

# E EDG

CoBL Research Publication

edge

2020



edge

RMIT  
UNIVERSITY

# edge

/ɛdʒ/

noun:

1. [singular] a slight advantage over someone or something.

I am pleased to introduce the first edition of Edge. This celebratory publication showcases the outstanding activities and achievements of our researchers, schools and centres in the RMIT College of Business and Law during 2020.

Our researchers had great outcomes this year – evidenced by the massive jump in our proportion of articles now published in top journals – many in the very top journals in a field, successes with ARC and other highly visible government and industry grants; RMIT awards for media stars and six university research awards; and national research awards.

This all happened during an exceptionally challenging year, one during which we had to make many changes in our learning and teaching practice. Over the coming years we will also have to deal with how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected our research practice beyond the immediate pressure on research time it introduced. Worldwide it is now recognised that COVID-19 had an uneven effect on research productivity, for example, on researchers with caregiving responsibilities. At the same time, journals and granting bodies are reporting spikes in submissions, and as internal funding opportunities across the sector dwindle, state and federal governments are looking at short-term solutions to plug funding gaps. The nature of the research landscape going forward will be very different.

In the College of Business and Law and its schools and centres, we have laid the foundations needed to adapt to many of these changes during this year. We have commenced vital projects, ranging from the redesign of the HDR programs and putting the foundations for ERA in place, to the introduction of the early career academic program, and many more. After the challenges we have faced in resourcing, we will be making investments into researcher support within the Business Research Office during 2021, placing us in a good position to accelerate our research development and outcomes.

Let me conclude by thanking each and every one who have gone above and beyond to make this a great year for research in our college. May this festive season be one of rest, recuperation, and if possible, a wonderful time spent with friends and family.

*Martie-Louise Verreyne*  
ADVC Research & Innovation, CoBL

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# By The Numbers

The following is an overview of some of the key activities and achievements in the research and innovation space in 2020.



<b>Scopus publications</b> Exceeded target for this KPI	<b>384</b>
<b>Total publications</b> (SCOPUS and non-SCOPUS)	<b>457</b>
<b>Total A* publications</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total A publications</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Proportion of publications</b> in top quartile journals	<b>60%</b>
<b>Total citation count</b>	<b>7,562</b>



<b>Total number of research projects with CAT 1-4 research income funding</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Cat 2-4 income</b>	<b>\$2.98M</b>
<b>Total Research income CAT 1-4</b>	<b>\$3.51M</b>



<b>HDR Enrolments</b> On track to meet and exceeded target for this KPI	<b>328</b>
<b>HDR Completions</b> Exceeded target for this KPI	<b>58</b>
<b>PhD Scopus authorships</b>	<b>47</b>



# Our researchers lead the way

## Associate Prof Laura Maran

Associate Prof Laura Maran (AISSC) was named as one of Australia's leading researchers in business, economics and management. Laura has been selected from the field of Economic History. The top 16 researchers are the ones with the highest number of citations from papers published in the last five years in the 20 top journals in their field.

## Associate Prof Sefa Awaworyi Churchill

Associate Prof Sefa Awaworyi Churchill (EFM) was named among Australia's top 40 researchers who are less than 10 years into their career. The top 40 researchers are selected from Australian academics across more than 250 fields and eight main disciplines. Sefa has been selected from the field of Social Sciences, Environmental Law and Policy.

## Professor Matt Warren

Professor Matt Warren has been voted AISA (Australian Information Security Association) Cyber Security Researcher of 2020. AISA is Australia's top information security industry professional body in Australia with a membership of over 6000 individuals and corporate sponsors.



# 2020 Vice-Chancellor's Awards and RMIT Awards

The RMIT Research Awards focus on research excellence and research impact. It is through these research contributions that RMIT continues to bridge the gap between research and impact, benefitting those beyond the academic community.

The research awards acknowledge the accomplishments of individual researchers, research teams, research leaders, supervisors and HDR candidates.

## Dr Sefa Awaworyi Churchill

### Vice Chancellor's Award for Research Excellence - Early Career Researcher

Associate Professor Sefa Awaworyi Churchill holds a PhD in Economics from Monash University. His interdisciplinary research focuses on development, health, and energy economics. He has made outstanding contributions to these fields with publications in some of the most prestigious general interest economics and field journals. His contribution as a leader in the field of his research is evidenced by the publication of over 90 books, book chapters and articles in top-ranking journal outlets, and presentations at various international conferences across the US, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa. His leadership in his field of research was recently noted in the Australian's Research Leaderboard, in which he was named among Australia's top 40 researchers who are less than ten years into their career, and the top 5 in the field of Social Sciences. He has experience working on consultancy projects for development and government agencies such as Plan International, the Indian Government and the APEC Business Advisory Council, among others. Associate Professor Awaworyi Churchill has also been the recipient of several prestigious academic research awards including an Endeavour Fellowship Award and numerous research excellence awards at RMIT University. He has a strong record for attracting external grants and serves as managing guest editor for two prestigious field journals (Energy Economics and Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization). He is also an editorial board member for the Sage Open Journal and the Journal of Economics, Race and Policy.

## Professor Ingo Karpen

### RMIT Award for Research Impact – Design

Professor Ingo Karpen is a leading international expert in strategic design and service design. Researching and practicing these purposeful approaches to innovation, Ingo continuously engages with the community to initiate, lead, and facilitate transformation of ecosystems to better serve people. In recent years Ingo has been leading multiple projects in business and legal sectors to solve complex legacy problems and reimagine user experiences through a design-led approach. Working with various clients, for example, across legal institutions and bringing together a wide range of interdisciplinary stakeholders, Ingo has been responsible for co-designing socio-cultural, architectural, procedural, technological and strategic changes that directly benefit the wider community and importantly some of the most vulnerable members of society.

## Associate Professor Shelley Marshall

### Vice-Chancellor's Award for Research Impact - Early Career Researcher

Associate Professor Shelley Marshall was awarded the Research Impact Award for her work across multiple domains. Shelley is the Director of the Business and Human Rights Centre, formed in 2020. Her primary research areas are business and human rights and the labour standards of precarious workers. The award recognises the achievements of Shelley's work with the International Labour Organisation over two years to co-create tools for enforcement of labour protections for home-based workers in Thailand. As a result of her work, labour inspectors around Thailand now use the tools Shelley co-designed with those stakeholders. It also recognises her work co-founding the Australian Corporate Accountability Network, a network of academics and NGOs working in corporate accountability in Australia and supporting climate change litigation and claims.

# 2020 Vice-Chancellor's Awards and RMIT Awards

## Dr Konrad Peszynski

### RMIT Award for Excellence – Innovative Research Supervision

Dr Konrad Peszynski is a passionate and innovative supervisor that has an outstanding track record both in supervision and graduate research leadership. He has supervised 20 HDR Candidates to date and has jointly published 25 papers in high ranking journals, conferences and book chapters. As School HDR Coordinator between 2014 and 2018, Dr Peszynski was an active member of the University Graduate Research Committee (GRC) that oversaw the development and implementation of a range of important HDR policies. At the School level, Dr Peszynski introduced new procedures such as the 'expression of interest website', supervision transparency and supervision/candidate quality control, as well as other initiatives. Since implementing these initiatives, HDR candidate engagement and intellectual climate increased not only within the School but across the College of Business and Law, with some initiatives being adopted in other parts of RMIT University. Dr Peszynski was the recipient of the 2018 School of Business IT and Logistics Award for HDR Supervision and also won the 2018 College Award for Innovative Research Supervision (by School). Dr Peszynski has presented papers in the prestigious conference, Quality Postgraduate Research in 2018 and had two papers accepted for the same conference in 2020.

