



WESTERN SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
**ANNUAL RESEARCH  
REPORT 2021**

COMPILED BY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MARIA ESTELA VARUA,  
ASSOCIATE DEAN, RESEARCH, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

# School of Business Annual Research Report 2021

Compiled by Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua, Associate Dean, Research, School of Business

## Research and HDR Committee 2021

**Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua** (Associate Dean, Research; Chair)  
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**Dr Jess Richards** (Early-Career Researcher)

## Acknowledgement of Country

Western Sydney University acknowledges the peoples of the Darug, Tharawal, Eora and Wiradjuri nations. We acknowledge that the teaching, learning and research undertaken across our campuses continues the teaching, learning and research that has occurred on these lands for tens of thousands of years.



**Campus Dreaming an original artwork commissioned by the School of Business: Artists Geoff Sellman, Bunda Bunda artist from the Goreng Nation, with Simon Alexander Cook of the social canvas.**

Part mud map, part diagram this artwork presents ideas of connections across the Dharug Country of Western Sydney. The flyover concept captures the University campus locations into a network of links and landscapes. These locations are represented at the junction points or meeting-place circles, as centres of networked learning and innovation and highlight the complexities and connections of business communities and regions.

The structured geometric base joins the mosaic of ecological niches across the Cumberland Plain inland from Sydney Harbour (Gadi), west of Dharawal Country, out to the Nepean-Hawkesbury River (Deeraybin) and south to Macarthur, Bankstown and Liverpool (Mil-pra). The tessellations of tiles can reflect the multicultural influences on Australian design and can suggest all the Industry Partners fit together to build the puzzle.

## Other acknowledgements

This report could not have been produced without the support and involvement of the School of Business Research and HDR Committee; Fiona Smith, Research and HDR Administration Officer, School of Business; Renée Kovalskis, Executive Project Officer, School of Business; and Professor Deborah Sweeney, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, Research, Enterprise and International.

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Western Sydney University,  
Locked Bag 1797,  
Penrith, NSW 2751.

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# 2021 OUTCOMES



4 new research partnerships

5 priority research initiatives projects



20 small grant-funded projects  
(including ECRs and adjuncts)

6 WSU-UEH collaborative projects



7 external grant-funded projects



10 training workshops delivered



21 seminar presentations

1305 participants



# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Here at the School of Business, our researchers and research students are central to our research productivity, engagement and impact. We are proud of the contribution made by our research community to new knowledge. Their combined efforts continue to flourish in an environment where learning, scholarship, discovery and invention are encouraged.

There is no denying that 2021 was a year filled with challenges – the COVID-19 pandemic in particular causing mayhem both locally and across the globe. Here in New South Wales we underwent multiple lockdowns, with the last enduring for four months. Never in living memory has the community seen the value of research so clearly as when it came to helping in the fight against this deadly virus.

For us, the pandemic and lockdowns meant renegotiating how we work, research and teach in the ‘new normal’ of living in a world that manages COVID-19. We worked hard on improvements to our processes and our programs in order to maintain our standard of excellence in business education, and our researchers found new and innovative ways to continue their important work. Zoom became alternately everyone’s best friend and nemesis!

One success story that we celebrated in 2021 was the School’s attainment of accreditation with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) – a highly significant achievement for the School and for Western Sydney University as a whole. AACSB accreditation has prestigious, longstanding and internationally recognised status, and achieving it significantly enhances the

University’s and the School’s reputation with potential international research partners. Prospective students and potential industry and research partners are increasingly aware of AACSB accreditation, and look for it when evaluating business schools around the world. As an AACSB accredited business school, we are part of a movement of the world’s best business schools – we are connected to a world of innovative and quality-focused business educators and researchers. AACSB sets the highest standards for business schools globally, and our School was commended in particular for its commitment to multidisciplinary research to address contemporary social and economic challenges.

But this is only part of the story. The strength of our performance is also reliant on the active engagement of our staff. We hope that through the pages of this report you will discover how the School has continued to initiate and demonstrate research excellence, engagement and impact. As you learn more about our work, also consider how you might connect with us, to explore new and innovative ways of doing business.

Finally, I offer my sincere appreciation to all our research groups, partners, collaborators and staff for their support, dedication and resilience – evidence of which is found throughout this report.

**PROFESSOR AMIR MAHMOOD**  
DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

# WELCOME FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN, RESEARCH



I am pleased to present the School of Business Research Report for 2021. Despite the past two years of uncertainty, we have made significant strides in expanding our research collaborations, improving the quality of our research publications, and increasing our research income. The wide-ranging research detailed in this report speaks to our extensive expertise and capacity to work productively with our various research partners.

The year 2021 was indeed a year like no other, with challenges we could not have foreseen. This report shares many research activities and successes achieved during these difficult times. I want to congratulate and thank all staff for their dedication and commitment to support the University and its mission. I'd also like to especially congratulate those who have put their hand up to present in our fortnightly seminar series and during Research Week.

During the year, we witnessed the formation of groups composed of all types of staff who worked collaboratively to produce high-quality research publications. It is my firm belief that reinvigorating our research groups, and investing time and resources into developing our researchers through research grants and mentoring, has been behind our strong growth.

I am delighted to support and promote the School of Business in expanding its research endeavours through interdisciplinary research, creative partnerships and innovative collaborations. We welcome new partnerships and new ways to engage with our stakeholders to make our research even more impactful.

Finally, I hope that you enjoy reading about our work in 2021.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
MARIA ESTELA VARUA**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN, RESEARCH, SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS

# THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A WORLD-LEADING UNIVERSITY WITH IMPACT

Western Sydney University has been recognised as number one in the world for its social, ecological and economic impact in the latest Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings, topping the list out of more than 1,400 institutions.

The University placed first overall worldwide as well as first in Australia in the prestigious annual rankings, now in their fourth year, which assess universities on their commitment to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on their teaching, research, outreach and stewardship. The University's work was recognised across nine of the 17 SDGs.

Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Barney Glover AO said the University is committed to tackling society's grand challenges and supporting a more just and equitable world.

"It is an immensely proud moment in the University's history to see our sector-leading efforts to drive important social transformation recognised," Professor Glover said. "Social justice, inclusive education, addressing inequality, environmental stewardship and resilience – these are all core to our mission. We are committed to delivering action in all these areas, and fostering the next generation of thought leaders and civic-minded citizens who can solve these complex challenges."

The School of Business is committed to engaged research with impact. You will see throughout this report that each of the projects undertaken in 2021 directly aligns with at least one, and in many cases more, of the United Nations' SDGs. This alignment is indicated by the icons below.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# OUR RESEARCH IN 2021

The School of Business promotes equitable and inclusive research that contributes to new knowledge and has a genuine impact. While the areas of research pursued by our staff vary widely, the majority of our research in 2021 concentrated on five key focus areas:

- Sustainability
- Innovation, technology and supply chain management
- Health and wellbeing
- Education and work
- Property, banking and finance.

These projects are outlined on the following pages, followed by projects focusing on other areas of interest, and research collaborations supported by external funding.



# KEY FOCUS AREA: SUSTAINABILITY

We take the meaning of the term sustainability to indicate meeting our own current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Our sustainability-focused research therefore involves not only natural resources but social and economic resources as well. This is because, embedded in most definitions of sustainability, we find concerns for social equity and economic development as well as environmental conservation.

Our collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to this research area focuses on understanding the relationships between people, place and change. We aim to provide evidence-based solutions to planning, policy and decision making for a diverse and inclusive world. In 2021, the following research projects were conducted in this area.

## THE NSW INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK: A STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Dorothea Bowyer (Lead), Dr Neil Perry, Dr Connie Vitale, Khalida Malik.

The NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework was designed to assist local government area (LGA) councils in NSW to manage assets efficiently on behalf of local communities. Since its introduction, debate has intensified over the framework's benefits, efficacy and utility in relation to the Greater Western Sydney region, which has experienced significant and continuing growth in infrastructure and population over the past decade. Using the Camden LGA as a case study, this project outlined and informed stakeholder perceptions and experiences of community engagement and asset management under the framework. The research shed light on how IP&R is interpreted and implemented and whether social, economic and environmental performance indicators align with the views expressed by key stakeholders.

Primary data collection was conducted with representatives of four stakeholder groups: Camden Council, the Office of Local Government NSW, and economic and community interest groups. The following four broad themes emerged from the data analysis.

- Benefits: The framework is perceived as a tool useful to a "growth" council in the strategic process of managing and reporting on assets.
- Challenges: There are concerns that the framework is outdated and that compliance and reporting place pressure on scarce council resources.
- Stakeholder engagement: Awareness of the framework and perceptions of the extent to which council genuinely consults with, and considers diverse interests within, the community varies significantly across stakeholder groups.
- Areas for improvement: There is scope for continuous improvement, including simplifying the language relating to IP&R commitments and better integrating planning and reporting requirements within and beyond the framework.

Recommendations were provided as to the way forward and how better to embed the IP&R framework in the organisational setting.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

#### Reporting and Disclosure of Aviation-related Activities by Local Government Operating Regional Airports in Australia

Collaboration with academics from the University of Wollongong, University of Southern Queensland and University of the Sunshine Coast to evaluate users' needs of general-purpose financial reports, focusing on aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenue recognition after the regional airports were gifted to local governments in the mid-1980s.

#### Global and Domestic Insights into Recycling and Household Waste Service Management Strategies as Part of the Climate Change Movement

Collaboration with Associate Professor Maria Varua and Dr Neha Deo under the undergraduate research Summer Scholarship Program 2021, incorporating insights and lessons learned from recycling strategies in Europe, and a comparative analysis of best practices in NSW local government areas.



## HOW GREEN IS AUSTRALIAN ORGANIC FOOD? COMPARING AND CONTRASTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF ORGANIC FOOD ITEMS FROM DIFFERENT AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURAL SITES USING LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT (LCA) MODELLING

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Henry Lau, Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala, Muhammad Salman Asif.

This research project is motivated by the uncertainty that exists in identifying and controlling scope 3 emissions (indirect emissions) in food supply chains. It is being completed in multiple phases as it has a wide scope. The first phase was completed under the small grant 2021. During first phase, life cycle assessment (LCA) modelling was conducted for food items using French database Agribalyse. This helped in understanding the major emissions hotspots during the sourcing and production stages of food products. Based on the hotspots, best industrial practices were benchmarked to reduce or eliminate these hotspots.

The research encompassed real-world case study and recent effectual literature on emission evaluation methods and presented a framework for industrial implementation. As a potential solution to the environmental issues, a hotspot resolution model (HRM) was developed that aligns the supply chain hotspots with best industrial practices. For methodological evidence, an LCA was conducted for a hypothetical food product, and demonstrated scope 3 emissions reduction in its supply chain using the HRM.

A research paper has been published to authenticate the findings of the first phase of the project. The industrial implications of this research are also critical, as it provides a stepwise guideline for firms to identify scope 3 pain points in supply chains using LCA, and then, based on the associated risk and resource availability, suggests the implementation of one or more of the best industrial practices to trace, record and reduce emissions at the supplier's end.

In its next phases, this research project will investigate the emission hotspots and the best resolution methods in Australian organic food supply chains.

### PUBLICATIONS

Asif, M.S., Lau, H., Nakandala, D., Fan, Y., & Hurriyet, H. Case study research of green life cycle model for the evaluation and reduction of scope 3 emissions in food supply chains. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*.



## MEASURING COST SAVINGS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF INNOVATIVE CLEAN TECHNOLOGY TO ORGANICALLY RECYCLED WASTE IN THE HEALTH SECTOR

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Michelle Cull, Dr Neil Perry, Associate Professor W Kathy Tannous.

### FUNDING BODY

Opes Industrial \$135,000

### FUNDING PERIOD

May 2021 to May 2024

The urban transformation and population growth underway in Western Sydney bring with them broader social, economic and environmental challenges, including waste management and air pollution. This research will assist in addressing these challenges by assessing the costs and benefits of implementing 'smart' clean technology aimed at reducing waste and air pollution, while indirectly assisting in the creation of jobs to manufacture the smart technology.

