Mining and Energy Services	DFAT	16-18 June 2015	Perth, Australia
ABAC PNG Workshop	DFAT	29-30 Sept 2015	Port Moresby, PNG
Regional Symposium: Facilitating Good Regulatory Practices in Architectural and Engineering Services	DFAT	8-9 December 2015	Singapore

ABAC Secretariat

The Australian APEC Study Centre continued as the Secretariat for Australian members of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC). AASC was an active contributor to the work of ABAC, hosting the ABAC 3 meeting in Melbourne and ensuring the strong contribution from Australia's ABAC members.

ABAC is the leading regional forum for public-private sector collaboration on policy issues of importance to the Asia-Pacific region. It provides a platform for business to provide advice and input to APEC Leaders and Ministers on APEC policy-making on regional economic integration, trade and investment liberalisation, infrastructure development, supply chain connectivity and other issues. ABAC members meet four times a year and represent a wide range of business sectors, including large corporations and small and medium enterprises.

The role of Australia's ABAC Secretariat is to provide administrative, policy and business outreach support to Australia's three ABAC members, and to keep them informed of discussions and views presented by other ABAC member economies. The staffers, led by Lead Staffer, Lisa Barker, also convey the views of the Australian ABAC members on position papers and working group/committee proposals, and ABAC reports.



ABAC meeting in Session during ABAC 3, hosted in Melbourne, Australia.

Australia's ABAC Members for 2015

ABAC membership comprises three business leaders appointed by the Leaders of each APEC economy. In 2015, Australia's ABAC members were:

Sir Rod Eddington AO

Chairman of J.P Morgan (Australia and New Zealand)

Chair of Regional Economic Integration Working Group (REIWG)

Robert Milliner

Senior Adviser, International Affairs at Wesfarmers Limited and Senior Adviser at UBS

Co-Chair of Finance and Economic Working Group (FEWG)

Tracey Fellows

Executive Director and CEO of REA Group (Appointed November 2015)

ABAC Activities

	Dates	Location
ABAC 1	27-30 January 2015	Hong Kong, China
ABAC 2	20-23 April 2015	Mexico City, Mexico
ABAC 3	10-13 August 2015	Melbourne, Australia
APEC Finance Ministers Meeting	10-11 September 2015	Cebu, Philippines
ABAC 4	12-15 November 2015	Manila, Philippines
2015 APEC CEO Summit and ABAC Dialogue with Leaders	15-19 November 2015	Manila, Philippines
APEC Informal Senior Officials' Meeting (ISOM)	11-12 December 2015	Lima, Peru

ABAC 3 – Melbourne Host City

Australia hosted the third APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) Meeting for 2015, in Melbourne between 10-13 August. The third meeting of the ABAC calendar is significant, as ABAC Members settle their reports and letters to APEC Leaders, Finance Ministers, Ministers Responsible for Structural Reform, Health, Transport and MSMEs.

The Centre played a key role in organising the meeting, planning the industry luncheon series and all the social events. Throughout the meeting we profiled Australian food and wine, tourism, and cultural experiences to the business leaders.

More than 200 APEC business representatives travelled to Melbourne to contribute to the four-day program of high-level policy discussions. The

meeting was an opportunity to involve local industry and stakeholders.

An industry program was delivered with sessions on key issues and networking events. The program was very well received by both visiting and local attendees.

Industry sessions promoted the Asia Region Funds Passport, measures to improve retirement and health provisions in the region's developing economies, urban infrastructure development, planning and financing and labour mobility policies. The networking events were similarly embraced. The Financial Services, Women's and Professional Services luncheons and social events had over 450 private sector and government attendees over the four days.

The Australian APEC Study Centre is

grateful for the support and participation of a number of Commonwealth and Victorian Government officials, who contributed significantly to the success of the meeting. Particular thanks to Australia's Ambassador to APEC, Brendan Berne and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Assistant Secretary APEC Branch, John Larkin and their teams for their support and engagement with the agenda.