## Professor Babak Abbasi

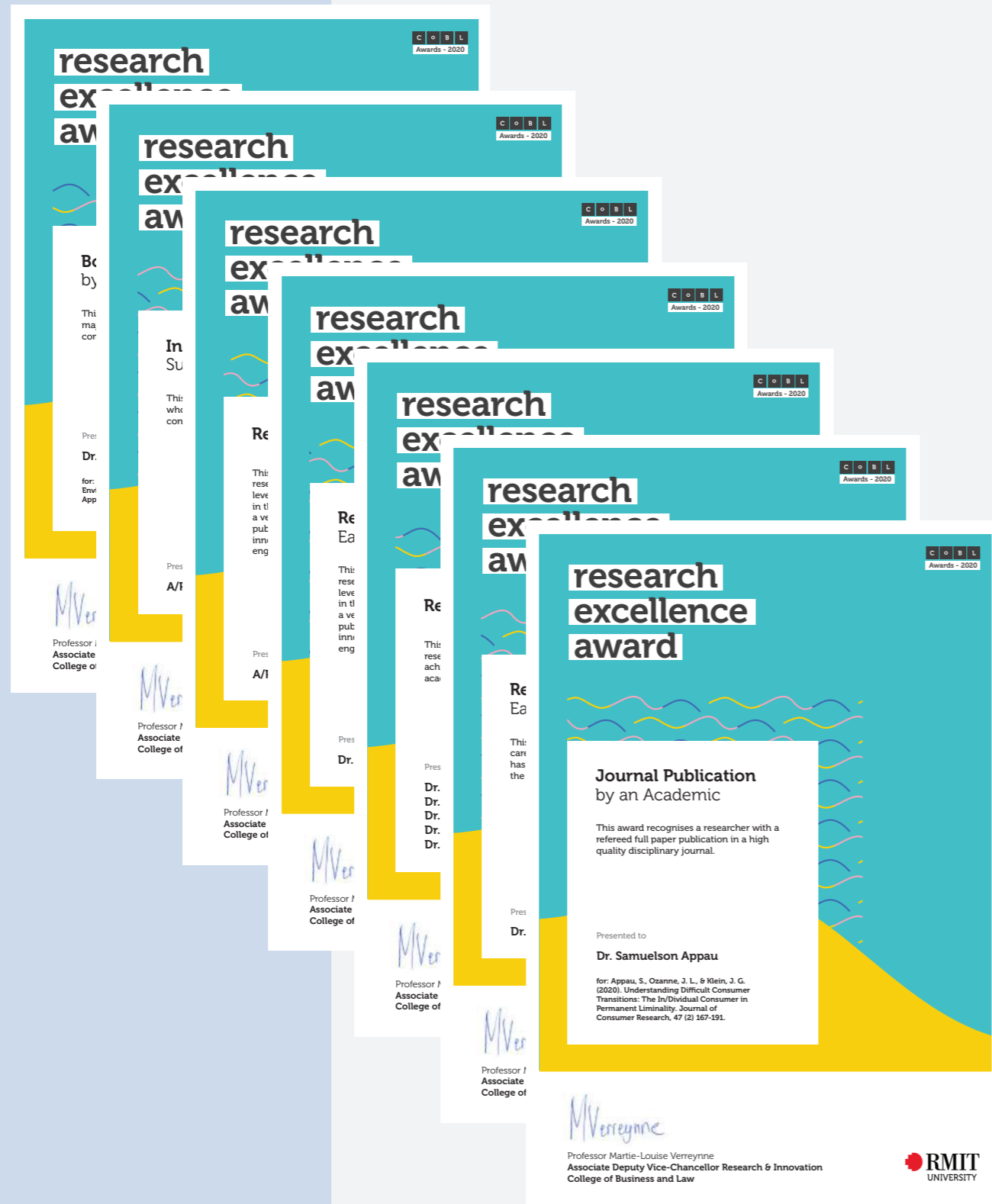
### RMIT Award for Excellence – Industry Engagement in Graduate Research

Professor Babak Abbasi has started research collaboration with Australian Red Cross Blood Service (ARCBS0) since 2010. This collaboration has resulted in several industry funded projects, joint publications, industry reports, and PhD supported/funded projects. I had two PhD students (Dr Nigel Clay and Dr Maryam Dehghani) who have completed their PhD in the area of 'Blood Supply Chain'. These students worked closely with the industry partner and presented their work at industry and academic events. Their research has been also recognised at national and international levels by winning the 'Best PhD Project Award' at International Conference on Operations Research and Enterprise Systems (ICORES) held in Lisbon and the 'Best Paper Award' at International Congress on Modelling and Simulation (MODSIM/ASOR) held in Hobart. Professor Babak Abbasi have co-authored five journal articles (1 A\*, 3 A and 1 B as per ABDC list) with them.

## Professor Bronwyn Naylor

### RMIT Award for Research Impact – Enterprise

Professor Bronwyn Naylor works in the fields of criminal law, criminal justice and human rights. Her research and engagement address two important challenges: the limited rights protections and increased risk of abuses in prisons and other detention facilities; and barriers to employment for people with a criminal history. Professor Naylor's research highlights that a crucial form of rights protection for people in places of detention is robust independent oversight, and she has advocated for effective monitoring regimes, engaging particularly with Australia's recent ratification of the important UN Treaty OPCAT (the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture). She has also conducted extensive research and advocacy on a major hurdle for people who have had contact with the criminal justice system and wish to achieve rehabilitation. Their criminal history, even if old, minor or irrelevant, can prevent them from contributing to society through employment. Her research and engagement in this area has focussed on achieving the legal reforms and attitudinal and practice changes required to solve this problem. Her work has been instrumental in achieving policy and legislative change, working in collaboration with government and statutory agencies, Aboriginal and other community organisations, NGOs, and individuals with experience of the criminal justice system.



# 2020 College of Business and Law Research Excellence Awards

Congratulations to the recipients of the annual CoBL Research Excellence Awards - we recognise and celebrate research excellence across all five College Schools (including Vietnam).

**A/Prof Joona Keranen**

**CoBL Award for Research Excellence**

This award recognises an individual researcher who has achieved the highest level of excellence in their research activity in the preceding year. This is evidenced by a very high quality track record in research publications and research income, innovative practice, and external engagement.

**Dr. Shahrooz Shahparvari**

**CoBL Award for Research Excellence - Early Career Researcher**

This award recognises an early career researcher who has achieved the highest level of excellence in their research activity in the preceding year. This is evidenced by a very high quality track record in research publications and research income, innovative practice, and external engagement.



# 2020 College of Business and Law Research Excellence Awards



**Dr. Thai Nguyen,  
Dr. Trung Nguyen,  
Dr. Binh Nguyen,  
Dr. Tra Pham,  
Dr. Burkhard Schrage**

## **CoBL Award for Research Impact**

This award recognises an outstanding researcher or team whose research has achieved considerable impact outside the academic community.

**Dr. Samuelson Appau**

## **CoBL Award for Research Excellence - Journal Publication by an Academic**

This award recognises a researcher with a refereed full paper publication in a high quality disciplinary journal.

*for:*  
*Appau, S., Ozanne, J. L., & Klein, J. G. (2020). Understanding Difficult Consumer Transitions: The In/Dividual Consumer in Permanent Liminality. Journal of Consumer Research, 47 (2) 167-191.*

**Dr. Leanne Morrison**

## **CoBL Award for Research Excellence - Book by an Academic**

This award recognises a researcher with a major work of scholarship published by a commercial publisher.

*for:*  
*Morrison, L. (2019). Corporate Environmental Reporting: The Western Approach to Nature. Routledge, New York.*

**A/Prof. Shelley Marshall**

## **CoBL Award for Innovative Research Supervision**

This award recognises an HDR supervisor who has made a distinctive or innovative contribution to research training practice.

**Dr. Louise Byrne**

## **CoBL Award for Research Impact - Early Career Researcher**

This award recognises an outstanding early career researcher or team whose research has achieved considerable impact outside the academic community.