The project includes funding for a PhD candidate to undertake a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of processing organic waste streams in healthcare facilities in Western Sydney, which will include indicators to measure efficiencies, cost savings, environmental benefits and occupational health and safety benefits associated with implementing new clean technology in the sector.

Supporting the federal government's commitment to halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030, the project will evaluate the use of the new technology in the healthcare sector and form the basis for evaluating costs and benefits of using the technology in other sectors, both in Australia and internationally.





## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF CUT ROSES: COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN KENYA, ETHIOPIA AND AUSTRALIA**

### **RESEARCHERS**

Professor Vivian W Y Tam (Engineering, Design and Built Environment), Professor Zhonghua Chen (Science), Professor Yi-Chen Lan, Dr Rina Datt.

### **FUNDING BODIES**

Fairtrade Australia and New Zealand and Western Sydney University \$8,500

### **FUNDING PERIOD**

September 2021 to December 2022

In conjunction with Fairtrade Australia and New Zealand, our research team will investigate the environmental impacts (primarily the carbon footprint) of cut roses from Kenya and Ethiopia compared to those of Australian-grown roses. For this purpose, secondary data will be collected from previous studies on cut roses from Kenya and Ethiopia.

The lifecycle analysis will consider both rose production in Kenya and the impacts of packaging and transport to Australia. A variant with optimised output in energy consumption will also be calculated. A comparative study report will be generated based on the method and approach of lifecycle analysis of cut roses conducted by Alig and Frischknecht (2018) in Kenya compared with the Australian-grown cut roses. This report will provide further insight into the sustainable production of roses with economic, environmental and social benefits. This project also has the potential for future external grant applications to be submitted to Horticulture Innovation Australia and AgriFutures.



## THE EFFECTS OF CARBON ASSURANCE ON THE QUALITY OF CARBON DISCLOSURE: INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

### RESEARCHERS

*Western Sydney University:* Professor Qingliang Tang (Lead), Dr Hanlu Fan.

*Macquarie University:* Dr Le Luo, Jamie Ayers

### FUNDING PERIOD

October to December 2021

Carbon assurance is emerging as an important sustainability practice. Using an international sample, this study examines the effects of carbon assurance on the quality of voluntary carbon disclosure. We find that assured companies tend to have better carbon disclosure quality than unassured companies, which supports the credibility enhancement role of carbon assurance rather than the impression management role. Further analyses demonstrate that the positive relationship is strengthened in stakeholder-oriented countries, countries with emissions trading schemes, and carbon-intensive industries. Moreover, the quality of carbon disclosure increases with the level of carbon assurance, and assurance accelerates the convergence of carbon disclosure.



## CONNECTING WOMEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS: BRINGING INDIA AND AUSTRALIA TOGETHER

### RESEARCHERS

*Western Sydney University:* Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua (Lead), Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista, Dr Heath Spong, Dr Rina Datt.

*Panjab University, India:* Professor Meena Sharma, Professor Purva Kansal.

### FUNDING BODY

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \$108,877

The School of Business, alongside Panjab University and the Australia-India Council, hosted a program to connect women social entrepreneurs from Australia and India.

Women social entrepreneurs possess distinctive qualities needed to transform societies and communities which form the core purview of social entrepreneurship. However, they face pervasive gender-specific challenges including limited skills and social constraints.

This project was designed not only to upskill female founders of small and medium social enterprises but also to help them gain a more global perspective, develop their network, and cultivate a deeper sense of appreciation for other ways of running a social enterprise as well as their own.

This project will contribute to the development of an international relationship between the two communities from which the participants are drawn. It will incorporate both a meaningful cultural exchange and an increased commercial awareness of the respective products generated in each location.

The benefits of this event will continue to contribute to the broader Australian effort to create a meaningful and ongoing economic relationship between Australia and India. A report titled 'An India Economic Strategy to 2035', delivered to the Australian Government by Peter N Varghese AO, emphasises the enormous potential mutual benefits to be derived from a bilateral commercial relationship between the two economies. By creating this connection between the women social entrepreneurs of these two communities (Panjab and Western Sydney), this project offers one valuable building block for this ongoing economic relationship.





## OUTSCALING MARVI IN ABHY

### RESEARCHERS

Professor Basant Maheshwari (Lead), Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua, Associate Professor Roger Packham, Dr Dharma Hagare, Dr Brenda Dobia.

### FUNDING BODY

Australian Water Partnership (DFAT)

### FUNDING PERIOD

June 2020 to May 2021

The MARVI (Managing Aquifer Recharge and Sustaining Groundwater Use through Village-level Intervention) project has been in operation in Rajasthan and Gujarat for the past eight years, and has developed a participatory approach for groundwater monitoring, community engagement, groundwater recharge and demand management.

This follow-up project focuses on developing:

- MARVI project sites as 'living laboratories' for the training and demonstration of farmers and other stakeholders
- capacity-building resources for groundwater management training
- strategic response to mitigate water management challenges for women and other village communities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project will expand the impact of the MARVI work into other parts of India.

## KICKING GOALS FOR WESTERN SYDNEY: FAN ENGAGEMENT AND EXPERIENCE AT BANKWEST STADIUM

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Jess Richards, Dr Michelle O'Shea, Dr Daniela Spanjaard, Dr Francine Garlin, Dr Timothy Hall.

### FUNDING BODIES

Parramatta Eels and Western Sydney University \$20,000

### FUNDING PERIOD

June 2019 to December 2022

Stadiums function as important pieces of civil architecture, by connecting sports clubs to the communities around them while giving local fans a home to be proud of. Through investigating stadium design and use from a fan perspective, as well as factors that can inhibit or enhance the fan experience, this research provided insights for Parramatta Rugby League Club to improve fan engagement, satisfaction and retention at Bankwest stadium (now known as CommBank Stadium) on match day.



## COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS RESEARCH GROUP

### RESEARCHERS

Associate Professor Neil Perry, Associate Professor W Kathy Tannous, Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua, Dr Heath Spong, Dr Edward Mariyani-Squire, Professor Amir Mahmood.

This group aims to improve the practice of cost-benefit analysis in NSW and beyond. We seek to ensure that new programs and policy are correctly evaluated and that all economic, social and environmental implications have been considered. As such, we seek to evaluate new projects and policy and affect decisions regarding the allocation of resources. Where relevant and appropriate, we seek to change CBA guidelines, write public submissions on existing CBAs of new projects, and improve the analysis of new projects and policy indirectly through the upskilling of public servants.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

We are currently engaged in funded projects with

- Transport for NSW (\$195,000 over three years) to analyse the productivity benefits of transport projects
- the Australian Research Council (\$600,000 over two years) to articulate the value of alternative forms of housing
- the Capital Markets CRC Limited (more than \$400,000 over three separate grants) with other scholars both within the University and from other institutions
- evaluation of the Education Pathway Pilot Program for the NSW Department of Education (\$336,697).



## CARBON ACCOUNTING AND SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH GROUP

### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Professor Qingliang Tang, Dr Hanlu (Ruby) Fan, Professor Yi-Chen Lan, Jinan University, Professor Hongtao Shen.

**University of Western Australia:** Professor George Shan

**Edinburgh Napier University:** Professor Simon Gao

**Chinese University of Hong Kong:** Professor Robin Hui Huang

**University of Toronto:** Professor Yue Li

**Macquarie University:** Dr Le Luo

**University of Sydney:** Dr Lie Ming Tang

It has become alarmingly apparent that moving towards a low-carbon world is critical. For current and future accounting professionals, these changes carry an opportunity to directly support climate change mitigation in many ways. This group is led by Professor Qingliang Tang, and consists of active researchers from Australia, North America, the UK, China and Hong Kong. The members of the group are among the top 50 authors in the field of carbon accounting in terms of citation in business journals (Zahra Borghei 2021) and top contributors to publication on carbon accounting in accounting journals (He et al. 2021).

Our research team contributes to the knowledge in understanding how accounting can play a role in transition to carbon neutrality. We focus on developing carbon management frameworks and providing research-based insights for policymakers and companies. Our research helps Australian firms to achieve long-term sustainable development by adopting proactive climate-change strategy. It explores how businesses change their carbon disclosure, performance and management practices in



response to new carbon regulations, and how these changes may impact business operations and stakeholders' behaviours and decisions. All these research projects have significant practical implications and help our industries better transition to carbon neutrality.

We have developed various carbon accounting teaching materials for undergraduate and postgraduate students so that they are equipped with the most cutting-edge carbon accounting knowledge. We have a strong publication track record in carbon accounting. Our team has so far published book chapters and papers in high-quality international research journals (including 4A\* and 21A), and our paper 'Gender Diversity, Board Independence, Environmental Committee and Greenhouse Gas Disclosure', published in British Accounting Review (A\*), was recognised as the most cited article (all-time) in 2021 (Google Scholar citations: 910).

We have led and participated in many competitive research projects funded both internally and by external funding organisations. Furthermore, we currently have six higher degree by research (PhD and master's) students at Western Sydney University and have had six PhD students in carbon accounting complete within the past 10 years at Western Sydney University alone – excluding those at other universities in our group. In addition, one of our PhD graduates, Le Luo, was named on Stanford University's prestigious World's Top 2% Scientists List (in the Accounting field), which lists the most widely cited of the more than 8 million active scientists worldwide in various disciplines. Moreover, our group members have served as ad hoc reviewers for more than 30 high-quality journals and as associate editors, guest editors and editorial board members for a range of the top accounting journals.

### PROFESSOR QINGLIANG TANG

PROFESSOR OF ACCOUNTING AND  
MEMBER OF THE CARBON ACCOUNTING  
AND SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH GROUP

While we all understand the threats climate change poses to our environment – rising sea levels, more extreme temperatures, more frequent severe weather events – we are perhaps less aware of its serious threats to our economy. These include the implications of its effects on human health and safety, damage to infrastructure, strain on the supply of utilities, and disruptions to global supply chains as well as to specific sectors such as agriculture and tourism.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is therefore of critical economic as well as environmental urgency, and this is what drives Professor Qingliang Tang's research in carbon accounting and reporting and carbon neutrality management.

"The purpose of my research is to explore the best approach to achieve a net zero emissions future for companies in Australia and around the world," Professor Tang explains. "This will assist managers of organisations to understand and manage climate risks and opportunities, enhance energy-use efficiency and strengthen competitiveness – achieving a win-win outcome by enhancing economic growth and reducing carbon emissions."

The ultimate goal of Professor Tang's research in this field is to support companies to transition towards a carbon-free business model, and it's the critical importance of achieving this objective for all generations to come that motivates his work.



"I've devoted myself to this field of study due to the urgency of the looming threat of climate change," he says. "I feel our generation has an obligation to protect our ecosystem."

To further advance this goal, Professor Tang also leads the Carbon Accounting and Sustainability research group (CASR) – a collaboration of academics, research students, government and other individuals who pool their respective expertise to research, educate and train others in the role that accounting can play in helping organisations to manage their greenhouse gas emissions and achieve carbon reduction targets.

"Our team is in the leading position in carbon accounting research in the world," Professor Tang says. "There is a shortage of people who have the knowledge and skills of carbon accounting, reporting and management. Thus, our team will develop carbon accounting teaching materials and curricula for accounting and business students who have aspirations for climate-related careers in the future."

In this way, both Professor Tang's individual and collaborative research is progressing our transition towards a low-carbon economy, and thus a healthier environment – and a more sustainable society.



# KEY FOCUS AREA: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Businesses are challenged by the need to constantly innovate, respond to rapid technological advancements and manage their supply chains amid disruptions. Our applied research in this area aims to investigate managerial challenges and problems in innovation, technology adoption and supply chain management, with a special focus on small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Our strong research capabilities have been developed over the past decade, as demonstrated through top-tier research publications and recognised by external competitive research funding bodies and industry.

Using sophisticated, diverse research methodologies and multidisciplinary collaborations locally and internationally, we have created high-quality research outputs that inform managerial decision making. We are determined to conduct research to find new knowledge adoptable by management practitioners.