The Centre would like to particularly thank the Victorian Government's Department of Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) and corporate sponsors, ANZ, AustralianSuper, PwC and RMIT University for their generous sponsorship of the meeting. Product sponsors included Crumpler, Koko Black, Kikki K, Keep Cup, Lupe Wine, Angel Baby and Rooftop Honey.



Wurundjeri Indigenous Elder Tony Garvey, Victorian Treasurer Tim Pallas, and ABAC Australia Member Sir Rod Eddington welcoming ABAC Chair Doris Ho to Melbourne for the ABAC 3 meeting.

Australia-APEC Women in Research Fellowship

The Australia-APEC Women in Research Fellowship provides financial support for up to 10 high-achieving female researchers from developing APEC economies to pursue research opportunities in partnership with Australian education and research institutions. Researchers are hosted by Australian education and research institutions for between one and four months.

Fellowships will be awarded each year for five years (2015-2019). The AASC is administering this fellowship, supported by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

This fellowship program aims to encourage the mobility of post-doctorate female researchers in the APEC region. It is designed to assist with the particular challenges female researchers face in undertaking cross-border research activities such as arrangements and financial support for childcare.

The 2015 fellows were a very impressive cohort with outcomes including several journal articles, publications, further research collaborations and even a job offer.



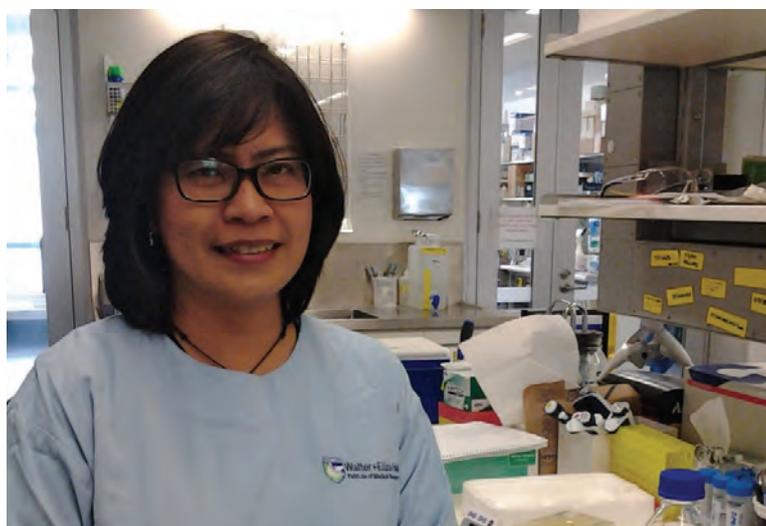
Dr Ying Shen working with her supervisor, Dr Vai Io Lo, on the interactions between the China-Australia free trade agreement and climate change mitigation at Bond University, Queensland.

2015 Fellows

<p>Dr Ying Shen <i>P.R. China</i></p> <p>July–Oct 2015</p>	<p>Faculty of Law, Bond University</p>	<p>Dr Shen examined the relationships between trade liberalisation, ISDS and climate change mitigation and the implications for the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement.</p>
<p>Dr Hai Anh La <i>Vietnam</i></p> <p>Sept–Dec 2015</p>	<p>Australian National University</p>	<p>Dr La examined financial interdependence and financial shock transmission in a new research area highlighted by policy makers since the global financial crisis.</p>
<p>Dr Zetty Norhana Balia Yusof <i>Malaysia</i></p> <p>Aug–Oct 2015</p>	<p>South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI)</p>	<p>Dr Balia Yusof screened, identified and isolated bioactive compounds exhibiting antioxidant and antibacterial activities from selected endemic marine micro- and macroalgae.</p>
<p>Dr Nadia Silvana Santini González <i>Mexico</i></p> <p>Aug–Dec 2015</p>	<p>Sydney University of Technology</p>	<p>Dr Santini González examined how a range of iconic groundwater-dependent plant species respond to different drought scenarios to inform research and policy at regional and national levels.</p>
<p>Martha Yahimbu Mungkaje <i>Papua New Guinea</i></p> <p>Dec 2015–April 2016</p>	<p>School of Pharmacy and Medical Science, University of South Australia</p>	<p>Dr Mungkaje investigated the anti-inflammatory and antibacterial effects of kinos extracts from Australian and Papua New Guinean Eucalyptus species.</p>
<p>Dr Maria Pythias Baradero Espino <i>Philippines</i></p> <p>July–Nov 2015</p>	<p>Advanced Water Management Centre, University of Queensland</p>	<p>Dr Espino examined bio-filters which remove contaminants, reduce colour, odour and taste, and prevent the formation of disinfection by-products in water.</p>
<p>Dr Rintis Noviyanti <i>Indonesia</i></p> <p>Oct–Dec 2015</p>	<p>The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)</p>	<p>Dr Noviyanti researched identification of immune effector mechanisms and antigenic targets of naturally acquired immunity to malaria in Indonesia.</p>
<p>Dr Anchalee Avihingsanon <i>Thailand</i></p> <p>Oct 2015 & Mar–May 2016</p>	<p>University of New South Wales</p>	<p>Dr Avihingsanon increased the screening, monitoring and treatment of HCV affected groups who have difficulty obtaining services and treatment.</p>
<p>Dr Reena Rajasuriar <i>Malaysia</i></p> <p>Sept–Nov 2015</p>	<p>Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, University of Melbourne</p>	<p>Dr Rajasuriar identified genetic determinants of immune recovery in patients at greatest risk of poor immune reconstitution following antiretroviral therapy.</p>