# COBL Grant Successes

## Professor Peter Fairbrother and Professor Cathy Brigden

Professor Peter Fairbrother and Professor Cathy Brigden were awarded an ARC Discovery grant for their research project 'Regions undergoing transition: the roles of unions and their peak bodies', which aims to investigate how unions and their peak bodies can act in beneficial ways to promote regional socio-economic development. The grant will commence in 2021 and is worth \$492,609 over three years.

Their research project 'Regions undergoing transition: the roles of unions and their peak bodies', aims to investigate how unions and their peak bodies can act in beneficial ways to promote regional socio-economic development. This project expects to generate knowledge of the processes of regional renewal, including the ways unions and their peak bodies may be involved. Expected outcomes include theory development and explanations of these processes of regional engagement to enhance regional transition. It will also provide a comprehensive refinement of research methodologies for labour and regional studies. This should provide significant benefits enabling the development of engaged and inclusive transition policies at a regional level. It will benefit workers, their households and communities.

Peter and Cathy's research grant was just one of two awarded in Australia in the 1503 discipline of Business & Management.

## Professor Heath McDonald

Professor Heath McDonald (Economics, Finance and Marketing) has been awarded an ARC Linkage project with colleagues Ian O'Boyle (Uni S.A.), Adam Karg (Swinburne) & Rochelle Eames (Victoria University).

The project is titled 'Exploring Wellbeing Outcomes in the Aquatic and Recreation Industry' and the amount awarded was \$389,261 (ARC). Partner contributions of \$213,250, bring the total funding to in excess of \$600,000 over three years. The project, to be managed by the University of South Australia, will investigate the impact on the use of public aquatic and recreation centres in Australia on individual wellbeing. Through the use of mixed methods across multiple locations, the project expects to generate new knowledge on the effect on users of different management and service models for the provision of aquatic and recreational infrastructure. Expected outcomes include a quantifiable measure of social and emotional wellbeing that can be utilised by centre management and government. This will help assessment of best practice for maximising community wellbeing, and can guide investment decisions by state and local government.

## Professor Jason Potts, Professor Sinclair Davidson, Dr Chris Berg

Congratulations to Chief Investigators Professor Jason Potts, Professor Sinclair Davidson and Dr Chris Berg who have been awarded \$423,540 for their project entitled 'Public Finance and Cryptocurrencies'.

This project aims to analyse the impact of cryptocurrency technology on taxation and the provision of public goods in Australia. The project will identify the historical relationship between money technologies and public finance, examine the impact of cryptocurrencies in relation to the modern state, and investigate the potential of utilising cryptocurrencies in the provision of public goods. The outcomes of the research will expand theoretical and practical understanding of public finance in a world of cryptocurrencies. The project findings will provide guidance to Australian and international policymakers to prepare for potential disruptions to taxation and public goods provision.

## Professor Ingo Karpen

Professor Ingo Karpen has been awarded an ARC Discovery grant for a research project with colleagues at the University of Adelaide. The project is titled 'Collective Engagement towards Social Purpose' and aims to develop knowledge on how to engender collective engagement for a social purpose, such that the collective actions of the group facilitate well-being of the broader community. The awarded grant is worth \$295,000.

The project expects to generate new knowledge of how to drive the emergence of engagement from an individual to a collective level and understand the benefits that can be gained by focusing this engagement on social purpose. Expected outcomes include measurement tools, an intervention framework for facilitating collective engagement, and mechanisms for leveraging this engagement for community well-being. This should provide significant benefits within organisations, by enhancing their social impact and facilitating economic growth and job creation.

This is a huge success for the College of Business and Law, noting that overall only two applications were successful in each of the marketing (1505) and management (1505) FoR codes.

## Professor Anne-Laure Mention

RMIT is set to lead EINST4INE (European Training Network for Industry Digital Transformation across Innovation Ecosystems) project that has been selected for funding under the highly competitive Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITN) scheme. It will produce a new generation of high performing early stage researchers in innovation and technology management.

The consortium, consisting of six European academic partners and 15 industry partners and coordinated by RMIT Europe, has been awarded a total value of €4M (approx. \$6.6M).

EINST4INE, which is led by Professor Anne-Laure Mention, belongs to a portfolio of projects focusing on open innovation, which also includes the RISE project OpenInnoTrain. Dr. Justyna Dabrowska, RMIT Vice-Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Fellow, is co-Chief Investigator of EINST4INE and Boaz Kogon, Innovation & Research Associate at RMIT Europe, is the Project Coordinator.

The EINST4INE consortium comprises RMIT Europe (Spain), Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology (Finland), Aarhus University (Denmark), University of Cambridge (UK), Universität Stuttgart (Germany), Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (Italy) and Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli (Italy), as well as 15 industry organisations and two academic partnering organisations: RMIT University (Australia) and the Garwood Center for Corporate Innovation, Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley (USA).

The project aims to develop new concepts, approaches and methods in the area of digital transformation and brings together a unique group of world-leading experts in the areas of Open Innovation, Industry 4.0, digital transformation and innovation ecosystems.

# 2020 Grants & Contracts

The following is an overview of how the College of Business and Law has performed in the research grants and contracts space in 2020.



<b>Total number of research projects with CAT 1-4 research income funding</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Cat 2-4 income</b>	<b>\$2.98M</b>
<b>Total Research income CAT 1-4</b> Excludes funds from externally led research projects.	<b>\$3.51M</b>

<b>Total ARC grant applications</b> Exceeded target for this KPI	<b>25</b>
<b>ARC Discovery Early Career DE21 applications</b>	<b>2 - CoBL Led</b>
<b>ARC Discovery Early Career DE22 applications</b>	<b>6 - CoBL Led</b>
<b>ARC Discovery Projects DP21 applications</b>	<b>3 - CoBL Led</b> <b>3 - External Led</b>
<b>ARC Special Research Initiatives SRI20 applications</b>	<b>2 - CoBL Led</b> <b>3 - External Led</b>
<b>ARC Linkage Projects LP20</b>	<b>1 - External Led</b>
<b>Other (Non-NCGS) Grant Applications</b>	<b>56</b>



## COBL Media Stars

Congratulations to Professor Matt Warren, Director of the Cyber Security Research and Innovation Centre, for being named RMIT University's Media Star for 2020. This is an outstanding achievement, having only been with RMIT for approximately one year.

Matt is a sought-after commentator in the field has been a regular in local and international media in outlets including SBS, The Age, ABC Radio, NT News, 4BC Radio, Fox FM, The Epoch Times and IT News.

From responding to the Australian Government's cyber security funding, to the rise of online scams and the need for cyber-resilience during lockdown, and the threat of cyber-attacks and disinformation on the 2020 US election outcome, Warren has helped journalists and audiences alike make sense of the cyber security issues facing us all.

This years' other stars range in experience from those entirely new to the media landscape and have all shown a willingness to share their knowledge beyond academia and help contribute to an informed and engaged public on the issues that matter.

Congratulations to Dr Warren Staples for being recognised as a College Media Star, and to Professor Anthony Forsyth for being inducted into the Media 'Hall of Fame'!

Dr Leonora Risse, Dr Meg Elkins, Dr Torgier Aleti and Dr Bernardo Figueiredo were also recognised as being CoBL 'Top Performers'!



## The year in short from RMIT Research and Innovation

The R&I Portfolio implemented a new enterprise-wide service structure in October 2019, and 2020 brought further changes to it as a response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. A refined new structure has now been implemented. This structure, based on working collaboratively across the R&I Portfolio and the three Colleges, drives a coordinated, client-centric service provision across RMIT to facilitate excellent research and innovative outcomes.

The Portfolio supports researchers and HDR candidates with research partnerships, grants and research contracts, funding opportunities, capability development, research training, ethics and integrity, intellectual property, commercialisation, and internships. The full list of services is outlined in the online R&I Service Directory. This site lists the services and key contacts, and provides links to information on the Researcher Portal, RMIT website and other online sources.

As we enter the transitional year of 2021, we will continue co-creating new ways of working across the Portfolio and the Colleges and enabling greater visibility and growing recognition of CoBL research excellence at the University level and beyond.