This research theme is centred around the INTUIT priority research initiative led by Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala. Current research projects relate to the topics of environmentally sustainable supply chains, innovative SMEs, supply chain resilience, cost-optimised inventory management, innovation commercialisation, and technology adoption, focusing on blockchain and Industry 4.0 technologies.

## APPLICATION OF LEAN AND SIX-SIGMA IMPROVEMENT METHODS: A CASE OF COAL SUPPLY CHAIN

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Premaratne Samaranayake

### FUNDING BODY

McLean Management Consultants \$1,500

### FUNDING PERIOD

December 2021 to November 2022

An integrated approach of lean and six-sigma implementation is proposed for investigating processes that are inherited in the organisation processes and that generate problems and bottlenecks affecting the overall operations in the selected supply chain.

This research aims to investigate problems associated with current processes of an industry-specific supply chain, and propose a holistic approach for addressing those problems at process level, using a combination of lean and six-sigma methods adapted through a comprehensive approach of active engagement of several stakeholders under a different and unique operating context from the selected case scenario.

Lean strategies offer a method for resolving production efficiency and supply chain process problems and thereby improving the effectiveness of the overall supply chain and customer satisfaction.

Based on the findings of the case study analysis, particularly in regard to issues at process level and the root causes of those problems, guidelines will be developed using the proposed integrated approach for addressing those with priorities identified.

The following specific and quality outcomes are envisaged.

- Report of the completed project
- A working paper for publication

This study will contribute to improving the research capacity of the chief investigator, through industry engagement and further opportunities for potential industry-based research collaboration.



# INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT RESEARCH FOR BUSINESS GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS (INTUIT) RESEARCH GROUP

## RESEARCHERS

Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala (lead), Dr Henry Lau, Dr Hilal Hurriyet, Associate Professor Neil Perry, Dr Premaratne Samaranayake, Associate Professor Stella Wu, Dr Lil Rodriguez Serna.

## PHD CANDIDATES

Rola Fanousse, Muhammed Salman Asif, Samantha Weerabahu.

The INTUIT research group carries out research under the three main themes of innovation, technology, and supply chain management, focusing on conducting cutting-edge research addressing the rapid changes in Australian and global business contexts. It focuses primarily on small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and aims to create new knowledge that informs decisions and innovative practices of SMEs in their responses to be relevant and adaptive to rapid technological advancements and be socially and environmentally responsible.

The multidisciplinary expertise of member researchers and emerging higher degree researchers is harnessed through dynamic research collaborations and an expansive approach towards projects. The research team has demonstrated capabilities in using a diverse set of research methods and the capability in innovative designs and deliveries of empirical and operations research projects using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala and Dr Henry Lau have published their collaborative research projects in top-tier journals, received

competitive research funding and been invited to present their research at both local and international conferences. Projects on agribusiness and food supply chain research benefit from the strong partnership with the Global Centre for Land-based Innovation in collaboration with Professor Brajesh Singh and industry partners.



## INTUIT PROJECTS

Below are some recently completed INTUIT projects. Current projects investigate the factors influencing Industry 4.0 technology adoption decisions and how businesses make sense of big data to create insights for strategic decisions.

### ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF INDUSTRY 4.0 TECHNOLOGIES

We explored the organisational capabilities required for successful implementation of Industry 4.0 technologies by conducting a systematic review of the relevant scholarly literature published from 2017 to 2021. A taxonomy of organisational capabilities was developed to assist managers to enhance the success in the process of adopting Industry 4.0 technologies. (D Nakandala, R Fanousse)

### BENEFITS OF EARLY-ADOPTER INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK IN INNOVATION COMMERCIALISATION

Using data collected through in-depth interviews with senior managers of 14 successful innovative firms in Australia, end-user involvement in the innovation commercialisation process was analysed using the thematic analysis method. The presence of diverse strategies for selecting early adopters and mechanisms for sourcing their feedback were identified.

Beyond project-specific immediate benefits, user feedback provides important sustained benefits for process and business model innovations through organisational learning. (D Nakandala, H Hurriyet, N Perry)

### AN INDUSTRIAL BLOCKCHAIN-BASED DECISION FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBAL FREIGHT MANAGEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY CHAINS

An industrial blockchain-based global freight decision framework was proposed which incorporates consortium blockchain technology with the multi-criteria and group-based decision-making approach of the group decision based best-worst method. It considers a decentralised mechanism of pairwise comparisons in the industrial blockchain platform, and secure and commonly-agreed pairwise comparison across the network to reach a consensus on the most appropriate carrier, shipping lane and 3PL company. (D Nakandala, H Lau, P Tsang)

### DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF EXTERNAL NETWORKS AND INTEGRATIVE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEE INTEGRATION ON SME INNOVATION AMBIDEXTERITY

This work contributes to the scholarly arguments on innovation strategy supporting the importance of balancing exploratory and exploitative innovation in firms instead of

choosing one strategy over the other. Based on survey data collected from managers of Australian SMEs and analysed using PLS-SEM, it shows that employee integration is a common antecedent of ambidextrous innovation, the differential effects of market-oriented and knowledge-oriented networks and that the benefits of knowledge networks for exploratory innovation are realised fully through absorptive capacity. (D Nakandala, T Nguyen, H Lau)

### INDUSTRY 4.0 TECHNOLOGY CAPABILITIES, RESILIENCE AND INCREMENTAL INNOVATION IN MANUFACTURING FIRMS: A SERIAL MEDIATION MODEL

The link between Industry 4.0 technology implementation and resilience was investigated by collecting data using a survey with manufacturing firms in Australia. Industry 4.0 technologies have direct effects on both operational and supply chain resilience in manufacturing firms. These relationships are mediated by incremental innovations in firms. (D Nakandala, R Yang, H Lau, S Weerabahu)

## THE BUSINESS OF FEEDING A NATION: HOW OUR RESEARCHERS ARE SUPPORTING INDIA'S FUTURE FOOD SECURITY

When a group of agricultural universities in India wanted to ensure their students would graduate with the innovation and entrepreneurship skills they'll need to ensure the populous nation's future food security in a rapidly changing world, they sought out the expertise of researchers at Western Sydney University.

The resulting collaboration has led to the development of a specialist multidisciplinary short course that incorporates the latest research-based knowledge in business, entrepreneurship, food and agriculture across both the Australian and Indian contexts, translating it into a practical, skills-based program for the contemporary Indian agrifood industry.

Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the School of Business and leader of the Agribusiness theme at the Global Centre for Land-Based Innovation, explains how the project came about.

"Universities today are keen for their students and staff to be creative, innovative and entrepreneurial," she says. "In parallel to discipline-specific studies, they require programs that develop entrepreneurial attitudes, behaviours and skills in business venture creation.

"So when this group of universities approached Western Sydney University to develop a course for their students, we put together a multidisciplinary project team comprising myself; Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment Research Development Advisor Dr Nisha Rakhesh; and Launch Pad Senior Business Advisor Inu Rana.

"Together, we integrated our research-based knowledge and expertise in business alongside agrifood disciplines with the capabilities of the University's tech start-up incubator, Launch Pad.

"The resulting short course, called Innovation and Entrepreneurship, exposes students to trends in digital and sustainable agrifood innovations and entrepreneurial opportunities, directs them towards socially and environmentally sustainable ventures, equips them with relevant advanced skills and toolsets they can readily use, and allows them to learn from successful entrepreneurs."

The course also allows for the translation of some of Associate Professor Nakandala's own research findings into a teaching and learning program beyond Western Sydney University. With resource constraints an ever-present challenge for young firms, having access to insights from the latest research into strategies proven to lead to success will allow them to optimise their limited resources to sustain innovation as they grow.

"In one of my recent projects we investigated innovative firms in Sydney that have successfully commercialised technology-embedded product innovations to market," Associate Professor Nakandala says. "Our study revealed how these firms strategically select early adopters of their innovative products, engage with them, manage supply chain complexities and draw benefits from user feedback in the innovation commercialisation stage. This is the kind of knowledge young entrepreneurs need to have when they want to successfully commercialise their own innovations.

"Another example involves the short food supply chains in urban Sydney, where we identified innovative supply chain management strategies adopted by successful firms. These firms interestingly used their collaborations with suppliers, customers and competitors to simultaneously meet competing efficiency and product variety goals and minimise product waste. My team developed a decision support system, adoptable by SMEs (small and medium enterprises) for cost-optimised sourcing from both regular suppliers and competitors in the same market. This approach differs from the competitive market dynamics and asks firms to collaborate innovatively with other players in the market. Twenty-first century entrepreneurs need to be aware of these innovative strategies."

Dr Rakhesh notes that it is particularly important to make such knowledge and skills available to the agricultural sector. "Agriculture is the cornerstone of the economies of

most developing countries, and contributes significantly to their GDP," she says. "It's an area that needs innovative ideas and solutions to address food security, production, resource efficiencies and changing climate patterns. This means the future of agriculture needs young entrepreneurs. So this project is very important, because the designers of the future are learning in our universities today. As educators, it's our responsibility to train and equip them with the skills they need to explore creative ideas."

Following the success of the course's pilot delivery in 2021, the team is now extending it to cater to the growing demand from other Indian agricultural universities, engaging with them to contextualise the content and consider innovative business models.

"In times of disruption, we need multidisciplinary approaches to respond to complex challenges," Associate Professor Nakandala observes. "Young entrepreneurs are the ones who will be able to introduce sustainable, technology-driven solutions to those challenges in the future. So we need multidisciplinary research engagements to produce new knowledge and provide real exposure for aspiring entrepreneurs to address those complex challenges with innovative solutions."

Launch Pad's Inu Rana very much agrees: "Entrepreneurship is the pathway to navigating through the complex scenarios and challenges of today, and thriving in – and in spite of – disruption," she says. "Entrepreneurship is the gateway to a better world, to a better future for this generation. The themes that this course touches upon are set in foundational entrepreneurship principles – sustainability, global scenarios, transformed industry sectors and interdisciplinary approaches. These are the foundations that are very relevant to students of this age as future leaders of this world."

## THIRD SECTOR RESEARCH GROUP

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Ushi Ghoorah, Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua, Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista, Dr Wayne Fallon, Ikenna Asogwa, Eddy Widjaja.

### PHD CANDIDATES

Ikenna Asogwa & Eddy Widjaja

This transdisciplinary research group will concentrate researchers and practitioners with an interest and expertise in third-sector research, whereby the third sector comprises primarily of not-for-profit organisations, charities and social enterprises. The group will primarily focus on conducting research that is broadly related to disclosures, accountability, social impact and innovation within the third sector, in Australia and abroad.

The primary outcomes of the group will be to:

- disseminate research in high-impact journals, trade publications and industry presentations
- foster research collaborations with cross-institutional colleagues, both local and international
- enable partnerships with industry partners (including third-sector organisations and Australian regulators)
- facilitate the successful application of external grants to further support the research agenda of the group
- attract and support higher degree by research students with an interest in third-sector research.

These outcomes will explicitly further the research objectives of the School as well as those of the University.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

#### FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS OF FUNDS: AN EXPLORATION OF AUSTRALIAN NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

Funded by the Accounting and Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand (AFAANZ) \$5000

#### TECHNICAL CAPACITY AND VISUAL PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORT DISCLOSURES

Funded by a Western Sydney University Early Career Researcher Fellowship grant \$19,535

#### DEVELOPING A DATABASE ON THE ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT DISCLOSURES MADE BY AUSTRALIAN NFPS

Funded by the School of Business

#### GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTIONS OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT DISCLOSURES: AN AUSTRALIAN INVESTIGATION

Funded by the School of Business



## SOCIAL ROBOTS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION RESEARCH GROUP

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Aila Khan, Dr Michael Lwin, Dr Omar Mubin, Isha Kharub, Mohammad Aoun.

Social robots are humanoids that have been designed to socially interact with people. While industrial robots have been assisting us in manufacturing and transportation for decades, social robots are a more recent development. These robots have mostly been used by researchers in the areas of health (e.g. in aged care homes) and education (e.g. in teaching of a language to primary school students). More recently, these robots have been employed by businesses as 'greeters' (e.g. hotel or airport concierges), information providers (e.g. product location in retail outlets) and even entertainers (e.g. singing, dancing or telling jokes in a mall; Nieto et al. 2014). It is expected that the number of social robots will increase as organisations have found them a useful tool in engaging with stakeholders, especially clients.