Dr Zetty Nohana Balia Yusof in the lab at South Australian Research and Development Institute analyzing the antioxidant and antibacterial activities from marine algae.



Dr Rintis Noviyanti undertaking research on malaria immunity at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne.

Building Research Capacity

This year we took active steps to increase our research capabilities and activities. Dr Douglas Brooks joined as Principal Research Fellow and Dr Bekzod Abdullaev as Research Fellow.

The focus of the Centre's research is clustered around regional economic connectivity through capital and labour market integration, trade and investment facilitation, and infrastructure development.

Research studies included:

- Current issues in Asia Pacific Foreign Direct Investment.
- Enhancing labour mobility in APEC for Department of Employment.
- Measures affecting services trade and investment (for Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

During the year, AASC research staff authored or co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, reports for APEC and ABAC meetings, and

monographs for Australian government departments. Topics included investment policy, labour mobility, trends in foreign direct investment, connectivity, and trade in services under the proposed Free Trade Area of Asia and the Pacific.

Collaboration with research partners was expanded, particularly with the Asian Development Bank, the APEC Policy Support Unit, the World Bank and the OECD.

Through outreach activities, staff were able to disseminate findings from the Centre's research to government officials and other experts in the areas of study, while further refining policy positions with inputs and advice from governments, academics, and staff of multilateral development institutions.

AASC research staff delivered presentations in Hong Kong, Melbourne, Tokyo, and Yangon, including the ABAC 3 meetings in Melbourne, contributing to policy dialogues and capacity building throughout the broader region.

Performing Secretariat services for APEC's Regional Investment Analytical Group (RIAG) kept research staff in close contact with colleagues in the ADB, APEC Policy Support Unit, ASEAN Secretariat, OECD, UNCTAD, and World Bank/International Finance Corporation.



Enhancing the Investment Environment Capacity Building Training Program 2-6 March 2015, Melbourne.

The Australian APEC Study Centre Advisory Board

Mark Johnson AO

Chairman of the Board

Alan Oxley

Chairman, Australian APEC Study Centre

Professor Ian Palmer

*Pro Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President,
College of Business, RMIT University*

Ken Waller

Director, Australian APEC Study Centre

Chris Tinning (observer)

*Assistant Secretary APEC Branch,
Investment and Economic Diplomacy
Division,
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

Professor Andrew Macintyre

*Deputy Vice-Chancellor International
and Vice-President RMIT*

John Denton AO

*Partner and CEO of Corrs Chambers
Westgarth*

Justin Hanney

*Lead Deputy Secretary Department
of Economic Development, Jobs,
Transport and Resources, Victorian
Government*

**Emeritus Professor Merilyn
Liddell AM**

Former President of RMIT Vietnam

Dr. Geoff Raby

Geoff Raby & Associates



Centre Director Ken Waller with Chairman of the Board Mark Johnson AO.