Tania Tambiah GAICD, Fellow of ARMS  
R&I Business Partner for the  
College of Business and Law

# Supporting research proposals

The R&I Portfolio's BUS supports applicants to optimise the quality and competitiveness of their applications through project development advice, application and career planning, grant development workshops, and advice and tools for researchers developing their budgets.

In doing so, the team provides feedback on application drafts, focusing on addressing the selection criteria, general readability, logical construction and flow of the proposal, and presenting track record information to maximise the chances of success. Once an application has developed, the team conducts a final review of eligibility and compliance with the relevant funding scheme rules, and organises School, College and institutional endorsements.

This year (to 13 November), the team has supported the submission of over 240 competitive grant applications and delivered over 70 grant development workshops, ranging from ARC scheme-specific programs, rejoinders, budget workshops, Research Professional demonstrations, grant opportunities for ECRs, among many others. We encourage researchers to contact the team at [busgrants@rmit.edu.au](mailto:busgrants@rmit.edu.au) to discuss opportunities well in advance of the external deadline and consider RMIT's process for applying for RMIT-led and externally-led grants and suite of tools associated with application development.

As we approach the end of 2020, we thank all researchers and research leaders for their collegial and collaborative approach to pursuing research income and look forward to the College's continued success in 2021. We'd also like to acknowledge the wonderful contribution Dr Aysun Alpyurek has made to the College over the last six years, as she has transitioned to the STEMM College Research Proposals team.



## BUS and DSC Research Proposals Team

- Dr John Bonacci (Manager, Research Proposals)
- Ms Emma Hegarty (Senior Coordinator, Research Proposals)
- Dr Alexander Lugg (Senior Coordinator, Research Proposals)
- Ms Danielle Hickey (Coordinator, Research Proposals)
- Dr Carolyn Dancevic (Officer, Research Proposals)

**70**  
grant  
development  
workshops

**240**  
competitive  
grant  
applications

# Research Partnerships and Research Contracts



*...demonstrate that **powerful teams** can be built not just across Schools, but also across **Colleges**.*



Statistics shown overleaf show the College continued to benefit in 2020 from industry collaboration whether for competitive or contract research.

Yet these high-level figures can only ever tell a part of the story. Looking closer, we see researchers continue to put into effect a wide range collaborative styles and tactical plays to benefit from research partnerships.

Through their successful tender response to the Australian Tax Office won in coordination with the DSC School for Property Construction and Project Management, Ashton De Silva (EFM) and Venkat Venkat Narayanan (AISSC) demonstrate that powerful teams can be built not just across Schools, but also across Colleges.

Kevin Argus, Joonas Keranen and Natalya Turkina (all GSBL) demonstrate that researchers can have convening power by bringing together partners from government, small and large business, and non-profit advocacy enterprises to further their work on shared value.

Bernardo Figueiredo, Torgeir Aleti, Diane Martin, and Mike Reid (all EFM) demonstrate how thought-leadership and its associated coverage in media can be leveraged to support the recruitment of partners.

And in their projects with Regional Australia, Peter Fairbrother, Cathy Brigden (Mgmt) and Ashton De Silva (EFM), demonstrate how nurturing a solid relationship can lead to multiple and ongoing opportunities.

The economic disruption of COVID-19 is the likely cause of a dip in the number of industry-funded projects but as the economy bounces back and industry and government reset their post-pandemic priorities, we can expect more great things from the College.

*Urs Meier, Manager, Research Partnerships  
Louise Bester, Manager, Research Contracts*



# Thought Leadership and Knowledge Exchange Update

## CoBL Thought Leadership Webinars

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### Series One – Business Resilience in Challenging Times





📄 Total invitations sent: 1400
👥 Average percentage industry registrations: 53%  
👥 Total registrations: 237
📺 Total views of online recordings: >100  
👥 Total attendees: 155

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### Series Two – Business Transformation in Challenging Times





📄 Total invitations sent: 3138
👥 Average percentage industry registrations: 63%  
👥 Total registrations: 354
📺 Total views of online recordings: >500  
👥 Total attendees: 182

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### Highlights

- ✓ College's first completely online webinar series aimed at industry
- ✓ Proven event collaboration with Vietnam and Barcelona
- ✓ Proven series & event template to replicate
- ✓ Proven deep knowledge capital that can be shared externally
- ✓ Positive post event survey feedback
- ✓ Proven proof of concept
- ✓ Capture of new industry contacts – pipeline of enquiry

During the course of 2020, the College of Business and Law has been able to offer expert opinion, media commentary and thought leadership on the various facets of how the pandemic has affected industry, government and society. Despite the difficulties of 2020, it has been fantastic to see the College offer this expertise freely, at a time when people are yearning to understand this new world we now live in.

During 2020 we have continually built upon the principle belief, that through knowledge exchange and thought leadership, we have a means to reach and engage industry, government and society. There have been countless examples of these activities throughout the year, such as the webinar series from CPOW: COVID-19: Reshaping the Regulation of Work and the Workplace, and the Consumer Wellbeing and Resilience webinar series from the Consumer Wellbeing Research Group.

We have heard excellent podcasts coming from the School of Management and the Blockchain Innovation Hub, and our academics have been cited in the media at rates the College has not seen before. All of our academics have also been writing prolifically, publishing thought leadership in industry magazines and blogs, and we have had a high number of articles published in The Conversation.

At the College level, the CoBL thought Leadership blog, Acumen, was launched in June this year and has quickly gone from strength to strength in a relatively short amount of time. The blog is a digital platform where our College can showcase our knowledge capital and research capability.

Publishing thought leadership content on topical issues has shown to improve and enhance the profile of our academics and our College in general, and already we are seeing the 'sub-brand' of Acumen building, and the reputational benefits are being realised.

Another pillar of our thought leadership and knowledge exchange is our webinar offerings. In May/June we ran a series of three webinars on topics related to business resilience during COVID-19, and in Sept/Oct we ran another three-part series incorporating our Vietnam and Barcelona campuses on the topic of business transformation during COVID-19. The objective for these webinars has been to connect with a broad industry audience, to let them know that we have expertise and offerings that can help them during these difficult times, and that we are open for business. Registrations and attendance numbers for these events were strong throughout the year.

Thought leadership and knowledge exchange are important parts of the College's Research and Innovation and Business to Business strategies, consequently, the College places huge importance on these activities. It has been fantastic to see how prolific our academics have been in these areas this year. As we look forward to 2021, it will be exciting to further build upon these successes in the new year.

*Ryan Wendt, Knowledge Exchange Manager  
Strategy and Innovation*

United Nations Association of Australia

RMIT UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH REPORT

# SDG MEASUREMENT AND DISCLOSURE 2.0

A study of ASX150 companies

AUGUST 2020



# Accounting, Information Systems and Supply Chain

## Sustainable Development Goals: Transforming Business Practices

Sustainability is a core research philosophy within the School of AISSC. Our research focuses on sustainable business practices including environmental accounting, supply chain integrity, and the application of business analytics for sustainable development.

An AISSC research team, comprising of Prof. Subramaniam, Drs. Akbar, Ji and Situ, and Dr. Mori Jnr. from the RMIT Sustainability Unit., has shone light on how the top 150 publically-listed Australian businesses are approaching the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 17 SDGs, agreed to in 2015 by 193 UN member states, collectively serve as a roadmap for addressing some of the world's most pressing problems including poverty, inequality, climate action, health, and more.

The research team's programme of study involves a series of three projects on SDG measurement and reporting, funded by the Global Compact Network of Australia, the UNAA, and CPA Australia, respectively. Research findings reveal Australian businesses are most concerned about SDG8 – Decent work and economic growth, SDG13 – Climate action, SDG5 – Gender equality, and SDG10 – Reduced inequalities. Regulatory developments such as the Modern Slavery

Act and the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure are also found to impact SDG disclosure trend.