In Australia, there is a limited number of social robots currently available. Most of these are with universities or research institutes. Researchers in the field of human-robot interaction have been working with social robots for a decade now. Australians, unlike the Japanese, are cautious of this new form of technology. There are concerns voiced about loss of jobs, safety, trust and, generally, ethics in the use of social robots. It is agreed, nevertheless, that the use of such machines is on the rise.

Our research examines whether robots affect an employing organisation's image. Just as an advertisement influences an organisation's image, similarly we propose to find a link between the robot's image and the organisation's image. Since technology is well recognised to cause anxieties in some segments of the population, we are also interested in evaluating people's anxiety levels with reference to the robot.

### PUBLICATIONS

- Kharub, I., Lwin, M., Khan, A., & Mubin, O. (2021). Perceived service quality in HRI: Applying the SERVBOT framework. *Frontiers in Robotics and AI* 8, 746674. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frobt.2021.746674>
- Mubin, O., Kharub, I. & Khan, A. (2020.) Pepper in the library: Students' first impressions. In *Extended Abstracts of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (CHI EA '20) 1-9. Association for Computing Machinery, New York. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3334480.3382979>
- Mubin, O., Ahmad, M.I., Kaur, S., Shi, W. & Khan, A. (2018). Social robots in public spaces: A meta-review. In *Social Robotics. ICSR 2018. Lecture Notes in Computer Science* vol 11357. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-05204-1\\_21](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-05204-1_21)

**DR JESS RICHARDS**

LECTURER, SPORT MANAGEMENT

It was chancing upon a late-night televised English Premier League football match as a teenager that first sparked Dr Jess Richards' fascination with sporting fans and the match-day experience – and ultimately led to a vibrant research career in the field.

Studying for her HSC into the early hours one night, the St George youngster and self-described “rugby league girl through and through” was surfing the channels for some background noise when she came across the unfamiliar game, and was captivated by what she saw.

“I remember watching that game and being absolutely fascinated with the crowd,” she recalls. “The singing, the movement of people around the stadium – I’d never seen anything like it.”

Her interest piqued, she entered university and a few years later moved to England to research its Premier League fan experience, where she found match day even more electrifying firsthand.

“The fans there are incredibly ritualistic, even superstitious,” she says. “They’ll do things like always walk a certain route to the stadium, because it passes their grandmother’s house who’s passed away now, but it’s where they used to play football as a kid. It made me realise how incredibly important the space is to them. In Australia we don’t really have traditions like that – we just go to the pub, walk from there to the stadium, then go home afterwards – but it’s very different in other countries.”

On returning to Australia, Dr Richards continued to research the fan experience and began working with sporting clubs and organisations to enhance it. She is a passionate believer in diversity of representation in sport, in stadium precincts



being inclusive, multi-use spaces, and in the benefits of engagement in sport for all.

“Australia is quite far behind other countries when it comes to putting on a show on match days,” she says. “So one of my major research goals is to work with sporting clubs to create memorable match days that are inclusive and fun for fans, as well as economically sustainable for the organisation.”

“I also think stadium precincts should be used every day of the week – not just for sport but also for concerts, restaurants – they should be enjoyed by all members of the community, not just those who want to go and watch a footy game on a Friday night.”

It’s particularly timely work, with the Sydney Football Stadium redevelopment nearing completion and Australia having secured a number of upcoming major international sporting events, including the 2023 FIFA Women’s World Cup, the 2026 Commonwealth Games and the 2027 (men’s) and 2029

(women’s) Rugby World Cup. It’s also important work in the wake of COVID-19 restrictions having curtailed such experiences.

“We saw the impact of sport being taken away during COVID, and the huge impact that had on people’s mental health,” Dr Richards says. “Sport on the weekend has always been a constant in people’s lives – it’s been a way of seeking comfort, an escape after a busy working week – and it holds such an important place in the Australian psyche and culture.”

“It also brings people together, and in particular it brings all kinds of people together – if you put on a Parramatta shirt and walk down Church Street, suddenly you’re best mates with everyone you meet! It’s an incredible way to engage with other people and be part of a community. So creating memorable match days is a way we can build community at a time when we need it more than ever.”

**DR PREMARATNE SAMARANAYAKE**

SENIOR LECTURER, HUMAN RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

With the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions having exposed weaknesses in supply chains around the world, one of Dr Premaratne Samaranayake's key areas of research has recently been thrust from behind the scenes into the spotlight of everyday conversation.

Disruptions to supply chains – whether due to material scarcities, labour shortages, production delays or logistical snarls – were once seen purely as the concern of industry, but we now understand firsthand that their impacts extend far beyond a firm's bottom line.

Dr Samaranayake has of course always understood this, and it's one of the reasons he's passionate about improving supply chain performance – that it has a direct positive impact on individuals and communities. He explains how these systems can be made more resilient in the face of such events.

"Supply chain resilience can be built into systems in two ways," he says. "The first is through resistance – where a system can be built to withstand any event that might conceivably happen, based on our experience and lessons learned from the past. At some point, though, when such an event does happen, the system will reach capacity, and when it does it then needs to be able to move quickly into recovery – which is the second aspect of resilience."

As well as improving supply chain performance, Dr Samaranayake's work includes modelling and simulation of real-world logistics and transport situations. A recent project directly influenced planning of the Parramatta Light Rail project, including zoning and infrastructure development and provision of adequate parking facilities.



Other research interests include business process improvements; Industry 4.0 adoption in manufacturing; and sustainable protected cropping – each of which similarly has direct implications for individuals as well as for business.

Industry 4.0, also known as the 'fourth industrial revolution', refers to the emergence of 'smart' manufacturing, which makes use of technologies such as digitalisation, robotics and machine learning to increase productivity and efficiency and enhance value and customer service. SMEs in particular may struggle to transition to this competitive new setting, and Dr Samaranayake's work assists them to do so smoothly for best customer experience.

Protected cropping is the practice of growing crops in protected conditions such as greenhouses, made increasingly relevant by climate change and population growth. "My work in this area looks to increase the sustainability of this practice by addressing the key concerns of multiple stakeholders

– including growers, consumers and governments – not only to maximise dollar value and minimise energy use but also to ensure food security and safety and to minimise environmental impacts."

Outside his own research projects, Dr Samaranayake takes pride in providing leadership and mentoring to earlier-career researchers, which he sees as a way of paying forward the crucial support he received early in his own, now very established, career.

This philosophy echoes the broad theme that underpins all his work – ensuring that systems run smoothly and that individuals and communities can sustainably be provided with what they need, when they need it.

# DEPUTY DEAN'S UPDATE ON RESEARCH AND AACSB ACCREDITATION



In 2021, the School of Business was awarded accreditation by AACSB International (the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) for its excellence in business education. AACSB accreditation is the longest-standing, most prestigious form of global accreditation that a university and its business programs can earn. Fewer than six per cent of business schools globally are AACSB accredited. Achieving accreditation was the result of extensive self-review and international peer evaluation against rigorous criteria and standards of quality academic and professional excellence, including benchmarks in research quality and impact.

In addressing the AACSB research benchmarks, the School reported the increasingly external focus of university research planning. The Australian higher education sector has taken an outward turn. Australian universities have embraced research impact and engagement as key corollaries to their focus on research quality. For research to support the community,

a key prerequisite is that the research be of a sustained quality and serve as a foundation to increased external income, increased collaboration and partnerships. Research quality and partnerships are key conduits to increased integration with industry and the community and, through this, to increased engagement and impact.

The School's commitment to the AACSB research benchmarks is ongoing, underpinned by the requirement for accredited schools to demonstrate continuous improvement. Our addressing of these benchmarks works in parallel with our obligations to the Australian Research Council (ARC) in its measurement of research quality and its assessment of research engagement and impact.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MEG SMITH**  
DEPUTY DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS





# KEY FOCUS AREA: HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Research within our Health and Wellbeing focus area explores how initiatives can prevent disease and illness, reduce costs, promote good health and wellbeing, and encourage healthy lifestyles in individuals and communities. The environment in which we live, the social, economic and cultural background from which we come, and the work we do, all affect our physical and mental wellbeing.

Our research is multidisciplinary and collaborative. We recognise that achieving health equity calls for a whole-of-society response. To this end, we work with governments, industry and communities, implementing evidence-based interventions to create transformational improvements in health and wellbeing. The research projects conducted at the School within this focus area are as follows.

## HOW TO PROMOTE BRILLIANT HEALTHCARE FOR COMPLEX HEALTH ISSUES

### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Associate Professor Ann Dadich, Dr Premaratne Samaranayake, Dr Hilal Hurriyet, Dr Cathy Kaplun, Dr Catharine Fleming, Kaitlyn Hockey, Simone Kaplun.

**University of Technology, Sydney:** Professor Nick Hopwood, Dr Barbara Doran, Annie McKinnon, Jasmine Xie, Josiah Guanzon.

**South Eastern Sydney Local Health District:** Dr Christopher Elliot, SA Health, Kady Moraby.

**Artist:** Kate Disher-Quill

To redress the imbalanced focus on all that is wrong with healthcare, this project focused on brilliant healthcare, particularly within the context of complex health issues, such as feeding difficulties in children. Complex health issues are often associated with particular challenges for patients, carers, clinicians, managers and the community. Understanding how brilliance happens in this context is likely to clarify how it might happen in less complex situations.

Why focus on children's feeding difficulties? Firstly, they are common. Secondly, they can have personal, social and economic implications. Thirdly, they are not always readily 'fixed' by health services. Collectively, this research depicts a somewhat bleak portrayal of feeding difficulties and feeding care.

To redress the preoccupation with the negative, the team considered brilliant feeding care – that which exceeds expectation, bringing joy and delight to those who experience it. This involved understanding the experience of receiving and delivering feeding care through interviews with carers and clinicians, who shared artefacts that represented feeding care,

particularly that which is brilliant. Additionally, the team analysed feeding clinic data and facilitated workshops with clinicians in order to map processes in a feeding clinic within the public sector, identify bottlenecks and their root causes, and ascertain improvement opportunities.

### PUBLICATIONS

Dadich, A., Hockey, K., Kaplun, C., Fleming, C., Hopwood, N., Moraby, K., & Elliot, C. (2021). Clinician and carer moral concerns when caring for children who tube-feed. *Journal of Child Health Care*, Epub-ahead-of-print, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13674935211052842>

### PRESENTATIONS

- Podcast for the *Journal of Child Health Care*
- Webinar titled 'Tube-feeding success: What does it look like?'
- Online panel discussion as part of Feeding Tube Awareness Week

### ARTWORK

An animation to share the research findings with a wider audience



## ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF INSTALLING SPRINKLERS IN SOCIAL HOUSING IN NSW

### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Associate Professor W Kathy Tannous (Lead), Dr Gulay Avsar, Nargess Ghassempour, Mark Whybro, Associate Professor Kingsley Agho.

**University of NSW:** Dr Lara Harvey

**Fire and Rescue NSW:** Trent Curtin

This study aimed to determine the health impacts of residential fires in social housing, and to examine sprinklers as a protective factor. It used linked administrative data to identify all residents of NSW who had experienced a residential-fire incident in the years 2005 to 2014. The risk of residential-fire incidents and associated injuries was found to be higher for residents in social housing, and the report recommended that government agencies implement the addition of sprinkler systems.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Report to Fire and Rescue NSW
- Conference presentation



## TOBACCO RETAILING AND SMOKING IN AUSTRALIA

### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Professor Suzan Burton (Lead), Dr Francine Garlin.

**Cancer Council WA:** Lorena Chapman, Dr Natalia Lizama.

**Cancer Council Queensland:** Associate Professor James Farrell

**Daffodil Centre:** Sam Egger, Dr Christina Watt

### FUNDING BODIES

Cancer Council WA, Cancer Council Queensland and Cancer Council NSW \$113,690

This project is a continuation of a more than 15-year relationship between Professor Suzan Burton and the Cancer Council, initially in NSW, and later extended to Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland. It is evidence of Western Sydney University's focus on engaged and impactful research, working with organisations on real problems, with the aim of making a difference in the community. Previous related research resulted in Western Sydney University's FOR (field of research) in Marketing achieving the highest rating 'High' in the latest Excellence in Research Assessment (ERA) Impact and Engagement evaluation exercise.

