enabling
impact

RMIT | Enabling Impact Platforms
UNIVERSITY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

RMIT University acknowledges the people of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung language groups of the eastern Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands we conduct the business of the University.

RMIT University respectfully acknowledges their Ancestors and Elders, past and present. RMIT also acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the lands and waters across Australia where we conduct our business.

Artwork 'Sentient' by Hollie Johnson. Hollie is a Gunaikurnai and Monero Ngarigo woman from Gippsland who graduated from RMIT with a BA in Photography in 2016.

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WELCOME

Welcome to *Enabling Impact*: a new annual report that provides a snapshot of the richness and diversity of research activities that our research community is undertaking. These activities are helping to deliver significant impact and value to our partners and the community. This report charts some of the ways in which RMIT's Enabling Impact Platforms help to enable that impact.

RMIT's Knowledge with Action Strategy, and our Decadal Aspirations for enabling research and innovation for impact, focus on our ambition to achieve impactful outcomes from research and innovation. RMIT's eight Enabling Impact Platforms (EIPs) are agile structures that are uniquely placed to bring together interdisciplinary research teams in partnership with industry, government, and community to deliver solutions that can address society's complex problems.

By collaborating with RMIT's Colleges, Schools, the R&I Portfolio, and external stakeholders, the EIPs bring together diverse perspectives and expertise to develop practical, sustainable and ethical solutions that address societal challenges and capture beneficial opportunities. This is what drives and defines the RMIT research ecosystem.

I am excited to see the EIPs continuing to support RMIT researchers to scale up their ability to conduct applied transdisciplinary research, to build impactful partnerships, and to accelerate the translation of research.

Distinguished Professor Calum Drummond AO
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation Vice-President

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to "Enabling Impact", an annual snapshot of the activities of RMIT's Enabling Impact Platforms (EIPs), and the progress and achievements of RMIT research and researchers enabled through those activities.

Enabling Impact provides a selection of case studies that highlight the diversity of strategic research and research impact achievements that have been enabled by the EIPs.

RMIT researchers at any career stage, from higher degree researcher to Distinguished Professor, can engage with others outside of their own disciplines through the EIPs. Affiliates of the EIPs can choose, and are encouraged, to join EIPs that align with their interests, with approximately 1500 unique affiliates and a total of almost 4800 affiliations, our affiliate base is driving interdisciplinary engagement.

The EIPs create opportunities for researchers to engage and collaborate across institutional and discipline boundaries to identify diverse and unexplored pathways to achieve impact from their research. In 2024 these opportunities included:

- 43 researcher led enabling impact networks (with 12 established in 2024), many with industry partners
- Access to funding schemes that drive research translation via the EIP Strategic Impact Fund and Network Activation Fund (30 projects funded in 2024)
- Support for capability development through our EIP Platform Activity Funding (90 capability development activities in 2024)
- EIPs supporting a significant number of events to drive collaboration and partnerships – 70+ events alone in 2024, with our support for 'Engaging for Impact' events resulting in a reach of over 3,500 participants

This *Enabling Impact* report encapsulates the collective efforts of all eight EIPs, which are always focused on the five EIP roles, to:

1. *Enable and catalyse* interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral engagement and collaboration;
2. *Lead* the community to construct and conceptualise initiatives at scale;
3. *Enable* effective research translation;
4. *Foster* an impact focused research culture;
5. *Provide* strategic thought leadership.

As a critical element of RMIT's continually evolving impact-focused research and innovation ecosystem, the EIPs are committed to enhancing RMIT's research impact potential, fostering innovative and strategic partnerships, and continuing to adapt to the ever-changing challenges of our world. By doing so, we aim to ensure that RMIT's research remains at the forefront of addressing and solving contemporary issues, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future.

This report is both a snapshot and an invitation to engage with the work of the EIPs, to collaborate, and to explore new opportunities for making a significant impact through research.

We thank all our partners and stakeholders for their continued support and look forward to the coming year of impactful research endeavours.

Professor Swee Mak
Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation Capability)

CATALYSE COLLABORATION

01

Enable and catalyse interdisciplinary and
cross-sectoral engagement and collaboration:
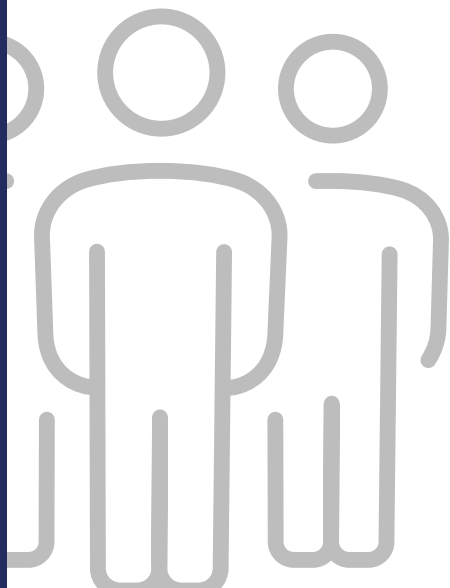networks and communities of practice

SCALE UP

02

Lead the community to construct and
conceptualise initiatives at scale:
major impact focused initiatives

FOSTER IMPACT

03

Foster an impact-focused research culture:
literacy, skills, engagement, and leadership

EIP ROLES

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

05

Provide strategic thought-leadership:
futures and strategic foresight focused

ENABLE TRANSLATION

04

Enable effective research translation:
diverse pathways to impact

THE EIP ROLES

The five EIP roles provide a vital framework for guiding EIP activities and evaluating our impact. They ensure that EIP initiatives are strategically aligned to maximise contributions to knowledge, policy, and societal advancement.

Planning Victoria: Housing Melbourne at 8 Million in partnership with the Planning Institute of Australia.

CATALYSE COLLABORATION

01

Enable and catalyse interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral engagement and collaboration: networks and communities of practice

ENDING PLASTIC WASTE

Efforts to end plastic waste emphasise the importance of reducing plastic consumption, improving recycling practices, and fostering systemic changes. By adopting sustainable practices and supporting innovative solutions, individuals and communities can significantly reduce plastic waste and contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment.

THE CHALLENGE

Plastic waste presents significant environmental challenges due to its widespread use and mismanagement. The global consumption rate is unsustainable, with an urgent need for a holistic approach to managing plastic waste.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

By adopting sustainable practices and supporting innovative solutions, individuals and communities can significantly reduce plastic waste. Actions such as avoiding single-use plastics, participating in awareness initiatives, and advocating for policy changes can drive market shifts towards sustainability. Collective efforts and advancements in recycling technologies are crucial for creating a sustainable future with reduced plastic waste.

THE APPROACH

The sell-out free public event "Putting plastic waste to good use: Building a sustainable future", hosted by RMIT's Enabling Impact Platforms, the Solving Plastic Waste CRC and CSIRO, showcased various strategies to tackle plastic waste, including educating the public on proper recycling practices, promoting initiatives like Plastic Free July, and leveraging technology such as the Recycle Mate app.

RMIT also co-chaired the Ending Plastic Waste Symposium, a scientific/industry sister-event to the public event, with over 300 attendees across 2 days. The symposium covered design and materials, advances in recycling and resource recovery, bioderived and compostable plastics, plastic in the environment and in health, the life cycle of plastic, circular economy and system perspectives as well as international approaches.

Showcasing Strategies

The global footprint estimate is that we're using the resources of 1.7 planet Earths every year. If everyone lived like the average Australian, we'd need 4.5 planet Earths

Rebecca Prince-Ruiz, founder, Plastic Free Foundation

> *Experts emphasised the importance of both individual actions and systemic changes, such as rethinking product design and improving recycling infrastructure, to effectively address the issue*

Collaborating with Community

PATHWAYS TO HEALTHY AGEING

RMIT is advancing projects that foster digital inclusion, social connectedness, and well-being among older adults. Initially supported by seed funding through the Platform Activity Fund, the Pathways to Healthy Ageing Network's initiatives exemplify the power of cross-disciplinary collaboration and community partnerships to achieve meaningful impact.

THE CHALLENGE

Older adults often experience digital exclusion, restricting their ability to engage with online services, maintain social connections, and access digital health tools. Bridging this gap is key to enhancing independence and overall well-being.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

By addressing digital exclusion and promoting social inclusion, these projects are shaping a more connected and supportive ageing experience. Ongoing collaborations with U3A and community partners continue to drive meaningful impact in positive ageing and digital equity.

THE APPROACH

Researchers from the Pathways to Healthy Ageing Network and Centre for Organisations and Social Change are undertaking several projects in collaboration with the U3A Network Victoria. These projects include the U3A Digital Mentoring Program; Reducing Perceived Risk in Digital Inclusion exploring how technology can support social inclusion; Navigating the Digital Health Journey investigating the use of mobile health apps and wearables; and Podcast Club workshops for media literacy.