However, Australian businesses need to make considerable improvements on their SDG measurement and reporting practices, including increasing transparency on how they prioritise and align SDGs with their business goals and strategies, and how well they perform on set targets. The challenges they face include translating global goals to corporate level; investments in more integrated information systems, and identifying and transforming risks related to sustainable development to opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have devastating effects on economies and communities around the world. Finding sustainable development solutions is urgent. The SDG research programme within AISSC is poised to deliver innovative solutions for sustainable development, drawing on the governance, technology and business analytics expertise of its researchers and the broader stakeholder network.



# Economics, Finance and Marketing

## The new stars in the EFM Galaxy

The School of Economics, Finance and Marketing is internationally recognised for research and innovation excellence in the domain of consumer and societal wellbeing. For some years this has been largely driven by our Marketing and Economics groups. They continue to be pivotal, but it is a group of young Finance academics, supported by senior staff, who are emerging to complete the school as world renowned in the domain of wellbeing.

In 2020, this discipline has produced 14 A\* papers which include one Top 3 Finance Journal and eight Top 5 Finance Journals. Seven of these 14 A\* have been produced by our early career academics. Further, Gaoping Zheng, Angel Zhong, Xiaolu Hu, Anh Le, Daisy Chou, Jonathan Batten, My Nguyen, Banita Bissoondoyal-Bheenick and Thao Tran have consistently produced high quality research outputs; making particular note of Angel Zhong with 6 and Jonathan Batten with 5 quality publications for the year.

Importantly, many of these are in the domain of wellbeing including; climate and sustainable investments, environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria and corporate financial performance and gender gaps in superannuation. What's more, staff have consistently leveraged their publications via media with over 35 appearances in digital, print, radio and television. For instance, Angel Zhong's media appearances include regular interviews on Ausbiz, radio interviews on ABC Perth about Monday Blues, coverage in The Age about Afterpay and Zip Co. and interviews in The New Daily and Australian Financial Review about investing.

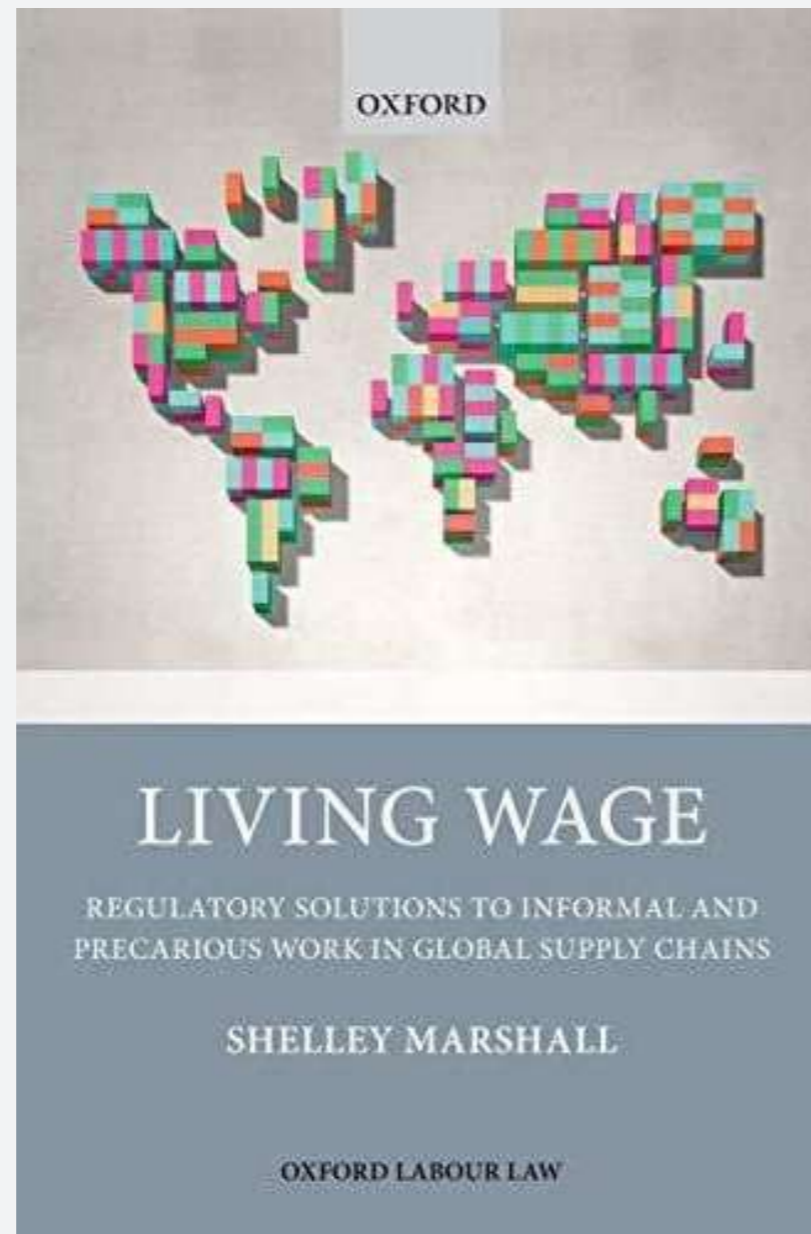


Added to this is the impact that Banita Bissoondoyal-Bheenick has in the superannuation industry on early release of gender gaps; Roslyn Russell has in the domain of financial literacy for disadvantaged groups working with organisations like Ecstra and the ANZ; and Jonathan Batten has through keynotes around the world on sustainability and a better society, as well as editorial duties in some of the top journals in the discipline.

Taken together, what we are seeing is a very strong group of researchers and innovators in the domain of sustainable finance and innovation in financial markets. With the exceptional work already being done in Consumer Wellbeing and Culture, International Development, and Societal Economics (including our BBL and Placemakers), the Finance Discipline, and particularly its cohort of young stars, has helped EFM to truly realise a multidisciplinary and binding narrative of Consumer and Societal Wellbeing.



# Graduate School of Business and Law



## Collaborative leadership leads to high level impact for the Graduate School of Business and Law

Research-based collaborative leadership is how Associate Professor Shelley Marshall has brought about change. Faced with seemingly intractable barriers, Shelley led stakeholders in the Thai Ministry of Labour on a two-year action-research project. It built consensus about the need to enforce laws for Thailand's most vulnerable workers.

Today, labour inspectors around Thailand are assisting homeworkers using the tools Shelley co-designed with those stakeholders. This leadership was based on many years of research on vulnerable workers in global supply chains, culminating in two books, *Homeworking Women* and *Living Wage*, both published in 2019. Shelley won the 2019 College of Business and Law book prize for the latter.

“Shelley’s expert advice has empowered the Thai Ministry of Labour to identify strategies to enforce the law across several target groups in Thailand,” Sandra Yu, Local Strategies for Decent Work Specialist at the International Labour Organisation, testified.

“Shelley not only provided technical assistance about how to enforce the laws but ensured that there was broad consensus amongst personnel within the Department of Labour Protection and Homenet by rolling out an action research process and involving

stakeholders in the co-design of enforcement methods.

“These tools include educational videos, model contracts and ‘how to’ guides such as a ‘Guide for Good Employment Practices in the Hiring of Homeworkers’ and a ‘Guide for Homeworkers about their Legal Rights and Obligations’.”

Shelley has also been the driver behind the creation of a world-first network of academics and human rights organisations: the Australian Corporate Accountability Network. It empowers NGOs with much needed evidence and amplifies scholarly research. With over 100 members, ACAN is attaining a policy influence that would not have been possible without this alliance.

In 2020, Shelley’s pathway from research to impact was recognised through a 2020 Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award for the project ‘Reducing modern slavery with new digital and enforcement technologies’ and the 2020 Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Research Impact - Early Career Researcher. Shelley brings this collaborative spirit to RMIT’s new Business and Human Rights Centre at its Director.