This project investigates the incidence of tobacco sales and smoking areas in alcohol-licensed premises in WA, Queensland and NSW. It also examines the attitudes and intentions of the owners/managers of the premises to selling tobacco and maintaining smoking areas.

Tobacco smoking is the single most preventable cause of disease and death in Australia today. Although smoking prevalence has declined over recent decades, more than one in 10 Australians continues to smoke. There is increasing evidence that tobacco retailers contribute to smoking prevalence by making tobacco more accessible and increasing

environmental cues to smoke. This project extends previous work by the team looking at how the distribution of tobacco (especially, but not limited to, in alcohol-licensed premises) contributes to smoking rates and makes stopping smoking harder for those who would like to quit.

Previous research has shown that a large majority of the public support increased restrictions on smoking with the aim of decreasing harm due to smoking, but the tobacco industry has claimed that tobacco sales are important for small businesses. The research results to date, however, have shown that tobacco sales are not important to many alcohol-licensed premises, and that the proprietors and managers of many alcohol-licensed premises support enhanced tobacco control legislation in premises like their own. Such findings are critical to establishing that further tobacco control legislation can be both evidence based and effective. The project aims to contribute to that evidence base by demonstrating how a range of measures, such as uniform legislation relating to the licensing of tobacco retailers, and smoking restrictions in alcohol-licensed premises, can decrease the health toll due to smoking.





## RESEARCH ON PRECISE POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN POVERTY-STRICKEN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS IN CHINESE BORDER PROVINCES

### RESEARCHERS

Ming Yan, Mengtao Gao, Dr Youqing Fan.

### FUNDING BODY

Yunnan Minzu University

### FUNDING PERIOD

June 2016 to December 2021

This project studies precise poverty alleviation in poverty-stricken ethnic minority areas in Chinese border provinces, using a small area estimation approach



## A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF MOBILE PHONE APPS TO CURB ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Aila Khan (Lead), Dr Michael Lwin, Isha Kharub, M Aoun, Dr Omar Mubin (School of Computer Data and Mathematical Sciences).

### FUNDING BODY

School of Business

### FUNDING PERIOD

January to December 2021

Mobile apps have become increasingly prevalent in modern society, and persuasive technology has a broader market than ever. Mobile-based alcohol cessation apps can promote positive behaviour change in users and improve the overall health of our society.

This research aimed to understand the various features users respond to, and make design recommendations for alcohol cessation apps. It reported on three sources of feedback (user ratings, user reviews, MARS App Quality score) provided on 20 alcohol cessation apps in the Google Play Store. The findings suggest that self-control-type apps received far greater positive user reviews than motivational apps. This trend was not observed through numeric user ratings. We also speculate on design recommendations for apps that are intended to assist in inhibiting alcohol intake.



## THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES IN NSW

### RESEARCHERS

*Western Sydney University*: Associate Professor W Kathy Tannous (Lead), Dr Gulay Avsar, Nargess Ghassempour, Associate Professor Kingsley Agho.

*University of NSW*: Dr Lara Harvey

*Fire and Rescue NSW*: Trent Curtin

### FUNDING BODY

RoZetta Institute Limited \$86,250

### FUNDING PERIOD

July 2021 to December 2023

This study will measure the total health impacts of residential fires in NSW in terms of deaths and injuries. It will be conducted through the examination of the impacts of fire incidents on individuals' use of health services over time. This is a PhD scholarship project, with the candidate to work on fire incident data linked with ambulance, emergency department, hospital admission, outpatient and deaths data at population level over 10 years.





## ECONOMIC COSTS OF THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES: A CASE STUDY IN NSW

### RESEARCHERS

*Western Sydney University:* Associate Professor W Kathy Tannous (Lead), Dr Gulay Avsar, Fahmida Rahman, Associate Professor Kingsley Agho.

*University of NSW:* Dr Lara Harvey

*Fire and Rescue NSW:* Trent Curtin

### FUNDING BODIES

Fire and Rescue NSW and Western Sydney University Graduate Research School \$75,000

This study will measure the economic costs of residential fires for individuals, health system, businesses and the wider society. It will assess vulnerabilities and risks of fire, together with the benefits of fire risk protection measures. This is a PhD scholarship project, with the candidate to work on fire incident data linked with ambulance, emergency department, hospital admission, outpatient and deaths data at population level over 10 years.







# KEY FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION AND WORK

Our research within this focus area draws on the population diversity of Western Sydney to underpin investigations that explore access to education and employment. Researchers emphasise how equity can be achieved for our most disadvantaged people and communities, by understanding and challenging current processes and policies. Our research is concerned with the potential for education to transform the way people live and learn, and in improving students' employability. Access to employment opportunities for the most vulnerable is championed by our researchers. The research highlighted in this report illustrates the range of projects undertaken under this focus area at the School of Business, while demonstrating a commitment to high-quality research that creates positive opportunities and impacts for individuals, communities and society.

## EMPLOYEES' EXPERIENCE OF WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Sarah Duffy (Lead), Dr Michelle O'Shea, Associate Professor Nida Denson (Social Sciences), Associate Professor Emilee Gilbert (Psychology).

It has been estimated that workplace sexual harassment cost the Australian economy approximately \$3.8 billion in 2018 (Deloitte Access Economics, 2019). Sexual harassment also, of course, has a substantial cost for its victims and for the businesses who employ them. This does not, however, have to be the case.

To understand the current situation at Western Sydney University, we turned to the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), which is the peak body on this topic in Australia. With its permission, we adapted and extended its survey tool and, from October to December 2021, surveyed Western Sydney University employees in order to understand the:

- prevalence, nature and reporting of workplace sexual harassment at Western Sydney University
- risk factors for particular population groups and workplace settings
- perceived effectiveness of existing formal and informal measures to address or protect employees from workplace sexual harassment.

We provided a confidential report of our findings that has been viewed by the University's Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Barney Glover and by its Senior Management Team. Professor Duffy has now joined Western Sydney University's Respectful Relationships Taskforce, and our team has ethics approval to run the survey and follow up with in-depth interviews in 2023 and 2025.





## DIASPORA PHILANTHROPY

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Aila Khan (Lead), Bruce Cameron, Siddharth Jain.

Diaspora philanthropy, a growing phenomenon, provides exemplary cases of generosity. Being an immigrant country, Australia has a significant proportion of its population which considers itself to be a member of an ethnic diaspora. Historically, it has been common for immigrants and their descendants to maintain close ties with their native communities. Over the past few decades, with better systems of communication, several overseas-based, not-for-profit organisations have reached out and connected with migrants spread across the globe. Allowing overseas charities to register in Australia provides an opportunity for diverse communities to play a significant role in the development of their original homelands.

Previous studies have suggested that 'donating' is directly related to the economic conditions prevalent in the relevant country. This is why, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was forecasted that charitable donations would fall by 20 per cent. However, our research with one large Pakistani charity organisation in Australia proved otherwise. We were able to explore reasons – mostly religious and social – which helped us to understand this phenomenon. With an average donation amount of just \$10, our analysis reflects the beliefs of a community whose charitable giving is grounded in the Islamic religious concepts of Zakaat, Sadaqah and Qurbaani, and not determined by economic concepts such as income or wealth.



## ACADEMIC NOMADS: CONSTRUCTING CAREERS AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT

### RESEARCHERS

Western Sydney University: Khalida Malik (Lead), Dr Dorothea Bowyer.

Middlesex University, UK: Professor Anne-Wil Harzing, Dr Nico Pizzolatto.

Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Chile: Associate Professor Juan Felipe Espinosa-Cristia

The constraints imposed by neo-liberalism and the extension of managerialism, marketisation and commodification have seen a marked increase of casualisation in the higher education workforce. It becomes increasingly difficult for those in precarious forms of employment to construct career and professional identities. There is a pervasive narrative of disadvantage in relation to those academics who lack employment security and, like nomads, these academics continue to seek multiple and flexible contracts, either in academia or industry.

Partnering with international collaborators in Chile and the UK, this study explores the experiences of these academics in a way that disrupts the conventional 'doom and gloom' narrative captured in terms such as marginalisation, exploitation and exclusion. The emphasis remains on individual agency and on breaking this down as a form of resistance, reworking and resilience. This adds to a more nuanced understanding of how these academics act in their own interests by deploying a variety of strategies. This study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining a survey and semi-structured interviews.



## CONSUMER CULTURE: A COMPARISON OF SUPERMARKET 'TRIBAL' BEHAVIOUR IN AUSTRALIA AND THE UK

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Daniela Spanjaard (Lead), Lynne Freeman,  
Professor Louise Young, Lisa Rohanek.

This project forms part of a study that investigates the presence of consumer 'tribes' within the supermarket shopping setting. It seeks to increase our understanding of how these communal groups affect interactions with other shoppers, and with the retailer, across the purchase cycle. Research (Spanjaard & Freeman 2022) has revealed that consumers are acknowledged to be culture producers and become important contributors in a range of market settings, and this is influenced by the relationship and exchanges between the supermarket and the consumer. Such consumption choices also play a vital role in establishing consumer social identities, shifting in line with situational and lifestyle factors.

This study seeks to confirm that consumers perform rituals that are grounded in collective benefits and that marketplace cultures are motivated by the pursuit of mutual interests, which are often supported through shared beliefs, social practices, traditions and status structures. The project applied a unique data collection method whereby participants in Australia and the UK uploaded streams of consciousness onto an online bulletin board in the form of audio, video, photography and text. This allowed the researchers to engage and interact with participants as their shopping activity occurred, and to uncover significant insights in real-time mode.



## EXPERT OPINION: WORK VALUE CASE IN THE FAIR WORK COMMISSION

### RESEARCHERS

Associate Professor Meg Smith (Lead), Dr Michael Lyons.

### FUNDING BODY

Gordon Legal \$57,500

As researchers within the School of Business, we prepared a report as expert opinion for Gordon Legal acting for the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation in proceedings before the Fair Work Commission. These proceedings are considering an application, on work value grounds, for wage increases to be made to the federal Aged Care Award 2010 and Nurses Award 2020.

Using relevant labour law, statistical data, peer-reviewed research and industry and government reports, the report initially addressed the gender pay gap in Australia, gender-based undervaluation of work, and barriers and limitations to the proper assessment of work value in feminised industries and occupations. It also assessed whether there was a gender-based undervaluation of the work done by personal care workers and registered and enrolled nurses in residential aged care, using an analysis of the history of the setting of pay rates in relevant industrial instruments, and evidence tabled through the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and the 2020 Aged Care Workforce Census.

The report concluded that the work of the personal care worker classification of the Aged Care Award 2010 and nursing classifications of the Nurses Award 2020 working in residential aged care facilities is undervalued. New work demands on personal care workers and nurses have not been accompanied by rises in award pay rates that reflect this increase in work value. Both the gender profile of the personal care worker and nursing workforces in aged care and gendered assumptions about the skill level required in care-giving work underpinned the report's conclusion that the undervaluation is gender based. The report has been tabled in evidence before the Fair Work Commission and the tendered expert opinion has been the basis of cross-examination.



## EDUCATION PATHWAYS PILOT PROGRAM

### RESEARCHERS

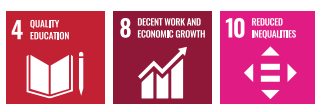
Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua, Dr Heath Spong, Associate Professor Katrina Barker (Education) (Lead), Professor Kathryn Holmes (Education), Professor Michele Simons (Education), Associate Professor Nida Denson (Social Sciences).