I see these initiatives as powerful examples of how innovation can drive inclusion. We're not just supporting older adults to build digital skills—we're co-creating new ways to age well, stay connected, and thrive in a rapidly changing world

Professor Bernardo Figueiredo

HOUSING MELBOURNE AT 8 MILLION

In August 2024, the Urban Futures Enabling Impact Platform hosted over 100 attendees at Planning Victoria: Housing Melbourne at 8 Million in partnership with the Planning Institute of Australia. Moderated by Cara Waters from The Age, a panel of experts came together to dissect the challenges that are facing metropolitan Melbourne in planning for a projected population of 8 million people.

THE CHALLENGE

As metropolitan Melbourne plans for a projected population of 8 million by 2050, the state faces a wide range of challenges as the population grows. These challenges include metro scale urban planning economics, government and infrastructure, affordable housing and construction. These challenges, in combination with a changing climate is testing Melbourne's built and natural environment.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

The Housing Melbourne at 8 Million was a high-profile showcase of RMIT's position as a leading public knowledge institution in urban futures tackling a policy issue of major contemporary importance. By collaborating in a dialogue with prominent policy and industry leaders before a public audience of over 100 participants, the event demonstrated RMIT's expertise in urban futures research while underlining the university's role in informing policy and civic debate about how to resolve urgent housing challenges.

THE APPROACH

Planning Victoria: Housing Melbourne at 8 million, brought together a panel of experts to dissect these challenges and share a transformational vision for what housing Melbourne in 2050 could look like. Thank you to our panellists, Dr Marcus Spiller (Deputy Chair, National Housing Supply and Affordability Council), Dr Jonathan Spear (CEO, Infrastructure Victoria), Nicola Foxworthy (Founding Director, Imagine Housing) and Associate Professor Ehsan Gharaie, PhD (RMIT University) for sharing their expertise.

Tackling Major Policy Issues

RMIT was pleased to collaborate with the Planning Institute of Australia on this important topic as part of our shared civic commitment to informing public conversations about the forthcoming Plan Victoria and the future of our city

Professor Jago Dodson

"

Housing Melbourne at 8 Million was a thoughtful session addressing the many questions facing Melbourne as it grapples with the target of building 880,000 dwellings in the next ten years and to accommodate a population of 8 million by 2041

SCALE UP

02

Lead the community to construct and conceptualise initiatives at scale: major impact focused initiatives

Social Sciences Week 2024 at RMIT University aimed to deepen public understanding of social sciences and their role in addressing global challenges.

Responding to Global Health Challenges

EAT MOVE HEAL

The Eat Move Heal Network is for individuals and organisations aspiring to conduct collaborative, cross-disciplinary Long-COVID research, amongst other areas of focus. Long-COVID or Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC) is an emerging global health challenge. It affects up to one in 10 people who have contracted COVID-19, which translates into millions of people worldwide.

THE CHALLENGE

People affected by Long COVID-19 experience poor quality of life, with poor access to person-centred services to manage their symptoms. However, Australian and international health providers have struggled to define a best practice approach. Poor understanding of consumer experiences and insufficient multidisciplinary primary care and allied health resources have been key barriers.

THE APPROACH

The Eat Move Heal Network saw this project as a critical opportunity to develop a consumer-led, value-added, integrative model of care for those suffering from post-acute sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC). Its initial studies explored the lived experience of PASC through consumer journey mapping, and reviewing how it was managed, resulting in a proposed new care model. The network reached out to its national and international industry partners to solidify its intentions to tackle this challenge.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

The Eat Move Heal Network has been delivering outcomes since its inception in 2020. Members were meeting weekly to discuss how to develop best practices in treating people with Long-COVID. By regularly meeting with industry partners, publishing their research in three articles in The Conversation and one in Elsevier's journals and producing a report in Public Health Review, cited by international researchers, all while mentoring multiple PhD students. Hence, the network was well prepared to apply for and be awarded an AUD$5 million Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) grant in 2024 to address the long-term effects of COVID-19. Within four years, this small network has maximized impact within a short time frame.

Eat, Move, Heal connects a committed and talented group of researchers, with quantitative and qualitative scientists, affiliate health, conventional and digital medical innovators all working together for a common goal: to help those who really need it

Distinguished Professor
Magdalena Plebanski

A lot of people don't know about long COVID. I've seen people who developed long COVID and have no idea what's happening. People who previously could run 5 kilometres, 20 kilometres a day … could barely could walk to the supermarket

Professor Zhen Zheng

Conceptualising Future Solutions

HIPI IS FOR HIGH IMPACT

The High Impact-Potential Initiatives (HIPI)s program was developed as a unique co-design approach bringing together interdisciplinary teams with cross-sectoral partners from industry, government, community, and academia.

THE CHALLENGE

The objectives of RMIT's Knowledge With Action Strategy and our Decadal Aspirations for enabling research and innovation for impact focus on fostering partnerships for sustained impact at scale. The challenge faced by these strategic partnerships is to seed and grow the development of national and international large-scale transdisciplinary research programs and impactful research. HIPIs are designed to meet that challenge head-on.

THE APPROACH

Participants are guided through a design-led, end-to-end, innovation and ideation process to collectively conceptualise transformative and innovative future solutions to significant problems impacting our communities, environment, and industry. In 2024, RMIT piloted the first HIPI program, focussing on sustainable housing "Housing our population. Sustainably." which generated a range of impact opportunity areas to explore and co-design with our partners. The program is now seeking to scale the HIPI model to other societal domains.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

This innovative ideation process is one stream of activity that enables new forms of collaboration to be conceptualised. With a pipeline of such ideas forming, the HIPI program is driving the co-creation of alternative impact and funding pathways to achieve impact at scale with diverse partners.

Fantastic approach from a positive point of view

Love the multi-disciplinary aspect

Solutions will come from a positive mindset

Looking forward to further conversation

Industry participants in the first "Housing our Population Sustainably" HIPI

"

Deepening Understanding

SOCIAL SCIENCES WEEK

As the principal sponsor of the national Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) Social Sciences Week 2024, RMIT University hosted a diverse range of thought-provoking events from 9–15 September 2024. Through in-person, online, and hybrid events, RMIT brought together researchers, industry leaders, and the wider community to explore innovative solutions for a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future.

THE CHALLENGE

Today's world is grappling with complex social, environmental, and economic issues, from climate change and sustainability to social justice and global inequalities. Understanding human behaviour, societal needs, and systemic challenges is essential for driving meaningful change. However, public engagement with social sciences remains limited, and there is a growing need to bridge the gap between academic research and real-world impact.

THE APPROACH

RMIT's Social Sciences Week program offers a diverse range of in-person, online, and hybrid events, with a focus on research-led discussions and industry partnerships. Social Sciences Week 2024 featured impactful sessions, including a documentary on homelessness among older women, a discussion on housing rights, a Q&A on *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, a panel on climate storytelling, a symposium on Australian content in the streaming era and more. These events reflect RMIT's commitment to fostering dialogue on global issues.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

By hosting Social Sciences Week each year, RMIT reinforces its role as a leader in applied social science research, fostering greater public awareness of how social sciences contribute to real-world change. The event strengthens partnerships between academia, industry, and government, creating opportunities for collaboration that drive meaningful conversations and policy discussions. By bringing research to life, RMIT ensures that the insights generated by social scientists reach those who can use them to create lasting impact.

The social sciences are needed now more than ever to help humanity restore the planet and address global inequalities. Through RMIT's innovative research and collaborations with community, government, and industry, we aim to understand human behaviour, societal needs, and complex global challenges

Professor Lisa Given

OPEN INNOVATION

Funded by the European Commission's H2020 program, and anchored within the broader Open Innovation paradigm, OpenInnoTrain explored the theory and practice of "research translation" across FinTech, Industry 4.0, CleanTech, and Food Tech. This project trail-blazed new collaborations as the first EU-funded project led by an Australian-based Chief Investigator, Professor Anne-Laure Mention, and was granted the maximum funding under this competitive scheme.

THE CHALLENGE

Research translation remains a critical hurdle in bridging academia and industry, with persistent gaps in knowledge transfer and commercialization in Australia and Europe. Closing these gaps is essential for driving sustainable innovation and societal progress.