# School of Management

## National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines'

In 2019, the National Mental Health Commission engaged Dr Louise Byrne and her research team including Dr Lena Wang at RMIT University to assist with engagement processes and writing of the National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines (the Guidelines).

The guidelines have been identified as a key national reform initiative, are an action from the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan and will be the first national policy document for this emerging workforce.

This is a much-anticipated document, particularly because of recent emphasis on the need for effective Lived Experience workforce development in the Productivity Commission's Final Report and the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System Interim Report.

The guidelines provide a roadmap for organisational and sector leaders across diverse settings to establish governance, policies, and practices that support sustainable and effective growth of the lived experience workforce. The guidelines include high-level policy considerations, practical actions and additional resources, with specific sections and information for funders/policymakers, organisations/employers, and lived experience leaders/workers across all sectors.

Since taking on this project, Louise has been invited to various working and advisory groups for other key national workforce initiatives, including the National Mental Health Commission's

National Mental Health Workforce Strategy Taskforce. Louise will also present at the upcoming Symposium to inform the establishment of a Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing, a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System Interim Report.

The guidelines is the latest project in a program of research that has spanned 11 years. Last year Louise, with Lena and other team members, led the Queensland Lived Experience Workforce Development Framework, which has received praise from the highest levels of the sector as a key initiative, and has been widely utilised and referred to within Queensland, nationally and internationally.

Lived experience roles are increasingly being developed within the wider workforce, across industries including mining, construction and energy. Louise and Lena's ongoing research explores the broader potential for lived experience roles in creating safer, more accepting work culture for people with mental health challenges within diverse work settings.

Dr Byrne and her team submitted the final draft of the guidelines in October 2020. They will be approved at every level of government including COAG before release in 2021.



### Participants

**RMIT Fulltime Employees**  
*Dr Louise Byrne, Dr Lena Wang*

**Research Staff**  
*Helena Roennfeldt,  
Dr Melissa Chapman, Leilani Darwin,  
Margaret Saunders, Calista Castles,  
Cecilia Runneboom, Dr Leanne Craze*

# School of Business and Management, RUVN

The School of Business and Management in Vietnam has nine active and/or recently completed research projects with overall funding of AUD \$560,000 categorized into three broad areas:



## Environment and Sustainability Management Projects

Associate Professor Bob McClelland is CI for the five-year Urban GreenUP Horizon 2020 project for SoBM, Vietnam, coordinated from Cartif, Spain (2017-2022). This project is concerned with developing a new Strategy for re-naturing cities through Nature-Based Solution (NBS) projects. He is also CI for the four-year Erasmus Plus project WANASEA for SoBM, Vietnam, coordinated from Nantes University, France (2017-2021). WANASEA is a joint project between European, Thai, Vietnamese and Cambodian institutions. It aims to support Capacity Building in Higher Education (Water and Natural Resource Management), promote a better academic integration and international cooperation and improve the quality of higher education. This is to enhance its relevance for society in the area of Water and related Natural Resources Management (WNRM).

Nhan Nguyen is CI for the Air Aware Project with a grant from the US Consulate. Nhan leads a multi-organization team to triple the amount of Air Quality monitors in HCMC. The project expands the number of Air Visual Air Quality Monitors covering HCMC from 5 to 18. Project partners include the US Consulate, UNICEF, Saigon Innovation Hub and 13 primary/elementary schools or Children's NGOs. Also, Nhan is CI with a grant from the Plastics Solutions Fund, started in 2019, to conduct research in three coastal communities: Phu Yen, Nam Dinh and Phu Quoc. This is in collaboration with three external partners (MCD, GreenHub and WWF). It aims to address issues of environmental plastic pollution in those communities.

## Vietnamese Government Projects

A team consisting of Dr. Tra Pham and Dr. Thai Nguyen are CIs for a grant from the Vietnamese Ministry of Science & Technology National Foundation for Science & Technology (NAFOSTED). This award was given to a foreign institution (RMIT Vietnam for the first time. The three-year project (2017-2020), aims to provide policy recommendations for promoting financial inclusion and innovation among small firms in Vietnam. This research addresses the agenda promoted by the Vietnamese government. Publications have resulted and there are further outputs under revision to Q1-ranked journals.

A team consisting of Professor Mathews Nkhoma (as CI), Associate Professor Bob McClelland and Dr. Hiep Pham have a two-year grant (2019-2021) from the Vietnamese Department of Science and Technology (DOST) aimed at improving the negotiation skills among nascent entrepreneurs in Vietnam through development of a digital application (App) to collate metrics for nascent entrepreneurs and have it populated with targeted instructional information for end-users.

## Corporate Business and Industry Projects

A team consisting of Dr. Thai Nguyen, Dr. Trung Nguyen, Dr. Binh Nguyen, Dr. Tra Pham and Dr. Burkhard Schrage undertook a project commissioned by the VinaCapital Investment Management firm, on Accelerating the SOE Privatization Process in Vietnam.

The report's key findings and recommendations were presented by the three research members to the Prime Minister's Private Sector Development Committee (PSDC) at Hanoi, Vietnam in June 2018. Since the briefing, the Central Government in Vietnam has moved ahead to address several of the team's recommendations. Dr. Trung Nguyen was CI for two research projects commissioned by KPMG (2018-2020).

Assessing the Readiness of Enterprises in Vietnam for Digital transformation, with Professor Mathews Nkhoma, the project aimed to assess the digital transformation maturity of enterprises operating in Vietnam and enable business leaders to understand where they are in their digital journey, where they have to go, and which best practices will get them there. Also, Dr. Trung led a second KPMG project on Assessing Corporate Citizenship in Vietnam which aimed to assess key priorities, objectives and initiatives for CSR/CC among mid-sized and large enterprises in Vietnam, to benchmark Vietnam enterprise initiatives and recommend best practice models in their governance.



# COBL Research Structures

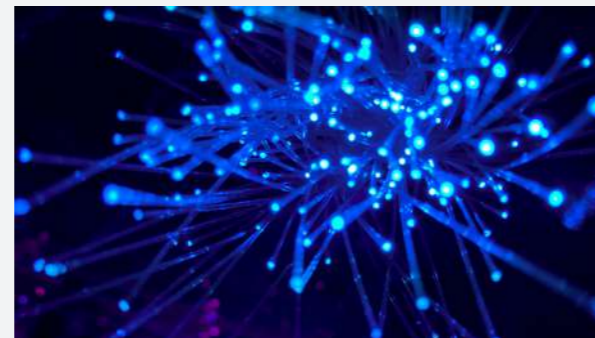
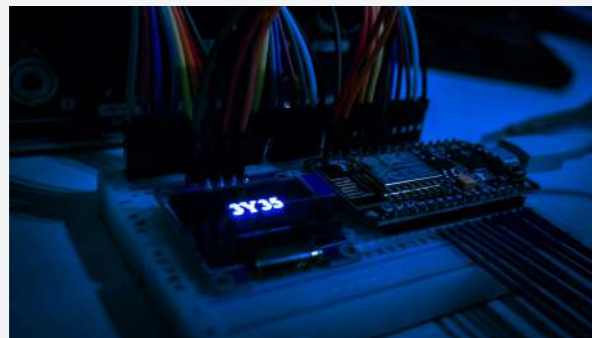
Research in the College of Business and Law covers a broad range of business discipline areas, reflecting the broad activities of our Schools. Our cohesive and supportive environment provides support to our nationally and internationally established researchers and nurtures our emerging early career researchers and postgraduate candidates.

As part of this cohesive and supportive environment, the College has a number of research structures, established to concentrate capability and join-up interdisciplinary research expertise with the needs of industry.

As we move forward into 2021 these research structures will be lynchpins of both the College R&I and B2B strategies. They are the formal structures that the majority of our research outputs flow from, and they are the agile groups that many of our new innovative external offerings will originate and be delivered.

The following are a collection of stories of some of the best research coming from CoBLs research structures.