### FUNDING BODY

NSW Department of Education

This research examines a pilot program trialled in 24 NSW high schools, which was designed to improve education and career outcomes for young people. The NSW Department of Education describes the Educational Pathways Pilot Program (EPPP) as an innovative program that introduces students to different post-school study and employment opportunities. The 10 unique initiatives that comprise the EPPP aim to create a career ecosystem by facilitating young people's transition between school, tertiary education and employment. Surveys, interviews and extent datasets from the Department were used to understand the views and experiences of all key stakeholders (students, parents/carers, educators, training organisations and businesses/employers) and to identify the benefits both of the 10 individual initiatives and of the program overall. The study also included a cost-benefit analysis to identify the most cost-effective initiatives based on the current cost data, in addition to developing longer-term projections based on costs and benefits forecasts, and projected student numbers in future years.

The research findings provide evidence of aspects of career education that are most beneficial to developing students' career-related knowledge and skills, and facilitating students' decision making and increasing their confidence about their future study and career. Results from the cost-benefit analysis reveal which of the 10 initiatives are most cost effective and deliver a positive return on investment both in the short and longer terms. Recommendations stemming from the study have been applied by the Department and resulted in the NSW Government investing a further \$13.5 million to expand the program to 163 schools in 2022.



## NATIONAL TAX CLINIC PROGRAM

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Connie Vitale (Lead), Dr Michelle Cull.

### FUNDING BODY

Australian Taxation Office \$300,000

### FUNDING PERIOD

2019 to February 2022

The National Tax Clinic Program was established by the Australian Government to support unrepresented individual taxpayers and small businesses, while providing practical real-life work experience for students considering the tax profession as a career path. In 2021 the Western Sydney University Tax Clinic was one of 10 universities participating in the program, whereby students provided help to clients under the supervision of experienced academic staff who are also registered tax agents.

The clinic uses a partnership pedagogy which empowers students as they navigate the professional tax accounting landscape and secure a sustainable career. It assists in bridging the gap between academic preparation, the professional workplace and volunteerism. Through intensive training using fictional case studies and tax software, students build their generic and technical skills before applying them to real-world circumstances and clients.

The clinic assists the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to highlight systemic issues with current processes and tax legislation. It also conducts applied research, with taxpayers and students completing online surveys reflecting on their experiences. Findings show that the experience has improved students' self-efficacy across all 16 dimensions measured. Our research also tells us that taxpayers leave the clinic feeling more confident and informed.

Since commencing operations, the Tax Clinic has assisted more than 300 citizens and 100 small businesses, lodging more than 800 tax returns and business activity statements. The Western Sydney University Tax Clinic is an inclusive project engaging and servicing the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Australian Tax Office, Centrelink, charities including Wesley Mission and the Salvation Army, and numerous financial counselling services. These interactions showcase Western Sydney University's staff and students and their willingness to help those in need.



## **FINANCIAL LITERACY, FINANCIAL PLANNING AND FINANCIAL WELLBEING RESEARCH GROUP**

### **RESEARCHERS**

Dr Michelle Cull, Dr Connie Vitale, Dr Walid Bakry, Graeme Mitchell, Greg Cunningham, Sharne Plum, Csilla Skultety, Siddarth Jain, Loretta Iskra.

Led by Dr Michelle Cull, this emerging research group falls under two of the University's major themes (Health and Wellbeing, and Education and Work) and aligns with the School's priority research initiative of Fair Go for Australian Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services. Membership consists of both staff and HDR students who have an interest in engaged research in the topic area that has both an academic and practical impact. During 2021, the group provided support and feedback to one another on research in the field and established small research groups to discuss research topics that crossed disciplinary boundaries with the objective to apply for external grants and publish high-impact journal articles.

### **CURRENT PROJECTS**

#### **EARLY WITHDRAWAL OF SUPERANNUATION DUE TO COVID-19**

Funded by an AFAANZ grant \$6837 and a Western Sydney University School of Business Small Project Grant \$3760

This project seeks to understand the motivations of Australians taking early withdrawal of their superannuation in 2020 as part of the government's COVID-19 rescue package.

#### **THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE DIGITAL PROVISION OF FINANCIAL PLANNING ADVICE**

Funded by a Western Sydney University School of Business Small Project Grant \$2000

This project assesses the adoption of digital processes by financial advisers in response to the changes in work required due to COVID-19 and explores the impact of these changes on overcoming barriers to accessing financial planning advice.





# KEY FOCUS AREA: PROPERTY, BANKING AND FINANCE

Our researchers in this focus area are conducting progressive research addressing the rapid changes in the Australian and global economic environments. The COVID-19 pandemic and the social and economic crisis it triggered have caused immeasurable suffering in the past two years, and greatly affected the financial and property sectors in Australia and the rest of the world. Our academics from the disciplines of economics, finance, accounting and property are engaged in researching market volatility, investor behaviour, banking and regulation, and energy. Researchers in this focus area continue to publish in high-quality domestic and international accounting, economics and finance journals. In the niche area of property investment, we have continued our leadership in research, focusing on property risk, the role of property in portfolios, property investment vehicles, and international property. Research activities in 2021 included the following.

## HOUSING SUBMARKETS AND URBAN DISADVANTAGE: INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Youqing Fan (Lead), Associate Professor Hassan Gholipour, Associate Professor Awais Piracha, Dr Mustapha Bangura, Professor Bingqin Li, Professor Mengtao Gao, Dr Stanley James, Associate Professor Chyi Lin Lee (UNSW).

The purpose of this study is to examine the importance of housing submarkets in explaining housing and social dynamics.

Affordable housing lessons from Sydney, Hong Kong and Singapore: Three keys to getting the policy mix right. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/affordable-housing-lessons-from-sydney-hong-kong-and-singapore-3-keys-to-getting-the-policy-mix-right-123443>

### PUBLICATIONS

Spatial mismatch, enclave effects and employment outcomes for rural migrant workers: Empirical evidence from Yunnan Province, China. *Habitat International* 86, 48-60.

Another tale of two cities: How Sydney is divided by residents' accessibility to jobs along the latte line. *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/another-tale-of-two-cities-access-to-jobs-divides-sydney-along-the-latte-line-96907>

The determinants of homeownership affordability in Greater Sydney: Evidence from a submarket analysis. *Housing Studies*, 1-27.

House price diffusion of housing submarkets in Greater Sydney. *Housing Studies* 35, 1110-1141.

Housing price bubbles in Greater Sydney: Evidence from a submarket analysis. *Housing Studies*.

How your income and where you live increase your likelihood of getting COVID-19. *The Fifth Estate*. <https://thefifthestate.com.au/urbanism/planning/how-your-income-and-where-you-live-increase-your-likelihood-of-getting-covid-19>





## **'FAIR GO' FOR AUSTRALIA'S BANKING, SUPERANNUATION AND FINANCIAL SERVICES CUSTOMERS: COMPARATIVE INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS ON BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT, BOARD CHARACTERISTICS AND REMUNERATION**

### **RESEARCHERS**

Professor Kevin Daly (Lead), Associate Professor Anil Mishra.

This research project has a multifaceted focus which covers three to four distinct aspects surrounding financial governance and financial regulation. The research program over three years will produce useful and credible knowledge that addresses problems important to business and society. The basic argument upheld by the research program is that producing reliable and valid knowledge is both socially engaged and socially responsible.

The 2019 Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry (known as the Hayne Royal Commission) found that: 'There can be no doubt that the primary responsibility for misconduct in the financial services industry lies with the entities concerned and those who managed and controlled those entities: their boards and senior management.' Our research represents a responsible, useful and credible exercise which addresses these current issues, important to both the banking and financial services sector and society more generally.

Our research seeks to review the theoretical and empirical literature on the relationship between bank governance and performance, providing a comprehensive understanding of the existing research and offering guidance for financial institutions and regulators on the major points of consensus and disagreement among researchers on this issue.

### **RESEARCH PAPER**

In recent years, regulators and investors have shown increasing interest in the promotion of diversity in corporate boards of directors. In this paper, we employed data from Australian bank boards to provide new insights on the diversity-risk nexus, based on a dataset of Australian banks for the period 2004 to 2019. We examined board gender diversity from two perspectives across the board and among board leaders. Our results supported the context-dependent impact of gender diversity on the board of directors and highlighted the beneficial impact on the risk of banks when considering gender diversity and the presence of a dominant gender group in the boardroom.

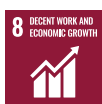
### **OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

Board gender diversity and bank risks: Evidence from Australia. (currently under review by a tier 1 journal)

The effect of banks' board diversity on market-based measures of risk and performance. (book chapter contributed for publication)

### **OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

Enrolled a PhD candidate, Jacie Liu, on a full-time basis to research the core relationships of the Principles for Responsible Investment. The resulting PhD thesis, 'Performance and risk of Australian banks based on boards' gender equity and tenure' is to be submitted for examination in 2022.



**PROFESSOR KEVIN DALY**

DISCIPLINE LEAD, ECONOMICS, FINANCE AND PROPERTY; HDR CANDIDATE SUPERVISOR

The equitable distribution of wealth and other resources is an important principle to Professor Kevin Daly, and one that underpins much of his own research as well as his supervision of others'.

Professor Daly is the Discipline Lead for Economics, Finance and Property, as well as an experienced research supervisor who has seen more than 20 higher degree by research (HDR) candidates through to successful completion as principal supervisor.

He explains how this key research interest first emerged. "My first job was in merchant banking in London. It was during a recession in the UK, and I saw people lose their homes – they were literally forced onto the streets because the bank had foreclosed on their mortgage and they had no other options. That instilled in me a passion for wealth distribution and equality, within the banking and finance industry in particular. So that's one of the areas I now focus my research on – and I also promote students' interest in pursuing research in those same areas."

Some of Professor Daly's recently published work examines this issue. With the world's wealthiest 5 per cent of people today controlling 60 per cent of the world's total wealth – meaning the remaining 95 per cent of us control just 40 per cent between us – it's an important and timely subject that has very real implications for all of us.

"Wealth inequality is becoming more and more of an issue for politicians and policymakers globally," Professor Daly explains, "because if we have such inequality as exists in the world today, then we have to deal with more poverty.



"As wealth becomes more concentrated, its distribution becomes less equitable. When a small proportion of the population is holding most of the wealth, they typically spend that wealth at the luxury end of the market, investing in things like gold, or building luxury hotels – things that do not add value to society or humankind in general."

This kind of spending fails to redistribute their wealth, as it remains within a small economy in which only the ultra-rich participate.

"If they were to spend their wealth on, for example, social housing, transport, environmental initiatives or renewable energy, that type of spending would benefit humankind overall," Professor Daly says. "And there are certain ways in which we can use the resources in the economy to redistribute wealth for the benefit of all humankind."

Professor Daly encourages the students he supervises to focus on similarly topical, internationally focused issues that will have a real impact on society.

"I encourage them to keep up to date with what's happening globally in economics, finance and politics – not just in our own backyard. Because what's happening globally affects us – we all affect each other. We're all on the same planet, and we're all affected by each other's actions, so it's important to be knowledgeable about the broader context."

## LONG- AND SHORT-TERM RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL AND AUSTRALIAN BANK PROFITABILITY

### RESEARCHERS

Associate Professor Partha Gangopadhyay (Lead), Dr Mamun Billah, Dr Walid Bakry.

The aim of this project is to use the intellectual capital (IC) valuation model proposed by Sydler et al. (2014) to predict future profitability performance of senior management in Australian banks. The application of the model will help us to verify whether it is possible to measure senior management profitability performance using IC expenses as proxies.

A firm's human resources are critical in generating sustained competitive advantages, and IC is critical to achieve its purpose. This research will explore new ways to assess IC using publicly available financial statement data to verify management's profitability performance. The model will allow us to use IC expenses as monetary proxies for human, structural and relational capital to predict future profitability performance of commercial banks and other organisations. The main purpose of the project is to use the financial ratio available from publicly available financial reports to measure the short-term and long-term impacts of IC on banks' profitability.

Achieving the successful application of the IC valuation model will provide a valuable tool for management to value a company's IC resources and measure its impact on financial performance.

The current phase of the project has been extended to examine the above IC impact on bank profitability on banks in New Zealand, the US and the UK over a 20-year range.



## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE DIGITAL PROVISION OF FINANCIAL PLANNING ADVICE

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Greg Cunningham (Lead), Csilla Skulketty, Dr Michelle Cull, Loretta Iskra, Associate Professor Ann Dadich.

### FUNDING BODY

AFAANZ (Accounting and Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand) \$6,837

### FUNDING PERIOD

January to December 2021

This research assesses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on financial planning advice provision, which traditionally involves numerous face-to-face meetings as part of an ongoing relationship. The study explores whether the forced adoption of digital technology as a means to provide financial advice will be permanently incorporated into ongoing business practices. Additionally, this research assesses financial literacy implications associated with the digital provision of financial advice and issues related to accessing advice, advice affordability and adviser-client relationships.

Self-efficacy, trust theory and the technology acceptance model underpin this research, which is an exploratory mixed-methods study.

The study employs interviews and a survey of advisers and practice support staff in addition to interviews with clients. Descriptive statistical analysis of surveys and thematic analysis of transcribed interviews are used to assess the adoption of digital financial advice and the impact on advice accessibility and affordability.

Results of the study assist in identifying the various digital tools and processes available to deliver financial advice and potential barriers to their adoption. The results assist in evaluating the factors that help and hinder digital financial advice for advisers, their practices, and their clients while also making a key contribution to technology acceptance models and literature concerning self-efficacy and trust theory in the financial planning context.



## MOBILE PAYMENT ADOPTION AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID IN INDIA

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Neeru Sharma

Over the past few years, the Government of India has made substantial efforts towards demonetisation and moving to cashless transactions. A strong push has given the non-banking population easy access to financial products. Mobile wallet companies have demonstrated the advantages of mobile payments, and the banks are now trying to make inroads into rural India by launching innovative mobile-based banking solutions. Digital financial inclusion is motivating rural and low-income earning populations to develop digitally based livelihood opportunities.

This research project is timely in proposing a research model linking the relevant factors driving the use of mobile phone-based applications for financial transactions at the bottom of the pyramid in India and empirically examining the construct interrelationships. Based on preliminary qualitative research, the factors driving the use of mobile applications have been identified as perceived value, communication through local social networks, rapport with bank/mobile wallet personnel, trust in service providers, satisfaction with the service, and security mechanisms. Further, perceived value is conceptualised to be a multidimensional construct constituted by convenience, affordability, usability, work performance and community benefits. The study will also examine the influence of age and gender on the modelled relationships.

## DEVELOPING A PREDICTIVE MODEL FOR CREDIT DEMAND USING MACHINE LEARNING AND BIG DATA MODELS

### RESEARCHERS

Associate Professor W Kathy Tannous (Lead),  
Associate Professor Oliver Obst,  
Geoffrey Chang.

### FUNDING BODIES

RoZetta Institute Limited and illion Australia  
\$180,000

### FUNDING PERIOD

May 2017 to June 2021

This study aimed to identify and quantify the consumer credit behaviours that are predictive of future credit demand and credit risk at individual and cluster levels, and to develop a leading indicator of consumer consumption using their behaviour.



# HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH

## MESSAGE FROM **THE ASSOCIATE DEAN, GRADUATE STUDIES**

Graduate research – also referred to as higher degree research (HDR) – is a crucial component of the School of Business. More than 100 higher degree researchers in doctoral, Master of Philosophy and Master of Research degree programs compose the vibrant HDR community at the School, with various HDR projects in the disciplines of management, economics and finance, human resources management, accounting, property and marketing.

Our HDR strategy is centred around excellence, skill development, impactful research and integration. We drive HDR candidates towards excellence to develop in-depth understanding and expertise in their areas of research; deliver high-quality and impactful research relevant to today's organisations, industries and economies; and seek opportunities to communicate their research to diverse audiences.

We provide opportunities for our HDR candidates to broaden their research skills through access to expert supervision and in-house skills development programs. We celebrate our highly multicultural HDR community, and promote an inclusive culture with equitable opportunities in an environment of peer learning through intellectual dialogue.

We seek out industry collaborations in our doctoral research projects, and invite industry,



government and international partners to co-create projects that address complex problems requiring in-depth research, data collection and analysis, and to work together with us to create industry internships for our doctoral candidates.

I invite you to read about the accomplishments of our HDR candidates in 2021.

The list of all HDR graduates 2021, together with their thesis titles and abstracts, is provided as Appendix 2 to this report.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
DILUPA NAKANDALA**

ASSOCIATE DEAN, GRADUATE STUDIES,  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

## HDR CAPACITY-BUILDING EVENTS

### HDR STUDENT COLLOQUIUM

The School of Business Higher Degree Research (HDR) Colloquium is a wonderful opportunity for candidates at all stages of their master's or doctoral research to present their work, receive considered feedback, discuss any theoretical, methodological and related issues arising from their work, and be inspired by their fellow candidates.

Organised by the School with the active participation of HDR candidates, this annual event also keeps our academics and other participants informed of what our HDR candidates are researching, and allows them to provide constructive feedback to refine their research and help them identifying key focal areas for future publications.

The Online HDR Colloquium in 2021 was very well attended, with around 70 participants throughout candidates' presentations and three special sessions. The first special session featured five HDR candidates who had paid research assistance appointments as part of the competitive Degree Researcher Development Grant program 2020-2021. This initiative was designed to give HDR candidates opportunities to develop their research skills by providing them with paid positions in the School's projects, allowing them to work with academic researchers, be part of internal research teams and programs, and contribute to the development of research outputs.



The second special session featured two eminent guest speakers: Professor Russell W Belk, Professor of Marketing at Schulich School of Business, York University, Canada; and the late Professor Lynne Eagle, Professor of Marketing at James Cook University and Adjunct Professor of Marketing at Charles Darwin University and at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. (The highly respected Professor Eagle passed away in October 2021, and we extend our sincere condolences to all who were fortunate enough to know and be inspired by her.)

The third special session was a debriefing in which session chairs and participants shared their reflections and explored opportunities for improvement.

The list of presentations from the Higher Degree Research Colloquium 2021 is provided as Appendix 3 to this report.



### RESEARCH SKILLS TRAINING FOR HDR CANDIDATES

With the commitment to producing future doctoral graduates with excellent research method skills, process knowledge, and communication skills, we have a comprehensive suite of research training programs delivered by the Graduate Research School of Western Sydney University and the School of Business. Among the research training events held at the

School of Business in 2021, highlights are voice and drama coaching and presentation skill development programs, research databases by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, software such as Qualtrics, publishing by Nature Research and methods such as Choice Modelling.

### HDR WRITING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Successful completion of a PhD degree is based on external examination of a written thesis by the candidate. In addition, research outputs by the candidate in the form of high-quality research publications increase their likelihood of post-PhD employment opportunities. For these reasons, the research writing skills of HDR candidates are a significant factor in the success of both their studies and their future careers.

The objective of the School's HDR Writing Skills Development Program is to proactively provide individualised support, advice and guidance to HDR candidates in need of strengthening their research writing skills. This program contributes to our HDR strategy for achieving excellence, and involves supporting HDR candidates to focus on developing their writing skills from early in their candidatures and to attend research literacy training provided by the Graduate Research School as well as programs designed and delivered by the School specifically for our own HDR candidates.

### RESEARCH WRITING BOOTCAMP FOR HDR CANDIDATES

This two-day residential program, held in Katoomba, was offered for the first time in 2021 and attended by 20 HDR candidates. The novel initiative aimed to provide:

- intensive research writing training for participants
- a dedicated block of time and space for focused independent writing in a conducive environment, in the presence of peer HDR candidates and advisors
- an opportunity for participants to discuss their writing challenges and receive guidance from advisors
- an opportunity for participants to recover from the long period of COVID-19-induced working from home, reconnect with their peers and revitalise the School's HDR community.

The program was packed with writing training sessions, activities and discussions as well as time for independent writing.

The opportunity for participants to network with peers and coaches was perceived as a great chance to recover and restore their confidence after the sense of isolation created by the COVID lockdown.

Overall, the program was recognised by participants as having been valuable, useful and memorable.



### SUPERVISORS' LOUNGE SESSIONS

The Supervisors' Lounge is an informal setting in which the School's HDR supervisors meet and discuss important supervision matters, share their supervision experiences and explore ways to improve HDR performance.

In 2021, we held two Supervisors' Lounge sessions, both online.

In July we invited Dr Louise Kippist, Assurance of Learning coordinator, to present the first round of Course Learning Outcome measurements for PhDs for the period 2016 to 2019. We also discussed the Assurance of Learning practices implemented in our PhD program and ways to ensure that all our candidates graduate with the required skills.

In November we invited Patricia Parish from the Careers Education Team to discuss employment opportunities beyond academia for PhD graduates. This topic contributes to our HDR strategy for increasing the employability of our PhD graduates.

### SCHOOL OF BUSINESS OUTSTANDING DOCTORAL RESEARCH AWARD

The objectives of this award, offered for the first time in 2021, are to recognise and reward outstanding doctoral research performance within the School, and to encourage current and future HDR candidates towards high-quality and impactful research and the production of a portfolio of research outputs during their candidature.

This novel initiative contributes to the School's HDR strategy for achieving excellence in HDR.

HDR supervisors are able to nominate a PhD graduate who received approval to graduate in the previous year, and the School delegates the assessment of applications to an independent external expert panel.

### SCHOOL OF BUSINESS 2021 3MT

**Winner: Felix Nguyen**

Presentation Title: Board Diversity and Firm Performance

**People's Choice  
: Taghreed Aljaffal**

Presentation Title: Australians are Good at Wasting Food



### DR MICHAEL HODGINS

RECIPIENT, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
OUTSTANDING DOCTORAL RESEARCH  
AWARD 2021

The development of any new clinical health intervention is a considered process that takes into account the latest theoretical understandings and the best available evidence. But this doesn't always see it translate seamlessly into practice, where different individuals, each with existing experiences, knowledge and behaviours, endeavour to deliver the best possible care to equally diverse patients within a wide range of practice settings.

So how can we accommodate these context-specific factors to ensure that models of care developed at research, policy and management level will actually deliver the intended benefits to patients and clinicians in practice?

Understanding and addressing this issue is a passion for Michael Hodgins. It's what drove his PhD research, and ultimately earned him the School's inaugural Outstanding Doctoral Research Award 2021.

"We sometimes get so bogged down in asking whether something has a good evidence base behind it that we forget to ask, 'Does it work in the real world?'" Hodgins observes. Changing that focus is something I aspire to do."

To this end, Hodgins investigates the subjectively and socially constructed nature of knowledge, and how this influences its application in practice.

"I'm interested in how clinical practitioners think and feel about their practice, and in how they apply evidence-based clinical interventions in everyday practice in the real world," he explains. "I'm particularly passionate about looking at health contexts and systems through the lens of assemblages – of people, spaces,



materials, cultures, behaviours, emotions – and how we can make things work for the benefit of patients, clinicians and healthcare organisations."

Hodgins' thesis, titled *Emotions and mindlines: A palliative care perspective*, specifically explored the role of emotion in shaping palliative care clinicians' 'mindlines'. Coined in 2004 by UK researchers John Gabbay and Andrée le May, this term refers to the set of personal internalised guidelines that experienced clinicians tend to follow, based not directly or solely on written sources but informed by them and then influenced by their own and colleagues' collective professional experiences, understandings and communications with each other and with patients. Importantly, as Hodgins' research found, they are also influenced by emotions.

"I chose palliative care as the context for this research because it's a very emotional space," Hodgins says. "It's an interesting space, too, in terms of how care is organised. Palliative care

is not always based strictly on achieving the best clinical outcomes – it's often focused more on social and wellbeing outcomes – and I was interested in how this might affect how clinicians feel about what they do, and how it might influence their practice."

Hodgins' research findings suggest that the role of emotions in translating theoretical knowledge to practice should be more explicitly acknowledged, and that clinical care guidelines should be flexible enough to allow practitioners to make decisions that will result in the most beneficial care being delivered in a given situation.

"One of the best things about doing research is finding a connection between theory and the real world," Hodgins says, "and that's really what this project was all about – how can we apply these clinical models of care and ensure they'll be genuinely beneficial to people in the real world?"