THE APPROACH

OpenInnoTrain has built a robust international network, enabling 143 staff exchange secondments across seniority levels and fostering collaboration between RMIT and leading European universities. It enabled more than 50 joint publications in top academic tiers and pioneered five cotutelle agreements, enhancing cross-institutional research. The project also up-skilled resources for large-scale projects, strengthening RMIT's global reputation in impactful research and provided opportunities for the academic community to be involved in hosting and undertaking secondments within the global research ecosystem.
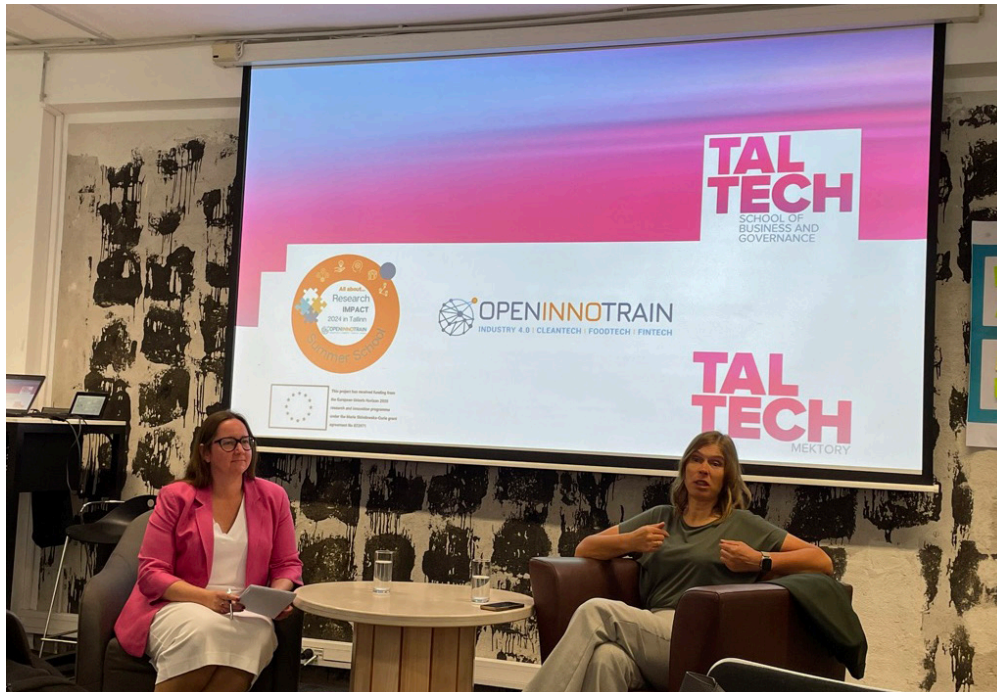
THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

OpenInnoTrain earned the ABDC 2023 Network Award for International Engagement. Its five Summer Schools, featuring esteemed speakers like former Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid, trained 150+ participants from 38 countries with actionable knowledge to create impact through research. Resources from the Summer Schools are now freely available from the OpenInnoTrain website, becoming one the project's lasting legacies. OpenInnoTrain has been the launchpad for the newly successful EU-funded COFUND project, Driving Climate Positive Futures (DREAM+PLAN).
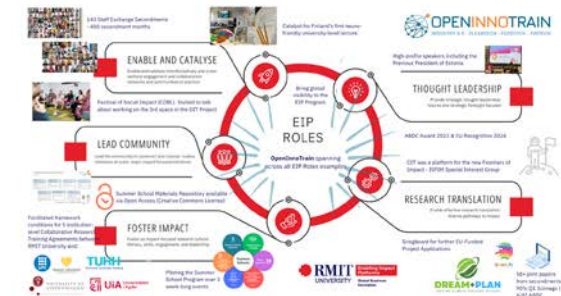
Trailblazing New Collaborations

With over 150 participants from 38 countries trained through five intensive Summer Schools—now available via open access—OpenInnoTrain was praised by the ABDC 2023 Network Award for International Engagement and recognition as one of 130 projects contributing to the European Year of Skills (2024)

Professor Anne-Laure Mention

Jasmine, speaking at the Taylor Swift Fanposium at The Capitol.

03

FOSTER IMPACT

Foster an impact-focused research culture:
literacy, skills, engagement, and leadership

RMIT
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SOCIETY 5.0

The Society 5.0 Ethics initiative aims to integrate advanced technologies like AI and robotics into society to solve complex challenges and enhance human well-being. By prioritizing ethical considerations and human rights, it seeks to create a sustainable, inclusive future where technology benefits everyone.

Integrating Technology and Ethics

THE CHALLENGE

The rapid advancement of AI, data surveillance, robotics, and other digital technologies profoundly impacts our lives. While these innovations offer significant benefits, they also pose risks such as biased systems, data breaches, and ungoverned automation. Addressing these challenges requires a global, interdisciplinary effort to ensure ethical decision-making and the protection of human rights in the digital age.

THE APPROACH

Professors Annette Markham and Lisa Given lead a multi-year project at RMIT to facilitate global discussions on ethical technology use. This initiative aims to develop a Declaration on Human Rights and Ethics for Society 5.0, bringing together thought leaders, technologists, and supporters worldwide. The project emphasizes interdisciplinary research, community engagement, and collaboration with businesses and governments.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

By positioning human needs at the forefront, the project seeks to embed ethical principles and human rights in new technologies. The initiative aims to build consensus on technology best practices and governance, addressing issues like data breaches and misinformation. Through global collaboration, the project aspires to create a positive societal impact, ensuring that technological advancements benefit all.

This event highlighted the growing interplay between money, data, and ethics, including the value displacement digital economies produce. Society 5.0 Ethics provided a terrific lens, and a community, to better understand the ethical challenges and opportunities this transformation creates for society

Professor Chris Speed

> **Society 5.0 is a broad label for the near-future inseparable interconnection between humans and technologies in the era of artificial intelligence and machine learning**
>
> Professor Lisa Given

Translating Expertise into Policy
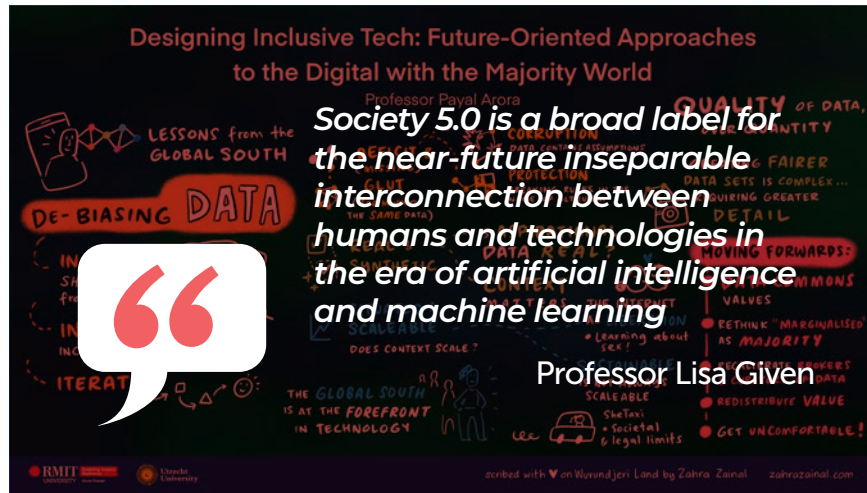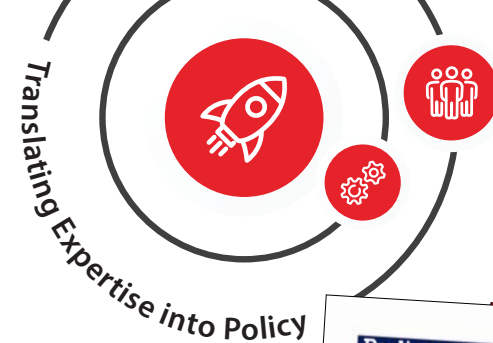
IMPACT FROM POLICY SUBMISSIONS

The RMIT PICSI (Policy, Inquiry and Consultation Submissions for Impact) initiative supports academics in translating their expertise into impactful policy contributions by facilitating formal submissions to government policy inquiries.

The RMIT PICSI initiative addresses the challenge of effectively translating academic expertise into impactful policy contributions.