Key Partners

The AASC has a well-established network of partners and collaborates with key regional and international institutions, Australian and Victorian government agencies, and universities and research centres across the Asia-Pacific. The Centre also has linkages with industry in Australia and in the APEC region, ensuring strong business engagement in all its activities.

APEC PSU

The APEC Policy Support Unit is recognised as an integral part of the APEC architecture and a highly respected source of policy research and analysis. The AASC has contributed to a number of key research pieces for the APEC PSU.

APEC Secretariat

The APEC Secretariat operates as the core support mechanism for the APEC process, providing coordination, technical and advisory support as well as information management, communications and public outreach services. The APEC Secretariat has provided funding for ASCC capacity building training programs and research projects.

APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)

ABAC is a leading regional forum for public-private sector collaboration on policy issues of importance to the Asia-Pacific region. The Australian APEC Study Centre has been an active contributor to the work of ABAC and provides secretariat services to Australia's ABAC members.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

The ADB is a leader in regional development banking, dedicated to improving the quality of life for people in Asia and the Pacific who are poor and unable to access essential goods, services, assets and opportunities. The ADB has provided support to AASC capacity building programs through its expert presenters and panellists/moderators and has funded participants.

Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI)

ADBI is a subsidiary and the think tank of the Asian Development Bank is a leading Centre for the creation and dissemination of information and knowledge on development in the Asia and Pacific region. In October 2011, the AASC and ADBI signed a MOU involving three areas of cooperation: capacity building; research and partnership; and publication.

ASEAN Secretariat

The ASEAN Secretariat's vision is for a strong and confident ASEAN Community that is globally respected for acting in full compliance with its Charter and in the best interest of its people. The Secretariat has been a strong supporter for the Centre's programs and many ASEAN Secretariat representatives have been participated in our capacity building programs.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) advances the interests of Australia and Australians internationally. Through the Department's AID program, the AASC receives funding for selected projects.

The Centre works closely with the Department's APEC branch on facilitating trade and investment in services work and through the ABAC Australia secretariat function. DFAT experts and senior staff also regularly contribute to the Centre's training programs and policy dialogues.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

OECD's mission is to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. OECD senior experts regularly participate in and contribute to AASC training programs, forums and symposia on investment and trade facilitation, governance and innovation.

Treasury

As a central policy agency, the Australian Treasury is responsible for developing Australia's economic policies and for managing the national budget. Treasury experts and senior staff regularly contribute to the Centre's training programs and policy dialogues, as well as providing advice on program development.

Victorian Government

The Centre has continued to work closely with the Victorian State Government and its agencies to assist their mission of working with business, Government and the community to boost productivity, exports, investments and jobs.

The AASC has partnered with the Victorian Government on several projects and looks forward to further developing this key partnership.

The World Bank (WB)/ International Finance Corporation (IFC)

The World Bank is a source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The IFC focuses exclusively on the private sector in developing countries. The World Bank and IFC regularly participates and contributes to AASC training programs, forums and symposia.

Funding

In 2015, the AASC received funding that amounted to \$3.62 million. The Centre has a sound long-term financial position with a diverse range of stakeholders. The extension of the ABAC Secretariat Contract, the multi-year women's fellowship project, and the significant number of shorter-term projects are critical to the long-term future success of the Centre.

Funding Sources

APEC Secretariat

**Australia and New Zealand
Banking Group (ANZ)**

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

AustralianSuper

**Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade (DFAT)**

**Department of Education and
Training**

Department of Employment

PayPal

PwC

**Victorian Government
Department of Jobs, Transport
and Resources (DEDJTR)**



Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital. Site visit for the Centre's PPP Capacity Building Training Programs.

Future Strategies and Activities for 2016

In 2016, the Centre will aim to achieve four major and interconnected goals to build its reputation as an eminent institution for Asia Pacific research and capacity building in the Asia Pacific, consistent with key APEC objectives.

We will work to realise synergies with RMIT's strategic goals, set out in the RMIT plans, 'Ready for life and work', and 'Global reach and outlook'.