# Blockchain Innovation Hub



## Research-led Teaching for the Digital Economy

RMIT's Blockchain Innovation Hub (BIH) is the world's first research centre devoted to the social science of blockchain. The BIH is an interdisciplinary team of researchers in economics, political-economy, organisational theory, law, sociology, politics and communications. A pillar of BIH activity is translating first-mover engagement and research into teaching and education.

Blockchain has the potential to automate, and dis-intermediate, the institutions and services that underpin our lives. Blockchain is moving rapidly from being experimental technology to a foundational economic infrastructure, with applications across many sectors including banking and finance, trade, supply chain and logistics, government services, health, social welfare, the creative industries, to name a few.

With rapid expansion and job growth in blockchain there are identified skills shortages not only in the technical aspects of blockchain but, significantly, in the skills and knowledge needed to help enterprises of all types – commerce, finance, government, and social enterprises, to adapt to and take advantage of the opportunities in blockchain.

Themed around "Blockchain-Enabled Business", the RMIT Blockchain Innovation Hub, (together with schools across the College of Business and Law, RMIT Online, and RMIT Studios) has curated a suite of multi-disciplinary education programs ranging through micro-credentials, online short courses, through to full degree programs. Significantly, 2021 will see the commencement of these new degree programs:

- **The Bachelor of Business (Blockchain Enabled Business)**
- **Graduate Certificate in Blockchain Enabled Business (FTF/Blended and Online)**
- **Master of Blockchain Enabled Business degree.**

These world-first programs bring together the disciplines of economics, finance, business IT, law, accounting, and management strategy, with significant design and development input from leading industry figures and key research leaders in the field, and current best-practice learning design for flexible and blended learning modes. By integrating world-leading research, latest industry thought and contemporary teaching practice, these programs bring together all that is RMIT.

# Business and Human Rights Centre

## The Business and Human Rights Centre (BHRIGHT) addresses the human rights impact of business through research, education, innovation and collaboration

Concerns about breaches of human rights have been heightened during to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the global recession it affected. Established in 2020, BHRIGHT has played a critical role in engaging with business to help make them aware of and meet critical obligations in upholding the human rights of workers, customers and communities they impact, as well as throughout supply chains. BHRIGHT is led by Associate Professor Shelley Marshall (Director) and Professor Alan Lowe (Associate Director).

Recognition of BHRIGHT's research success in response to the pandemic: Gender and Resilience in Garment Global Supply Chains won an Interuniversity Research Centre on Globalization and Work grant.

Mass job losses have occurred across the global garment sector. This research collects crucial data on how garment workers in Myanmar are navigating COVID-19 and the recession, and what this tells us about supply chains' resilience. The researchers involved in this were Sara Todt, Dr Kate Grosser and Associate Professor Shelley Marshall, who worked in partnership with Care International Myanmar.

Reducing barriers to employment for Aboriginal people: rethinking the role of criminal record checks was recognised with a \$300,000 by the Victorian Legal Services Board, building on its 2018 Australian Philanthropy Award for successfully expunging criminal records for members of the Stolen Generation in Victoria. Professor Bronwyn Naylor was awarded the 2020 RMIT Award for Research Impact – Enterprise for this work.

With unemployment high, especially for young people, this important project assists employers in the private and public sectors to identify existing good practice in managing risk and supporting opportunities for employment, and to communicate these practices to jobseekers and employers in ways that can be readily adopted. Researchers on this project were Professor Bronwyn Naylor, Stan Winford, A/Prof Georgina Heydon and these researchers were partnered by Woor-Dungin, Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation, VACCHO (Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations).

Strengthening Corporate Respect for International Humanitarian Law built on its success in being granted RMIT Malcolm Moore Industry Research Award in 2018, disseminating a suite of easy to use resources to business, and was recognised with a 2020 Graduate School of Business and Law Impact Award.

With a rising risk of civil and inter-country conflict due to scarcity of resources during the pandemic, business needs to know how to develop enhanced measures to prevent and address abuses in conflict contexts.

The researcher was Dr Jonathan Kolieb and the partner was the Australian Red Cross. To read about more of our projects, go to [www.rmit.edu.au/research/centres-collaborations/business-and-human-rights-centre/research-projects](http://www.rmit.edu.au/research/centres-collaborations/business-and-human-rights-centre/research-projects).



# Centre for People, Organisation and Work (CPOW)



## Towards decent work for frontline aged care workers

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare not only the consequences of the long-term under-resourcing of Australia's aged care sector, but also the challenges presented by understaffing, as well as the low wages and increasingly precarious working conditions of frontline aged care workers.

CPOW's Work of Social Care research theme, led by Dr Fiona Macdonald, focuses on the organisation and regulation of care work. It is centrally concerned with the quality of paid care work and with addressing gender inequality in work.

Drawing on their respective expertise on working conditions in the feminised aged care and disability support sectors, Prof Sara Charlesworth and Dr Fiona Macdonald were asked to provide written submissions and oral evidence to Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety.

Sara's evidence addressed the links between 'decent work' and good quality care drawing on her cross-national ARC funded research. Further submissions from the Decent Work Good Care research team including Wendy Taylor, took up lessons from international evidence on the type of working conditions that support relationship-focused care quality, also the subject of a separate Australian study Sara and Wendy undertook with colleagues. Sara's evidence also took up the central role of the federal government in setting, monitoring and enforcing a floor of decent working conditions for aged care workers. In May 2020, the Decent Work Good Care research team were invited to provide a briefing on their research findings to the policy and legal team supporting the Royal Commission.

Fiona's evidence went to questions about the organisation of care work and employment through 'gig economy' digital platforms, drawing on her ARC-funded DECRA research project on paid care work in cash-for-care systems. Fiona participated in an employment experts' roundtable to inform the Royal Commission and was then invited to provide verbal evidence to a Royal Commission as part of an expert panel.