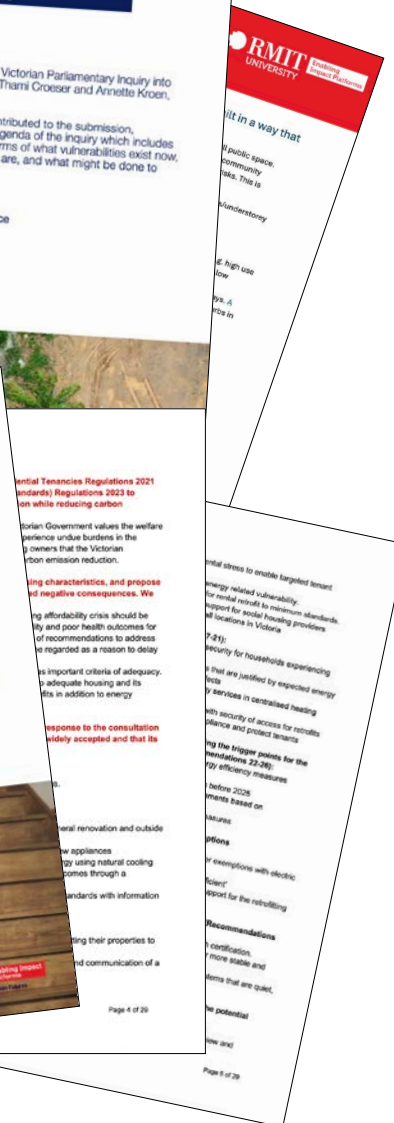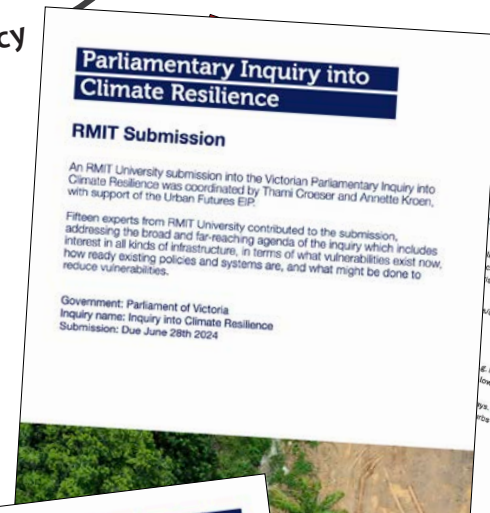The approach involves supporting academics in making formal submissions to government policy inquiries, thereby presenting their expert knowledge to shape policy and achieve societal impact. This initiative is researcher-led, with operational support from the Enabling Impact Platforms (EIPs), and includes guidelines and advice to assist researchers with the submission process.
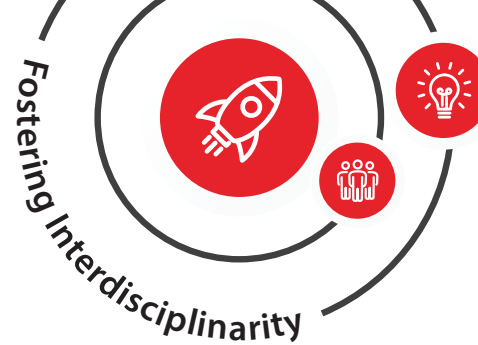
The pathways to impact include building a repository of submissions to develop impact narratives and enhancing researcher capability to influence policy through structured development sessions. By fostering interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral engagement, the PICSI initiative aims to position RMIT as a leader in policy impact and public understanding. As RMIT researchers' capability for policy engagement develops we hope to expand the program through further activities.

Our response to the Victorian Government consultation on the proposed Regulations on Minimum Standards for Rental Properties and Rooming Houses has contributed to the new heating standards for rooming houses and blind cord safety standard for residential rental properties that were introduced at the end of 2024

Associate Professor Nicola Willand

Parliamentary Inquiry into Climate Resilience

RMIT Submission

An RMIT University submission into the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Climate Resilience was coordinated by Thami Croeser and Annette Kroen, with support of the Urban Futures EIP.

Fifteen experts from RMIT University contributed to the submission, addressing the broad and far-reaching agenda of the inquiry which includes interest in all kinds of infrastructure, in terms of what vulnerabilities exist now, how ready existing policies and systems are, and what might be done to reduce vulnerabilities.

Government: Parliament of Victoria
Inquiry name: Inquiry into Climate Resilience
Submission: Due June 28th 2024

Minimum Standards for Rental Properties and Rooming Houses

RMIT Submission

An RMIT University submission into the Consultation on the proposed Regulations on Minimum Standards for Rental Properties and Rooming Houses by the Victorian Department of Government Services was coordinated by Dr Nicola Willand.

Eighteen experts from RMIT University contributed to the submission, which aims to improve outcomes and increased acceptance of the proposed minimum energy efficiency and safety standards within the community, especially among stakeholders who might be negatively impacted by the reforms.

Government: Victorian State Government
Consultation: Minimum Standards for Rental Properties and Rooming Houses
Submission: Due July 1st 2024

Fostering Interdisciplinarity

USING AI SAFELY IN RESEARCH

The Research Practice with Artificial Intelligence at RMIT (RePAIR) network aims to foster a community of RMIT researchers, students and professional staff with the confidence to integrate AI tools and techniques into their research and work practice, safely and responsibly, positioning RMIT as a leader in AI-integrated research.

The RePAIR network initiative addresses the challenge of ethically and safely integrating AI tools and techniques into responsible research practices at RMIT.

The approach involved the creation of an internal community of researchers, students, and professional staff with a shared interest in using AI in research. The initiative focused on the application of AI in research practice, design and implementation, including critical and ethical approaches to adopting AI.

The pathways to impact include fostering interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral engagement, enhancing research quality through AI, and creating safe spaces for open discussions about AI's role in research. By organizing workshops, such as those on leveraging large language models for data analytics and academic tasks, the RePAIR network aims to provide valuable insights and hands-on experience to its members.
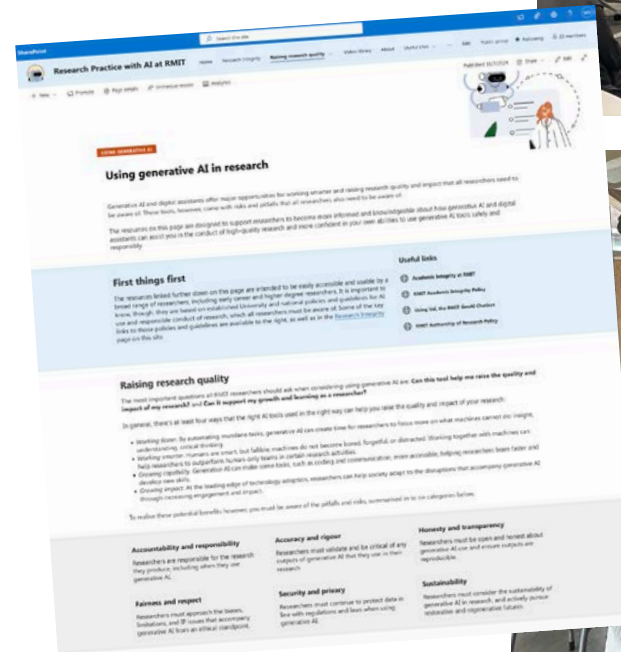
TAYLOR SWIFT FANPOSIUM

In February 2024, RMIT University hosted Fanposium, a unique event celebrating Taylor Swift's cultural impact. Bringing together cultural studies researchers, music industry experts, and dedicated fans, the event reaffirmed Swift's status as a remarkable cultural icon and created a space for engaging discussions on her lasting legacy.

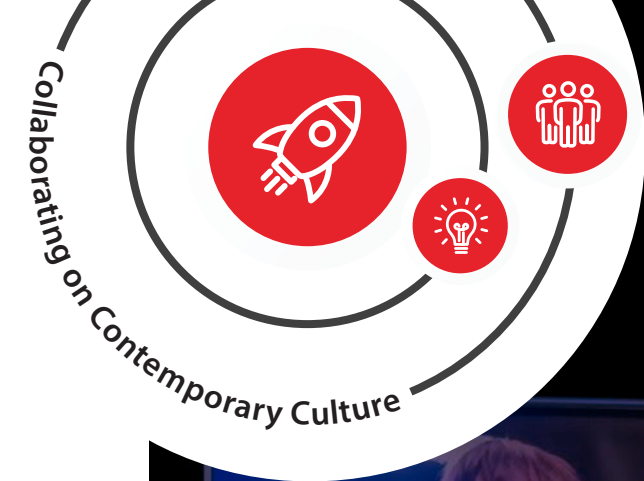**Collaborating on Contemporary Culture**

THE CHALLENGE

The growing academic interest in fandom and celebrity influence has highlighted the need for more scholarly discussions that bridge fan engagement with critical analysis. Despite Taylor Swift's global influence, there are limited academic platforms that examine her impact beyond music, particularly in relation to gender representation, fan culture, and industry power dynamics. Fanposium sought to fill this gap, providing a structured space where both fans and scholars could exchange insights.

THE APPROACH

Hosted at The Capitol, Fanposium was designed as an interactive and immersive event. It featured fan-led presentations, a screening of the documentary Miss Americana, and an expert panel discussion moderated by Kate Pattison, an RMIT fan studies expert and PhD candidate. The panel included distinguished scholars and industry professionals, and explored Swift's impact on gender, fandom, popular culture, and the music industry. Hosted in collaboration with the Music Industry Research Collective (MIRC), the event reinforced RMIT's commitment to academic discourse on contemporary cultural phenomena.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

By bridging fan culture with academic discourse, Fanposium demonstrated how cultural events can drive scholarly engagement and deepen public understanding of celebrity influence. The event not only celebrated Taylor Swift's artistic and cultural significance but also set a precedent for future fan studies discussions at RMIT. It reinforced the importance of fandom as a site of academic exploration, opening doors for further research, events, and collaborations in the study of popular culture and the music industry.
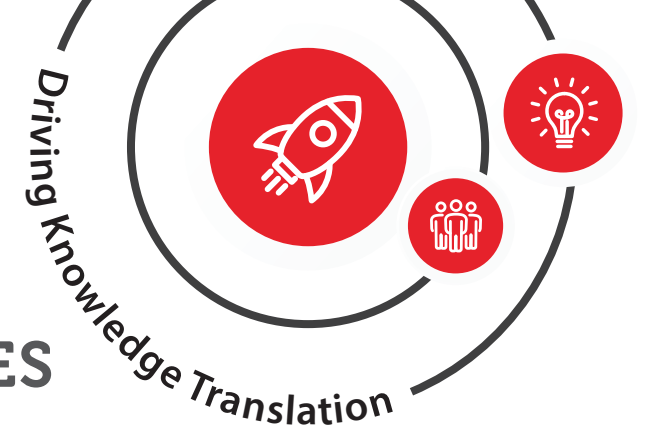
It was incredible to see fans, academics, and experts dissect her impact, and engage in conversations both on and off the stage. The success of the Fanposium is a testament to the fantastic collaboration between cross-disciplinary teams at RMIT

Kate Pattison
RMIT Fans studies expert

Driving Knowledge Translation

STREAMING AND ENTERTAINMENT GENRES

The Streaming Industries and Genres Network (SIGN) brings together scholars and key industry experts to contribute evidence-based strategy, policy recommendations and public understanding around how streaming entertainment—including streaming video (both subscription and user-generated), gaming, and social media platforms—constructs and frames genre.

