

Housing@RMIT Network

Quarterly Newsletter May 2026



Who are we?

Housing@RMIT is an interdisciplinary network of 250+ researchers across 13 disciplines and 18 schools, working to address Australia’s housing challenges. We focus on housing supply, sustainability, affordability, and equity—collaborating with government, industry, and communities to create real-world impact. Check our [LinkedIn](#) & website for more details. To become a member, reach out to **Karien Dekker** (karien.dekker@rmit.edu.au)

Network Update

- Joanna Hatcher** passed CoC and her research explores children, young people and women’s experiences in family violence refuges, and how systemic factors (such as government funding and the housing crisis) shape everyday lives and service responses.
- Sadaf Dalirazar** passed her 2MR and her research looks into role of demonstration projects in facilitating the transition towards sustainability and circular economy in the housing sector.
- Sara Pishgah’s** confirmed 3MR and is investigating how material reuse can become a normal practice within material procurement processes in the Australian residential construction industry, and the role digital technologies can play in enabling this transition toward a more circular construction.

Opportunities for HDRs and ECRs

- Horizon Doctoral Program**
Call for Horizon Doctoral capacity-building program is open till **28 May 2026**. It is delivered by the Melbourne Centre for Cities in partnership with the Australasian Early Career Urban Research Network (AECURN), Australasian Cities Research Network and Melbourne Centre of Cities. Check out the details [here](#).
- The PhD Blueprint: Career, Life & Reality’**
With collaboration of Urban Futures Symposium and Housing@RMIT network, we bring a panel discussion where our amazing guest from industry and academics will share their experiences on how they managed life and career with PhD and how they transitioned into a successful career. Lock the date **3 June 2026, 12-1:30 pm**

Meet the Team Member!

Dr Konstantina Vasilakopoulou joined the RMIT School of Property, Construction and Project Management as a **Vice Chancellor’s Research Fellow** in early 2025. She is an architect, lighting designer and environmental engineering expert with academic and consulting experience across Europe and Australia. Her research sits at the nexus of climate change, building and urban physics, health and justice.

Her housing-related research focuses on energy justice and the effects of the home environment on the wellbeing of vulnerable populations. A project that profoundly shaped her perspective on housing research was the **European HERB initiative (Holistic Energy-Efficient Retrofitting of Residential Buildings)**, where she designed and managed the retrofit of a multi-storey public housing building in Athens, Greece. By integrating innovative energy-saving technologies, the project significantly improved residents’ indoor comfort and reduced their energy expenses, while also strengthening community cohesion.

Konstantina has also worked with the **Home Modification Information Clearinghouse (HMinfo)** at UNSW Sydney, first as a researcher (2017–2020) and later as Director (2021–2024). Her work at HMinfo centred on research translation to support home modifications for older people and people with disability.

She warmly invites RMIT ECRs and HDRs to join the diverse and supportive Housing@RMIT Network, to share their experiences in housing research.

Activity updates

- Asia-Pacific Network for Housing Research Conference “Navigating Asia-Pacific Housing Futures: Financialisation, Technology, Governance, and Climate Action”, Bali, 5-7 October 2026, Check the details [here](#). **Abstract deadline: 17 May 2026.**
- Joint Australasian Housing Researchers Conference / Asia-Pacific Network for Housing Research Conference 9-12 February 2027 at RMIT in Melbourne – call for papers will follow soon, **abstract deadline 1 September 2026.**

Network publications and policy impact

- Housing Australia Future Fund submission**
The Housing@RMIT Network submitted to the audit of the design and delivery of the Housing Australia Future Fund. See [Performance audit of the Housing Australia Future Fund | Australian National Audit Office \(ANAO\)](#)
Authors: Davies, L., Daley, K., Dekker, K., Dodson, J., Halvitigala, D., Hayward, D., Jayasurya, S., Lawson, J., Porter, L., Shooshtarian, S., Sinclair, S., Teo, P., and Vahanvati, M.
- Public housing towers demolition alternative visions report**
A group of researchers and industry partners published a report with three alternative future visions for the Barkly Street public housing tower in Brunswick. The report explores retrofit options which will reduce CO2 emissions, might be similar in cost as demolition, and would enable residents to stay in place.
[Melbourne public housing tower report calls for reno over knockdown-rebuild - RMIT University](#) authored by [Karien Dekker](#), [Ben Milbourne](#), Bart van Bueren, [Mike Collins](#), [Kathryn Daley](#), Mark Goodie, [Priya Kunjan](#), David Kelly, Callum Logan, Stephen Mintern, Sara Pishgahi, Simon Robinson, [Sarah Sinclair](#), [Rajapaksha Pathiranage Nilmini Weerasinghe](#), Waduge Sajani Udeshika Jayasuriya.
The report was widely cited in the media: 137 articles including The Age, ArchitectureAU, 9 News, ABC Radio and Brunswick Voice!
- Public Housing Redevelopment in Melbourne: A Multidisciplinary Response**
Last year, the Housing Network submitted to a policy review of the public housing towers policy in Victoria. That submission was also published as a peer-reviewed article in a journal: Kunjan, P., Dekker, K., Davies, L., Dearn, E., Gajanayake, A., Garimort, J., ... Sp Wong, P. (2026). Public Housing Redevelopment in Melbourne: A Multidisciplinary Response. Urban Policy and Research, 44(1), 73–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08111146.2026.2623549>

Designed and Co-edited by Muzna Anam