The Centre's strategic imperatives for 2016 are to:

- Exercise our core strengths: Research and Capacity Building activities.
- Exploit and widen funding opportunities to maintain a sound financial position.

- Facilitate global engagement in all activities and relationships including with RMIT, the Australian government, the Victorian government and international multilateral agencies.
- Increase the reach of the Centre's work through digital innovation.

Exercise our core strengths: Research and Capacity Building Activities

- The AASC will continue to expand research activities and high-level capacity building workshops in the Asia Pacific region. The forward program contains commitments to deliver capacity building workshops on improving investment in global value chains and removing barriers to services in the region. We will deliver

five industry workshops for Austrade that increase awareness and utilisation of the three North Asia Free Trade Agreements for target sectors in professional services.

- Complete contracted research by the APEC Policy Support Unit on a survey of Regulatory Measures in Environmental Services and a case study on Financial Services Sector Reform in Japan.
- Develop modelling to support the use of quantitative indicators under the RIAG program.
- Operate collaboratively with APEC fora and organisations, and alongside international multilateral agencies, to deliver strong research and capacity building outcomes.



APEC Symposium: Good Policy and Regulatory Practices for Facilitation Trade and Investment in Mining and Energy Services group photo, held at University of Western Australia, Perth

Exploit and widen funding opportunities to maintain a sound financial position

- The AASC will continue to prioritise positive relationships with a range of Commonwealth Departments, Victorian Government, international agencies and the private sector to develop funding partnerships and to ensure our capabilities and commitment to the region is well understood.

Facilitate global engagement in all activities and relationships

- Will ensure core activities are aligned with the University's strategic goals, set out in the plans, 'Ready for life and work', and 'Global reach and outlook'.
- Assist the University to build and maintain linkages with major regional and international institutions, through creative research and capacity building work. For example, the Centre will facilitate broader and deeper engagement by RMIT experts in urban infrastructure in the region over the forward program.
- Continue its role as the Secretariat to the Asia Pacific Infrastructure Partnership (APIP) and organise dialogues between the public and private sector organisations.

- The AASC represents a powerful and tangible knowledge hub within RMIT with clear potential to optimise access to expertise on regional matters.
- Support efforts by Vietnam and PNG to develop their priorities as Chair of APEC in 2017 and 2018, respectively.
- Partner with the World Bank/IFC Group to deliver programs aimed at strategically improving the investment environment in the Asia and Pacific region.
- Support Australia's APEC activities in 2016 as commissioned including continuing to deliver highest quality services to Australian ABAC members and effectively promote outreach activities. Through work with the Asia Pacific Financial Forum (APFF) the AASC will continue to support Australia's initiative to establish the Asia Pacific Region Funds Passport (ARFP).
- Consider new regional groupings such as G20 Pacific Islands for funding.



Participants at the 2015 PPP Capacity Building Training Program held in Melbourne

Digitalisation of content to reach a broader audience

- Develop digital content for selected capacity building training programs, and specifically in relation to promoting PPP for infrastructure planning, project development and financing in the region.
- Will enable the AASC to reach a far wider audience of senior officials in agencies in the region and broaden RMIT's engagement.

Upcoming Capacity Building Activities

	Funding	Date	Location
Investment Climate Indicators and FDI Statistics RIAG Workshop	DFAT PSLP and ADB	3 March 2016	Melbourne, Australia
The Asia Pacific Financial Forum Industry/Regulator Dialogue – Progress on the Asia Region Funds Passport and Regional Financial Market Integration	Financial Services Council	23 March 2016	Sydney, Australia
Public-Private Dialogue on Improving the Investment Climate for Global Value Chain Development	DFAT	28-29 April 2016	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
APEC Symposium: Good Policy and Regulatory Practices for Facilitating Trade and Investment in Services – Toward the APEC Services Roadmap	DFAT	24-25 May 2016	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Asia-Pacific Urban Infrastructure Network (UIN) Advisory Council Meeting and Second Biennial Forum	DFAT	14-15 June 2016	Singapore
Free Trade Agreements and Training Professional Services Workshops	Austrade	TBC (5 Workshops)	Melbourne, Australia

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