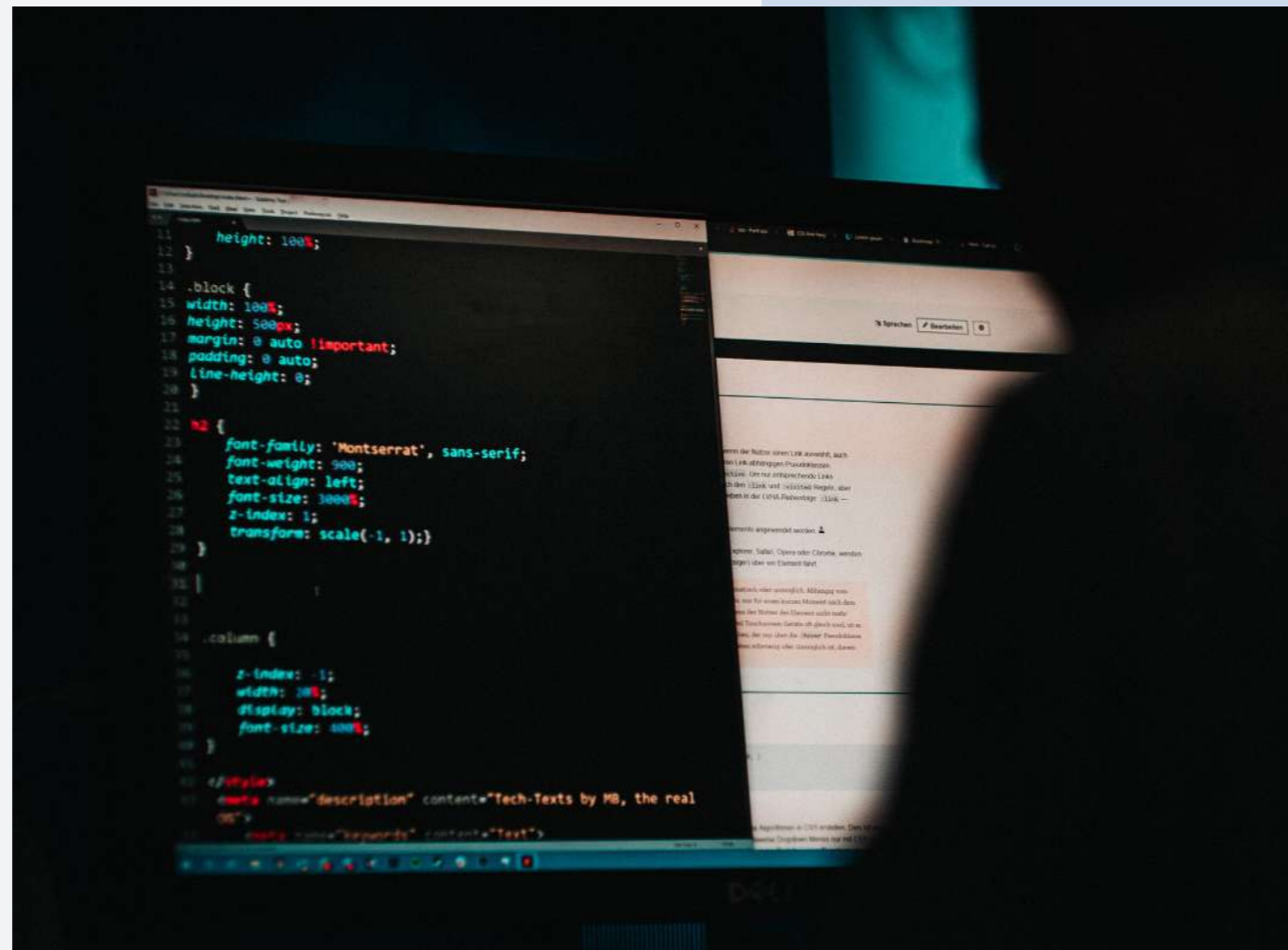
Both Sara's and Fiona's evidence has been taken up by Senior Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission in identifying the key role of the federal government in weighing options and in formulating proposals to address the poor working conditions of frontline workers. Final proposals go to a renovation of the pay and classification structure, the importance for care quality of ensuring gig workers are in an employment relationship, and the importance of secure working conditions to the relationships of workers with service users in providing good quality care.

## Participants

*Sara Charlesworth, Fiona Macdonald, Wendy Taylor*



# Centre for Cyber Security Research and Innovation



## 2020 The Creation of the RMIT University Centre for Cyber Security Research and Innovation

The RMIT University Centre for Cyber Security Research and Innovation (CCSRI) has been established in 2020 within the College of Business and Law. The focus of RMIT CCSRI is to develop a multi-disciplinary research centre relating to the organisational, human and technology aspects of Cyber Security. The Centre was launched on July 16, 2020 and works closely with the RMIT Blockchain Innovation Hub and the RMIT Cyber Ready Cloud Innovation Centre, powered by Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Key achievements of the Centre in 2020 include:

- The Centre is heading up a national effort to improve the cybersecurity posture of Australia's universities through a unique threat intelligence sharing and cyber risk network. The project is being developed with \$1.6 million in funding outlined in the Australian government's 2020 Cyber Security Strategy.
- CCSRI partnered with the Australian Information Security Association (AISA) to undertake a research project for the New South Wales (NSW) Government. The project will identify potential cyber security skills gaps and look at the impact of COVID-19 on the NSW Cyber market. [www.aisa.org.au/common/Uploaded%20files/AISA\\_NSW%20Report\\_2020\\_Final.pdf](http://www.aisa.org.au/common/Uploaded%20files/AISA_NSW%20Report_2020_Final.pdf)
- CCSRI worked on an AustCyber - The Australian Cyber Security Growth Network Ltd research project with Cynch Security and Deakin University. The project focused on Cyber Security of small businesses and how bootcamps could improve small businesses Cyber Security capabilities and awareness.
- CCSRI has presented numerous cyber security presentations at government and industry cyber conferences and events.

# Centre for International Development

## Centre for International Development makes headway against poverty

Increasing poverty and inequality are the most important global issues facing humankind. The World Bank reports that extreme poverty is expected to rise in 2020 for the first time in over 20 years, due to COVID-19, conflict and climate change. Moreover, Oxfam estimates that just 8 people own the same wealth as the poorest 3.6 billion people.

These global challenges are recognised by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015. The Goals provide a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

Universities play a pivotal role and in 2020, RMIT University was ranked 10th in the world by the Times Higher Education (THE) for its overall contribution to the SDGs. It was also ranked number one in the world for its efforts to reduce inequality within and among countries. Much of the research conducted by the Centre for International Development (CID) addresses the issues of poverty and inequality; helping RMIT cement its place as a global leader in this space.

The Centre conducts research on the measurement and incidence of multidimensional poverty. Researchers examine the leading causes of poverty, including environmental and economic shocks. This work also inspects how poverty and inequality are influenced by major policy shifts, including trade liberalisation, community-level health interventions, and macroeconomic policy.

The Centre studies factors that assist in reducing poverty, including the impacts of foreign aid, microfinance and financial inclusion, as well as targeted interventions like chil sponsorship programs and conditional cash transfers.

Centre staff are also active in research that focuses on the consequences of poverty, including child labour, poor physical and mental health, conflict and crime. Centre members also study household-level coping mechanisms used to deal with poverty, including selling assets and migration.

Much of this work has been sponsored by leading players in the international development arena, including Plan International, Oxfam, World Vision, various UN organisations, and governments. The CID's work catalyses change by helping decision-makers and influencers design policies and interventions.

CID work appears in leading journals, like the Journal of Development Studies, World Development, World Economy, Journal of International Economics, and Energy Economics. Our research not only helps RMIT's reputation as an applied institution with a mission centred on social change, but as a leading and serious research university.



URL: [www.rmit.edu.au/cid](http://www.rmit.edu.au/cid)  
LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/cidrmit/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cidrmit/)

# Global Trade and Logistics Research Group



## Digital Transformation and the Future of Work in the Transport and Logistics

Digital and technology transformation is certainly one of the most influential developments shaping business across all sectors of the economy. The Transport and Logistics sector is undergoing significant changes as a result and is likely to transform significantly in the coming decades in a number of ways, including the design of transport infrastructure and systems, the design and operations of its rolling stock as well as the nature of work and employment.

Ultimately there will be significant adjustments to operations efficiency and productivity and the nature workforce skills requirements. The Global Transport and Logistics (GTL) Research has identified this as an important topic which will shape its research over the next few years. This is already evident in the kinds of research projects undertaken by the group in 2020, which include:

- An examination of skill gaps and training needs in the transport and mobility sector, funded by iMOVE Australia CRC and to be completed over fifteen months to October 2021.
- A study to assess and internationally benchmark Austria's policies and strategies for workforce digital transformation. This project was funded by the Federal Department for employment and concluded in June 2020.

In addition, the group is developing a program of HDR studies on this important topic, including:

- A Masters by Research project by Ms Xuan Thanh-Vi Nguyen developed under the College of Business and Law scholarship scheme to examine the motivations and implications of technological change in the Vietnam ports industry, and;
- A Doctoral research project by Mr Sherry Thomas, funded by the iMOVE Australia CRC to examine the nature and extent of digitalisation and the implications for workforce skills development in the context of the Australian Transport and Mobility sector.

# E EDGE

2020 has been an exceptionally challenging year, which affected researchers profoundly. Yet our researchers have shown amazing resilience and perseverance over the course of the year, and the research achievements detailed in this publication are a testament to that resolve.

As we look forward to 2021, we have the foundations for reaching new heights in Research and Innovation.

The new Research and Innovation strategy emphasises future investment in big ideas; people and groups; relationships; impact and translation; research reputation; and interdisciplinary research.

Through this strategy we will continue to uplift the CoBL research culture and build on the achievements of 2020.

A big thank you to all our researchers and professional staff who support research. We hope you enjoy perusing this publication that celebrates CoBL's outstanding 2020 research achievements.

2020

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