THE CHALLENGE

Streaming is transforming audience understandings of and engagement with entertainment genres. SIGN examines the deep socio-cultural ramifications of shifting paradigms around content categorisation, discoverability, and access; the shifting policy and industry strategies in relation to the organisation of content on streaming services and platforms; and audience engagement with new and evolving content distribution and categorisation systems, such as streaming video platform interfaces, content recommendation systems, and catalogues.

THE APPROACH

SIGN provides an environment for Australian scholars from five universities working across a variety of disciplines, including Media, Cinema, Games, Social, Information and Computer Sciences, to collaborate with industry stakeholders from key partner organisations such as the ABC, the Australian Media and Communication Authority, ACMI and the Australian Children's Television Foundation on strategies for knowledge translation.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

To mark nearly 10 years of unregulated streaming in Australia, SIGN ran the *Securing Australian Content in the Streaming Era* Summit at ACMI/RMIT in September 2024. This brought together the local screen industry (producers, commissioners, regulators), academics and the public to reflect on the key issues facing the Australian production sector right now. In early 2025, the SIGN network released the *10 Years of Streaming in Australia* report.

> *Streaming has been normalised at such speed and scale that regulators, producers and audiences have struggled to understand the ramifications — that's where SIGN researchers come in*
>
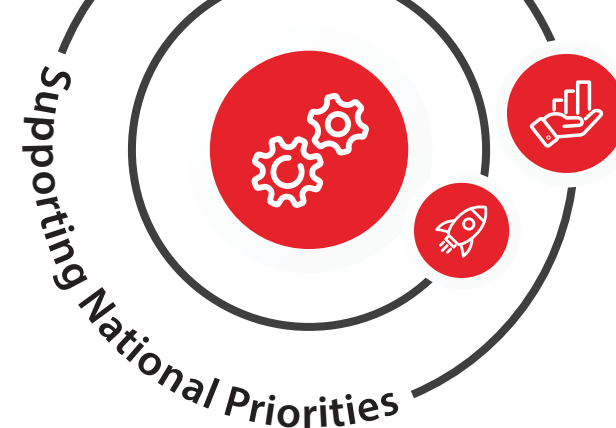> Dr Alexa Scarlata

Photo credits: Bryan Tang

Portable quantum magnetic microscope developed by the
RMIT Applied Quantum Technologies Centre (RAQT)

RESEARCH TRANSLATION

04

Enable effective research translation:
diverse pathways to impact

FUTURE OF QUANTUM TECHNOLOGIES

The RMIT Quantum Technologies Roadmap aligns with the National Quantum Strategy's themes, emphasising national collaboration, research translation, effective partnerships, skill development, and increased participation from under-represented communities to position RMIT as a leader in quantum technology.

THE CHALLENGE

The RMIT Quantum Roadmap addresses the challenge of advancing quantum technologies at RMIT to enhance Australia's digital and technological capabilities.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

This report provides strategic recommendations for RMIT to establish a cohesive, externally facing approach to this dynamic field encompassing sensing, communications, computing, materials, and quantum-adjacent domains. By following these recommendations across horizons 1 to 3, RMIT can focus its efforts and investment and grow in its niche research, innovation, and education domains. The pathways to impact include fostering national collaboration, developing a pipeline of quantum skills, creating an RMIT Leading Research Centre and increasing participation from under-represented communities. This strategic alignment aims to position RMIT as a leading institution in quantum technology, driving significant contributions to the field.

THE APPROACH

The approach involves aligning with the themes of the National Quantum Strategy, which include thriving research and development in quantum; access to essential quantum infrastructure; and a skilled quantum workforce. This document positions and examines the opportunities for RMIT in Applied Quantum Technologies in Australia and Victoria. Its purpose is to review the context of Quantum Technologies and contextualise RMIT's Quantum Technologies research and innovation within this landscape. Quantum Technologies are undergoing rapid evolution and attracting significant investment, both internationally and nationally, across various sectors of the economy. RMIT's roadmap highlights its commitment to cutting-edge technologies, with recent innovations in health diagnostics and energy sectors serving as examples.

Supporting National Priorities

There is a global race to not only develop and translate the latest technologies based on quantum physics, but also to enable our workforce to capture the security, economic and social potential of this new generation of technologies.

Distinguished Professor Calum Drummond AO

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs
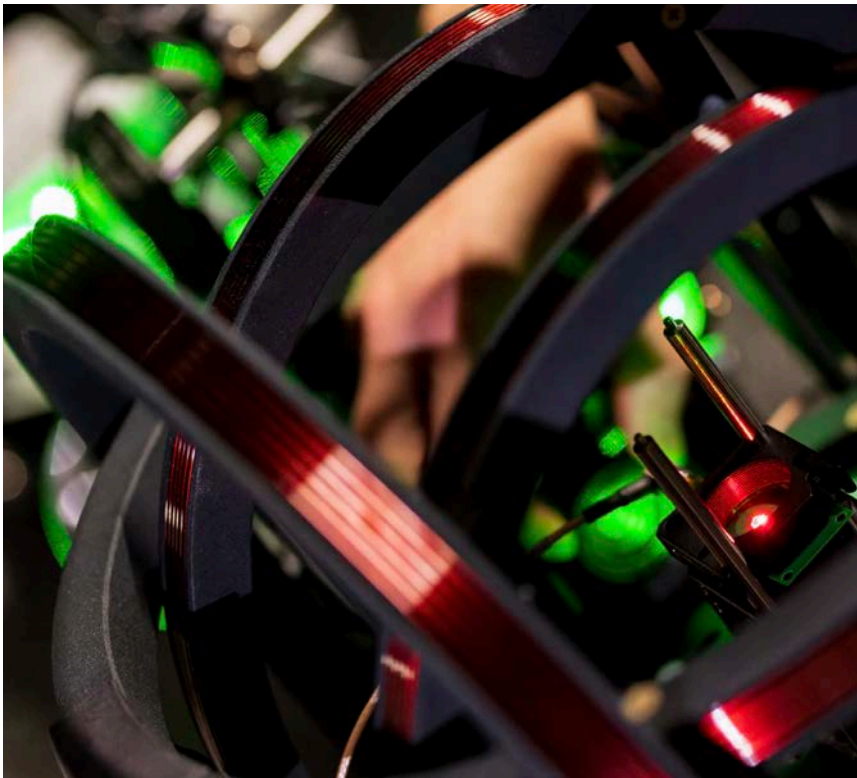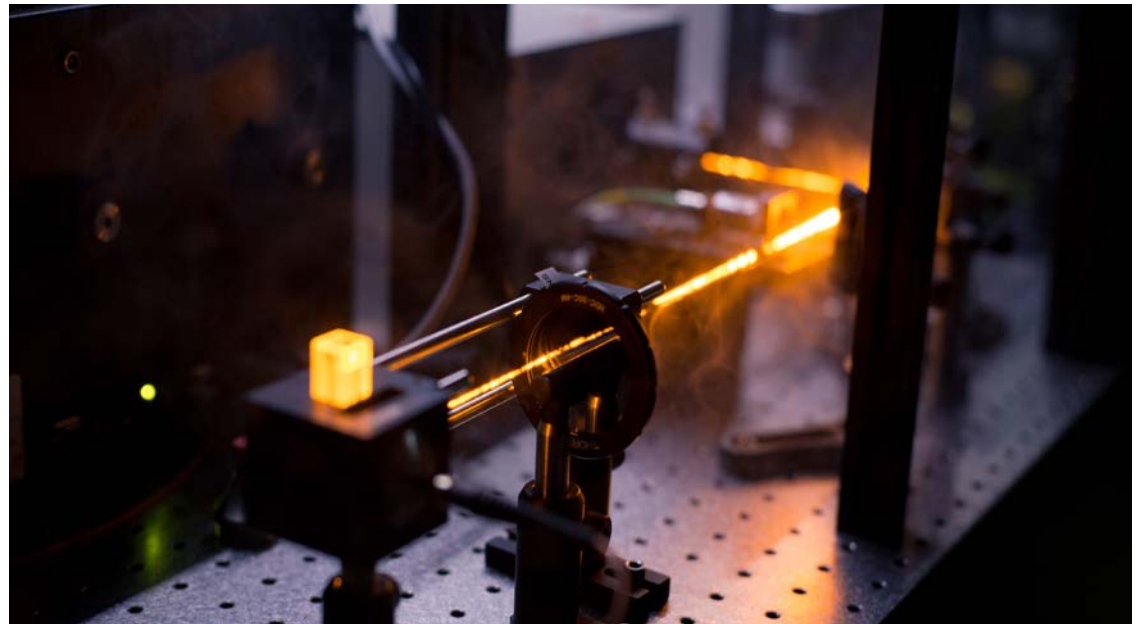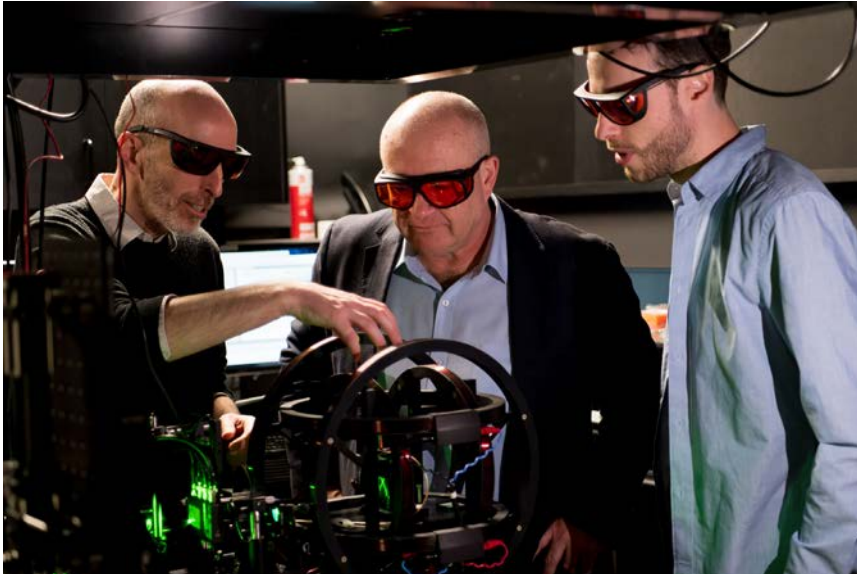
SHOW HER THE MONEY

RMIT hosted the Australian première of "Show Her the Money", an award-winning documentary celebrating the resilience of women entrepreneurs in securing venture capital. The event highlighted the critical funding disparity: in 2023, only 4% of venture capital raised in Australia went to female-led start-ups.
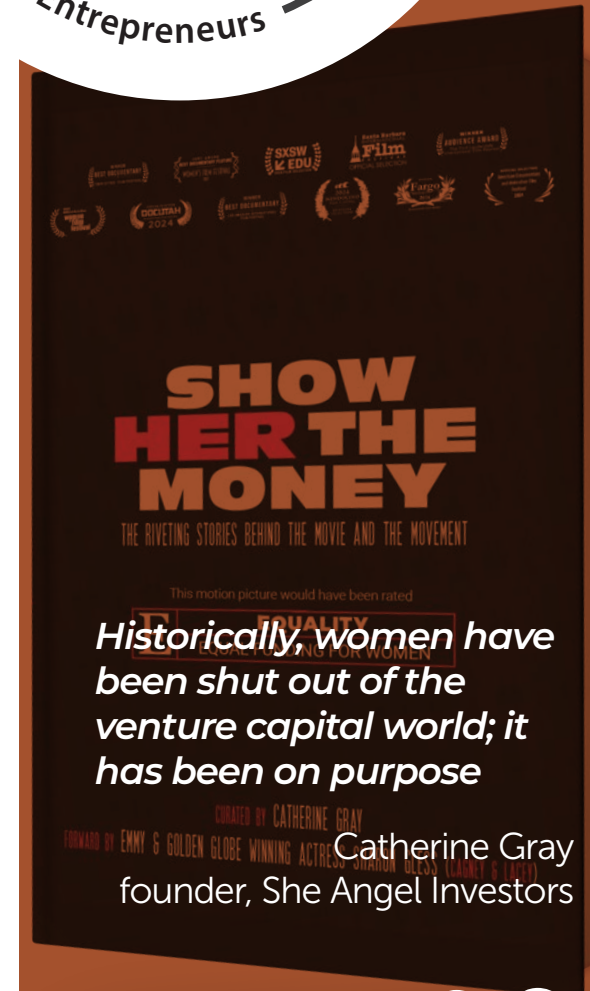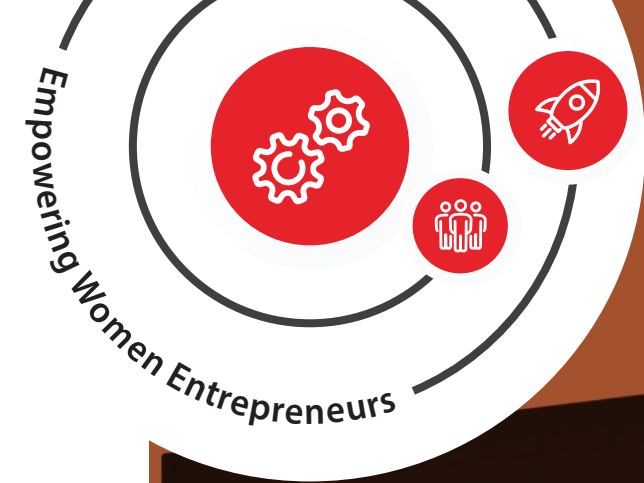
THE CHALLENGE

Women entrepreneurs face significant barriers accessing venture capital, perpetuating systemic inequities in the start-up ecosystem. Raising awareness and fostering collaboration is vital to addressing this gender funding gap.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

Pathways to impact include empowering participants with knowledge, inspiration, and actionable insights to foster gender equity in venture funding, while building a supportive community of advocates. In 2024, RMIT also launched the Entrepreneurial Academics Network (REAN), an academic and industry-led network connecting academics across disciplines, integrating entrepreneurial thinking and practices to solve real-world problems.

THE APPROACH

The approach involved partnering with Shebacks.Me to host the première screening of the documentary, showcasing four inspiring entrepreneurs redefining their industries. The première afforded an opportunity for a panel of Australian women entrepreneurs, investors and leaders including RMIT's Dr My Nguyen, Associate Professor of Finance, to share their experiences navigating funding challenges. The panel was followed by a networking event, bringing together academia, industry, and advocacy.

Historically, women have been shut out of the venture capital world; it has been on purpose

Catherine Gray
founder, She Angel Investors

Partnering to Solve Chronic Diseases
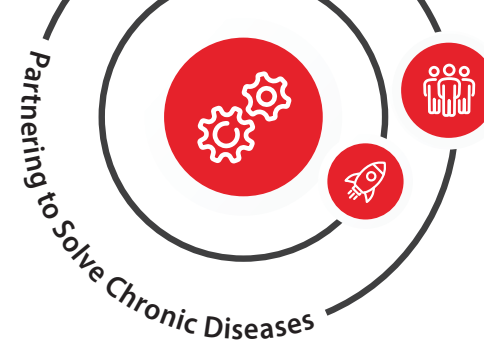
BETTER TOGETHER

The "Chronic Diseases: Better Together" Academia meets Industry in Health event showcased RMIT's substantial strengths in chronic diseases and partnerships. The Enabling Impact Networks and their industry partners came together to share the outcomes of their collaborations. This dynamic event explored two sessions, "Chronic Diseases and Lifestyle" and "Health at Home".

Current challenges in the health industry include communication and understanding of patients' culture and family, with industry, hospitals, universities are no longer separate entities but a united front working as one.

Two Q&A Industry Sessions were held with industry panellists that included, Tony McGillion, Divisional Director of Education, Northern Health; Christina Cavallero, Howden Care Australia; Matthew Green, CEO, BodyGuide; Peter Birkett, CEO, Assisi Centre; Eric Shum, Co-founder, Cormanga; and Agnes Loffeleya, Executive Care Manager, San Carlo Homes. Key learnings included the importance of working together and communicating well and the need for hospitals and universities working together to find solutions.

Members of each Network highlighted how seed funding from the EIPs have contributed to their successful research impact journey, including the Eat, Move, Heal Network collaboration with industry partners that resulted in the award of an MRFF (Medical Research Future Fund) grant in 2024; and the Mental Health Innovation Network (MHIN) developing webinars with industry partners, creating a Mental Health Resources Kit.

What a dynamic event with excellent presentations!

Distinguished Professor Vasso Apostolopoulos

Advancing Ecosystem Restoration
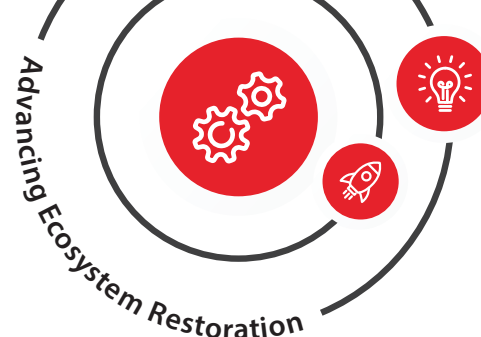
NATURE POSITIVE

The Nature Positive Network at RMIT is bringing together experts across disciplines to develop innovative solutions for sustainability and ecosystem restoration.

The nature positive agenda aims to halt biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems, and integrate sustainability into economic and policy frameworks. However, significant challenges remain in translating commitments into actionable strategies.

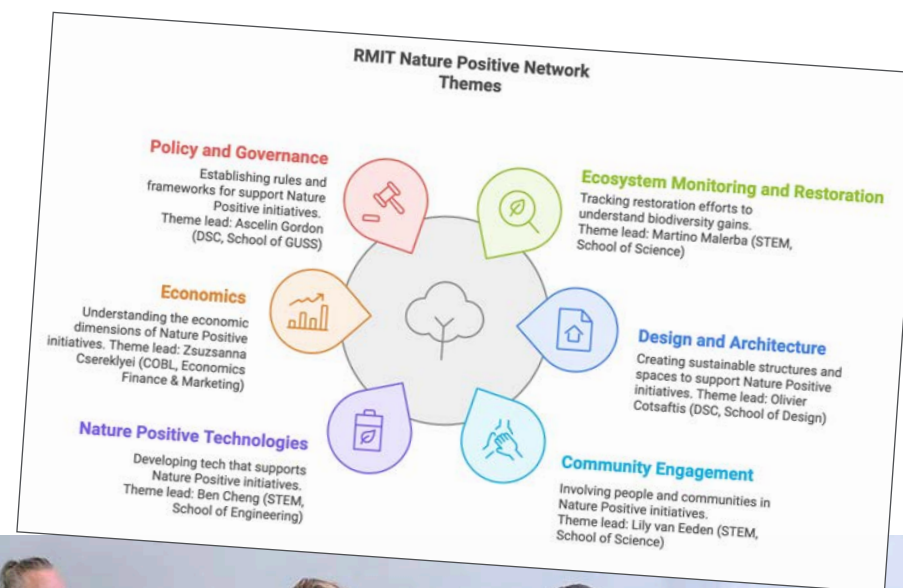The Nature Positive Network brings together 40+ academics in environmental science, law, business, engineering, design, and social sciences to develop solutions for nature positive transformations.

The Network aims to shape Australia's nature positive transition by building industry partnerships to co-develop sustainability solutions; influencing policy and governance frameworks through evidence-based research; driving investment in biodiversity conservation by enhancing financial models; and scaling nature based solutions for climate adaptation and urban resilience.

By fostering multidisciplinary research and stakeholder engagement, the network provides a one-stop shop for translating cutting-edge research into real-world impact.

RMIT Nature Positive Network Themes

Policy and Governance
Establishing rules and frameworks for support Nature Positive initiatives.
Theme lead: Ascelin Gordon (DSC, School of GUSS)

Ecosystem Monitoring and Restoration
Tracking restoration efforts to understand biodiversity gains.
Theme lead: Martino Malerba (STEM, School of Science)

Economics
Understanding the economic dimensions of Nature Positive initiatives. Theme lead: Zsuzsanna Csereklyei (COBL, Economics Finance & Marketing)

Design and Architecture
Creating sustainable structures and spaces to support Nature Positive initiatives. Theme lead: Olivier Cotsaftis (DSC, School of Design)

Nature Positive Technologies
Developing tech that supports Nature Positive initiatives.
Theme lead: Ben Cheng (STEM, School of Engineering)

Community Engagement
Involving people and communities in Nature Positive initiatives.
Theme lead: Lily van Eeden (STEM, School of Science)

The Victorian Disaster Research Forum in October 2024 brought together disaster researchers from eight different Victorian universities.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Provide strategic thought-leadership: futures and strategic foresight focused

05

Driving Innovation across Creative Sectors

PARTNERING WITH GLAM

The EIPs work closely with numerous other portfolios, including partnerships teams. In the area of Design and Creative Practice, for example, this means supporting and engaging with major partnerships with institutions like the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI), and Adobe—to extend and deepen RMIT engagement with these long-standing partners, as well as helping to develop new partnerships across the spectrum.

THE CHALLENGE

Major galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (known as GLAM sector organisations) play a crucial role in research engagement and translation—advancing the state of the art by supporting, curating and disseminating creative outcomes, and being a locus of critical discourse. However, the scale and complexity of these large organisations makes collaboration complex—with a huge range of types and modes of creative practice, and vital engagements with urgent critical conversations.

THE APPROACH

Partnerships are most effective and powerful when they are based on shared purpose and values, working towards outcomes that both organisations seek to achieve. The EIPs have supported this through a range of means—from co-hosted events, to shared projects like the RMIT & ACMI Small Research Grants program. Bringing together the creative might of RMIT, and the powerful cultural cachet of our partners, and in expanding and engaging research translation across diverse pathways

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

RMIT has its own important outlets for exhibitions and creative works and events via RMIT Culture. But other forms of exhibiting organisation, with their own kinds of peer review and curatorial selection, are essential for public dissemination and translation into impact. This means that the full range of activities—from exhibitions to performances, creative practice publications to public discussions, and beyond—can be realised and enabled via partnerships.

ACMI's major research partnership with RMIT has gone from strength-to-strength since it began ... it's so rewarding to see two Victorian institutions with a global outlook working together to drive innovation across our education and creative sectors
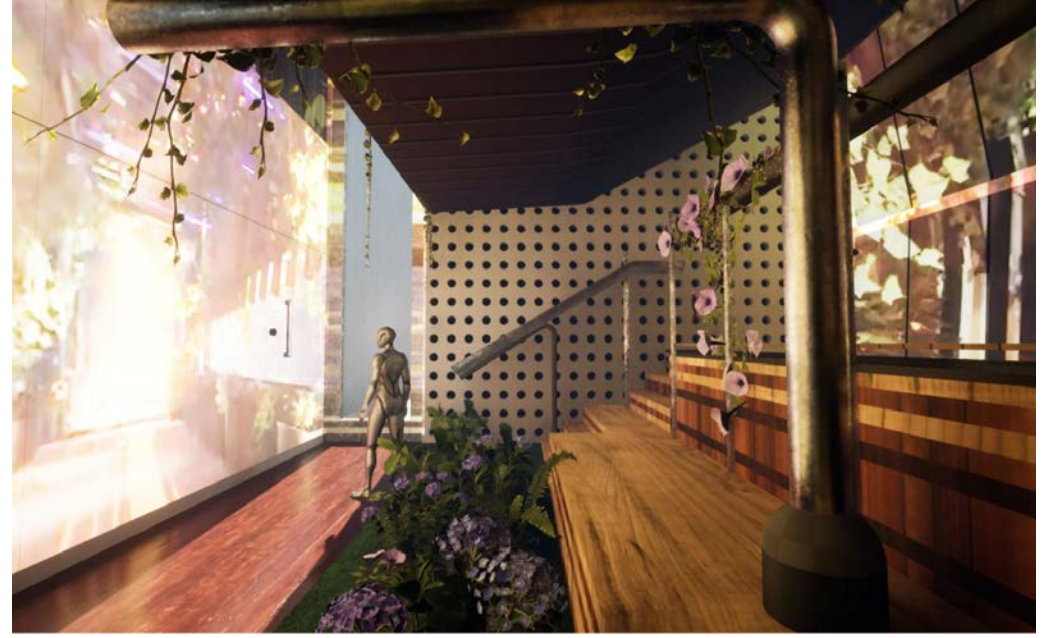
Seb Chan
ACMI Director & CEO

Photo credits: Eugene Hyland

Collaborating to Innovate

DISASTER RESEARCHERS JOIN TOGETHER

Victoria faces a unique combination of natural hazards and disasters, from bushfires and floods to severe storms and extreme heat, that pose significant challenges to our community, infrastructure, and environment. The Victorian Disaster Resilience Alliance (VDRA) brings together Victorian research capabilities from across the entire spectrum of Victorian university research related to emergencies.

THE CHALLENGE

The VDRA aims to address Victoria's unique combinations of natural hazards, climate, and community risks. Researchers across Victoria's universities collaborate to reduce barriers to innovation, enhance disaster research impact, and translate findings into practical disaster resilience and emergency management applications.

THE APPROACH

To catalyse the VDRA, the Victorian Disaster Research Forum aimed to connect and coordinate disaster researchers across Victoria's universities. The forum focused on interdisciplinary collaboration to address Victoria's unique natural hazards and disaster resilience needs. Researchers and practitioners were invited to contribute to and shape the applied disaster research agenda in Victoria.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

The VDRA aims assists Victorian researchers in diversifying pathways to impact. The goal is to address Victoria's, Australia's, and global innovation needs by promoting practical applications of disaster research. Practitioners and researchers collaborate to shape an applied disaster research agenda.

Connecting Victoria's unique research strengths to disaster innovation-needs, not only in Victoria but around the world, can help us to prepare for growing risks and respond to increasingly severe hazards.

Professor Allison Kealy

RMIT UNIVERSITY

Contact: Mittul Vahanvati

To raise awareness about climate risks, the RMIT research team partnered with Honiara Youth Council to translate recent research findings into comics, drawn by four young local artists with script written in the local Pidgin language

Vahanvati, M., McEvoy, D., Iyer-Raniga, U., Sou, G., & Clemo, J. (2023). Disaster resilient housing (Jackson). In. Melbourne: RMIT University Media. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25439/rmt.23514534.v1

RMIT UNIVERSITY

Contact: Erica Kuligowski

This project investigates how community members understand, use and take action in response to bushfire maps, both incident and predictive maps

NSW Rural Fire Service
Fire spread prediction map

This project is funded by Natural Hazards Research Austral
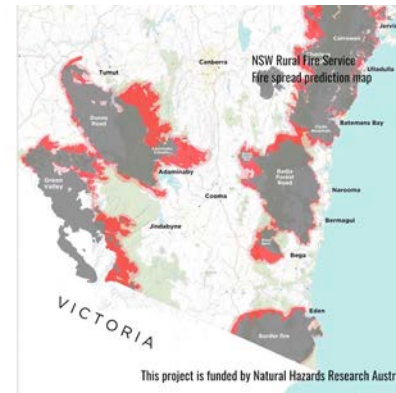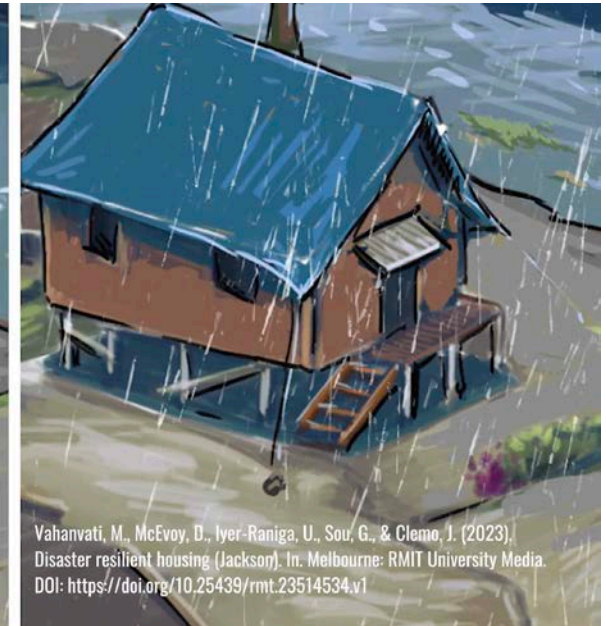
PLANETARY CIVICS

The Planetary Civics Initiative is a collaborative effort between RMIT University College of Design and Social Context, Dark Matter Labs, and other global alliance partners, aiming to promote planetary thinking as essential for the survival of all life on Earth. It fosters an inclusive, transdisciplinary platform for education, research, and collaboration on planetary practices and their impact on contemporary civics and future innovation.
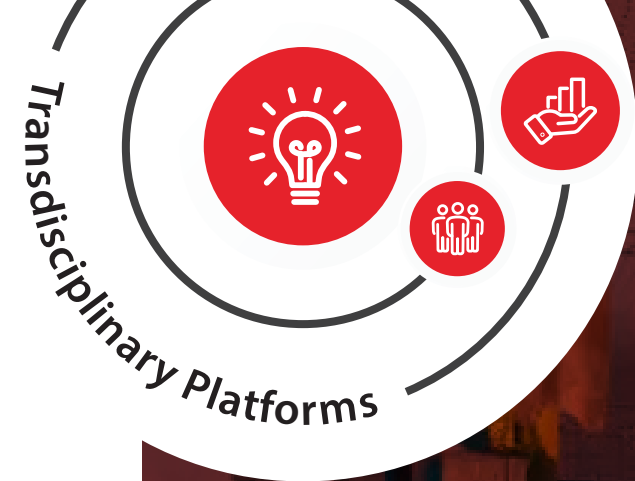
THE CHALLENGE

The initiative addresses the urgent need for a radical shift from geopolitical to planetary thinking in response to interconnected global crises such as climate change and pandemics. It emphasizes the mutual reliance between humanity and Earth's systems, advocating for compassionate and effective approaches to our shared future.

THE APPROACH

Planetary Civics employs an interdisciplinary and dialogical approach, fostering conversations among diverse practitioners and thinkers, shifting the Overton Window by promoting new care practices, civic imagination, and innovative pedagogies. Planetary Civics encourages a radical rethinking of our relationship with Earth's systems and the development of transformative policies and practices.

THE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

The initiative leverages seminars, research studios, and transdisciplinary collaborations to explore and implement planetary practices. By bringing together leading thinkers and practitioners, it aims to create deeply democratic futures and foster innovation agendas that prioritize social and environmental benefits. The seminar series, launched in 2023, serves as a key platform for these discussions and developments.

Transdisciplinary Platforms

There is an urgent need for new stories to be told and new truths uncovered via planetary thinking — not just to accelerate towards a relational, holistic model of governance, but also to show other possible futures via creative practice — to bring hope in dark times

Professor Naomi Stead

"

This was a deeply moving conversation in which Indy invited us to reflect on contemporary crises as a crisis of self; an outcome of deep, codified practices of extraction that require reinvention around new concepts of reciprocity and care.

Dr Sarah Barns

Mekong Delta Background

. Some of the major challenges include:

- Coastal and riverbank erosion, which causes the delta to lose about 500 hectares of land per year.

- Saline intrusion, which affects the freshwater availability and crop production in the delta, especially in the dry season.

- Floods and droughts, which are exacerbated by weather fluctuations, upstream reservoirs, and deforestation.

- Pollution, which degrades the water quality and ecosystem health of the delta's rivers and canals.
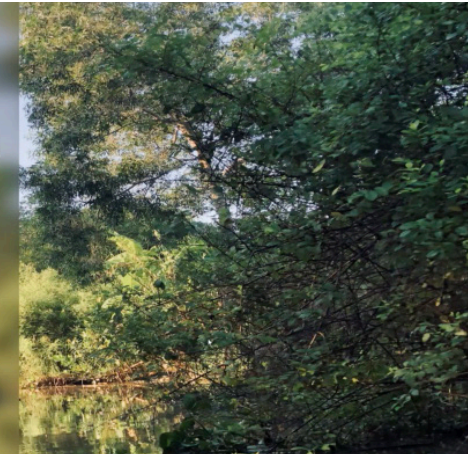
EIP TEAM

Meet the Enabling Impact Platform Directors and the EIP Team

We wish to gratefully acknowledge the commitment and contributions to the preparation of this document of the Enabling Impact Platform team, in particular:

- The eight Enabling Impact Platform Directors at the time of writing: Professor Jago Dodson, Professor Matt Duckham, Professor Lisa Given, Professor Anne-Laure Mention, Professor Xavier Mulet, Distinguished Professor Magdalena Plebanski, Professor Gary Rosengarten, Professor Naomi Stead

- Professor Swee Mak for sponsoring the document

- The EIP Operations Officers: Jennifer Buhagiar, Kelly Foo, Ben Johns, Michelle Nicolo, Zara Vaccari-Cook

- The editing team: Alice Boland, Matt Duckham, Zara Vaccari-Cook

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XAVIER MULET

Professor Xavier Mulet is Director of the **Advanced Materials, Manufacturing and Fabrication** EIP

BHI

MAGDALENA PLEBANSKI

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DCP

NAOMI STEAD

Associate Professor Paul Minifie is Interim Director of the **Design and Creative Practice** EIP, while Professor Naomi Stead is on secondment
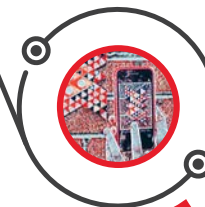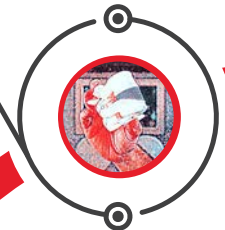
GBI

ANNE-LAURE MENTION

Professor Anne-Laure Mention the **Global Business Innovation** EIP Director

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Acknowledging all the RMIT researchers
whose work is leading to impact*

Most importantly, we wish to close with
our thanks and acknowledgements to
all of RMIT's Enabling Impact Platform
Affiliates, and to the leaders and members
of the Enabling Impact Networks, whose
achievements are showcased in this
document.

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https://www.rmit.edu.au/research/our-research/enabling-impact-platforms

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