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# OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

As well as the key focus areas previously identified, several of our researchers in 2021 worked on niche areas of interests. At the School of Business we champion an interdisciplinary approach, whereby our researchers are encouraged to collaborate with the many schools, institutes and disciplines across the University to tackle the most pressing problems and explore promising developments within the field of business. Examples of such projects include those on the following pages.

# MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN, ENGAGEMENT

## DR MICHELLE CULL

ASSOCIATE DEAN, ENGAGEMENT,  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Engaged research is of crucial importance as the School of Business at Western Sydney University plays a major role in serving the needs of Greater Western Sydney – the third-largest economy in Australia and home to almost 150,000 businesses. With strong growth expected in the region in coming years, the School of Business is ideally placed to develop and promote multidisciplinary research that has real-world impact.

Our engagement activities include working with local chambers of commerce, professional bodies, multinationals, SMEs, microbusinesses, government and community organisations. We continue to build mutually beneficial strategic relationships, integrating theoretical knowledge with industry practice to enrich the lives of those in both our local and international communities.



This year, to ensure that our academic staff remain up to date with the latest events in business, we introduced an Industry Fellowship Award which provides allocated

time to work closely with industry partners to build relationships, support curriculum innovation and ensure that our research is aligned with business practice.

## SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMES) IN GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY: A SURVEY OF GROWTH, RESILIENCE AND CRITICAL CHALLENGES

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chikweche (Lead), Dr Anna Evangelista, Dr Michelle Cull, Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista, Associate Professor Ann Dadich, Dr Sheree Gregory.

This was a joint project with an industry partner, William Buck Advisory. The project's objective was to address an important research and practice gap on how small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Greater Western Sydney can enhance their growth prospects and resilience in a post-COVID-19 dynamic business environment. These businesses are an important driver of economic development in the region and account for most of its formal employment, thereby reinforcing the need to understand the dynamics and factors that influence their capacity for growth and resilience in a changing business environment. Accordingly, the project considered:

- how confident SMEs were in weathering the COVID storm (i.e. SME sentiment)
- whether and how SMEs accessed government support, and the perceived effects
- how SMEs built resilience to optimise sustainability.

Findings from the study confirmed the positive impact of COVID-19 grants from governments on the ability of the businesses to develop resilience. A key policy recommendation from the study was the need for policymakers to consider a balanced approach to developing supporting policies and programs for SMEs that includes them in co-designing these policies and programs.

### BEST ACADEMIC PAPER AWARD

Chikweche, T., Evangelista, A., Cull, M., Evangelista, F., Dadich, A. & Gregory, S. (2021). SME sentiments, access to government support, and resilience during a pandemic. Paper presented at the 2021 SEAANZ Online Symposium, Australia.

## EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES' SUPPLY CHAINS IN GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chikweche, Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala.

This project aims to investigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on small to medium-sized enterprises' (SMEs') supply chains in Greater Western Sydney, in order to develop a framework for understanding and dealing with potential future disruptions. Given the major disruptions to supply chains during the COVID-19 pandemic that caused both challenges and opportunities for SMEs, there is a need to investigate the antecedents of supply chain resilience within the SME context, responses to disruptions and challenges in developing those responses for mitigating adverse effects and exploiting opportunities.

A key research gap in the literature relates to the lack of extant studies on how Australian SMEs respond to supply chain disruptions, yet this is an important potential constraint considering their overall exposure and dependence on imports for raw materials. The project outputs will help us to understand the behaviour of Australian SMEs and develop strategies for them to effectively responding to future supply chain disruptions.



## A FRAMEWORK FOR AN INCLUSIVE INTEGRATED SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR SMALL-SIZED INDIGENOUS BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chickweche (Lead), Dr Francine Garlin, Associate Professor Ann Dadich, Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista, Dr Sheree Gregory.

The overall objective of this project is to design, develop and introduce an integrated one-stop support portal for small-sized Indigenous Business Enterprises (IBE) in Greater Western Sydney which is informed by consultations from the IBEs themselves.

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Chikweche, T., Garlin, F., Khan, A. & Lwin, M. (2021). A conceptual framework for an integrated one-stop portal to support Indigenous Small Business Enterprises. Presented at the 2021 SEAAANZ Online Symposium, Australia.

## SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES RESEARCH GROUP

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chickweche, Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala, Dr Anna Evangelista, Dr Michelle Cull, Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista, Associate Professor Ann Dadich, Dr Sheree Gregory.

The overarching aim of this group is to bring together multidisciplinary researchers from across the School to collaborate on diverse small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)-related research that can be used to support SME practice and policy in Greater Western Sydney and beyond.

The group's key research focus areas include:

- SMEs' resilience
- government support for SMEs
- entrepreneurship during crisis
- Indigenous business enterprises
- migrant entrepreneurship
- women and youth entrepreneurship
- SMEs and manufacturing
- SME supply chain challenges.

The group collaborates with external partners such as local chambers of commerce and industry partners to conduct research and generate knowledge to be disseminated to a broad audience. For example, the group is committed to conducting ongoing annual surveys of SMEs in Greater Western Sydney, which examine various operational and strategic issues within the sector in order to contribute to continuous and up-to-date engagement with SMEs in the region.



# PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR, GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT'S UPDATE **ON INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS**

Creating and developing international partnerships with overseas universities is a fundamentally important component of Western Sydney University operations. It is through these relationships that increased opportunities for students are developed, including activities such as exchange opportunities for students studying in Australia and those studying abroad at our partner universities. While these student interactions are important, it is also vitally important that universities are able to facilitate interactions between staff and faculty to build relationships and strengthen bonds between universities. Promoting joint research projects across universities further strengthens these bonds by bringing together academic colleagues in a collegial environment which expands the knowledge and research capabilities of all involved.

The School of Business began working with partner the University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City (UEH), in 2008 with the commencement of a Doctor of Business Administration program for academics in Vietnam. Over the years our interaction has grown, with students from Vietnam coming to Australian to study, study abroad groups from Western Sydney University visiting UEH, and Western Sydney University staff teaching some postgraduate courses in Vietnam. In 2021, the Office of the Provost, Vietnam Campus, launched a research initiative to bring together academic staff from the Western Sydney University School of Business and UEH with similar research interests to work jointly on research projects. With the initiative continuing into 2022, a total of 12 joint research projects have been funded to support this collaboration. Bringing together academic staff in the research space further strengthens the connection between the universities and is contributing to an increased academic output with the generation of journal publications, industry reports, and joint funding applications.

## **PROFESSOR YI-CHEN LAN**

PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR, GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT



## THE SOCIAL IMPACTS OF GREEN ROOFS

### RESEARCHERS

Western Sydney University: Dr Aila Khan (Lead), Dr Nicole Ibbett.

University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City: Hoai Anh, Dr Tuan Doan.

University of Technology, Sydney: Professor Sara Wilkinson

### FUNDING BODY

University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City–Western Sydney University Research Initiative \$17,000

Green (also known as vegetated, eco or living) roofs are roofs planted with vegetation on top of a growth medium (substrate). The concept is designed to promote the growth of various forms of vegetation on top of buildings to provide aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits.

Green roofs have number of advantages, but the most frequently studied relate to energy savings for the building. Few studies have adopted a comprehensive framework to adequately investigate the impacts of green roofs on the immediate community or broader society.

In this study, the researchers aim to employ the social impact framework, as recommended for green innovation studies. To accurately measure the impacts of green roofs on nearby communities, the study will look at environmental impacts, health impacts, economic impacts, impacts on social and human capital, and any effects on people's collective as well as place-related identities.

The researchers expect this study to result in the following outcomes.

- Empirical evidence relating to community's perceptions regarding the impacts of green roofs
- A formal report for the management of the site being investigated
- Contribution to the literature on green innovation, which has often not received as much attention

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Presentation at Research Week 2021
- Urban Greening seminar conference presentation at UTS



## INVESTIGATING INDUSTRY 4.0 READINESS AND MATURITY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN VIETNAM: EVALUATION THROUGH A STATUS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

### RESEARCHERS

*Western Sydney University:* Dr Premaratne Samaranayake (Lead), Dr Krishnamurthy Ramanathan, Professor Yi-Chen Lan.

*University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City:* Quan Tran Ha Minh, Khanh Ngo.

This project aims to develop possible strategies that can be adopted by manufacturing firms in selected sectors to transition to an Industry 4.0 setting in a stage approach. The significance of this research is that it provides a review of international best practices that have been adopted by Industry 4.0 leaders, as they moved from traditional manufacturing to Industry 4.0. This study will also develop a conceptual framework that will help to delineate a roadmap for a manufacturing firm to undertake Industry 4.0 transformation and achieve increasing levels of Industry 4.0 sophistication.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

Phase 1 has progressed well, including the hosting of a webinar attended by around 30 managers from manufacturing organisations in Vietnam and a self-assessment of Industry 4.0 readiness by four organisations. The second stage of the project is now in progress, including the planning of webinars involving two companies for further discussion of the findings of the first stage as preparation for Industry 4.0 adoption in their respective organisations.





## SME TRANSFORMATION IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista (Lead), Farid Ahmed, Dr Anna Evangelista, Dr Edward Mariyani-Squire, Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua.

**University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City:** Thi Ngoc Lien Nguyen, Phuong Thai, Associate Professor Mai Dong Tran, Associate Professor Nguyen Phong Nguyen.

Digital technology has transformed most sectors and aspects of society and the economy. This transformation presents enormous opportunities for businesses, including small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In Australia, the government is pushing for all companies to be born global and for 95 per cent of SMEs to have a digital presence by 2030. In Vietnam, the targets are for digitalised companies to account for 20 per cent of each industry sector and 30 per cent of the national economy.

In Australia, small businesses fall far behind Vietnam and the rest of our eleven Asia-Pacific neighbours in various digitalisation measures, including being the second-lowest in using technology to improve profitability. In general, smaller SMEs lag in digital technology adoption compared to larger firms. This study aims to investigate the obstacles, opportunities and implications of the digital transformation of SMEs in Australia and Vietnam. It is anticipated that the findings will help both countries to achieve their digital economy targets and contribute towards theory development and best industry practice.

Three industry sectors in each country will be the focal subject of the study. In Australia, these sectors are construction; health care and social services; and professional, scientific and technical services. In Vietnam, they are transport and storage; accommodation and food services; and human health and social services.

A model of digital transformation based on the Technology, Organisation and Environment (TOE) framework will be empirically tested using survey data from both countries. The total sample size is set at approximately 700 SMEs. The project is expected to be completed by the second half of 2022.



## INNOVATIVE BUSINESS STRATEGIES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19'S IMPACT ON TOURISM

### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Dr Karina Wardle (Lead), Dr Michelle O'Shea, Dr Tim Hall, Professor Yi-Chen Lan, Dr Catherine Link.

**University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City:** La Anh Duc, Ha Thu.

Globally, the tourism industry represents one of the most important economic contributors, yet it is highly susceptible to disaster. Tourism disaster management and recovery literature is still in its infancy, with existing scholarship overwhelmingly dedicated to terrorism and security issues. This research extends this literature by exploring how health disasters, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic, are shaping the tourism sector.

Designed as a comparative study between Sydney and Ho Chi Minh City, the project aspires to understand current issues and

identify steps towards an innovative approach to tourism business operations in response to the economic, social and environmental impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry. Interview and survey methods were employed to investigate challenges experienced by direct tourism stakeholders including travel agents, hotels, restaurants and tour operators due to the COVID-19 pandemic in both regions, and to bring together stakeholders to strategise innovative and best practice tourism industry recovery solutions. While overwhelmingly they sought to pivot and indeed pirouette, in notably fewer

instances longer-term innovations, including changing their profit model, product system and customer engagement, were perceived as valuable. With continued uncertainty and changed consumer habits and preferences, the harnessing of a growth mindset through strategic innovations offers opportunities in the present and longer term.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

The research team has presented at international research webinars and conferences and is developing a library of academic, industry and government outputs including journal papers, reports, case studies and a podcast series to help the industry respond to the current crisis.

The project has secured a Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities (GISU) Alliance Joint Research/Publication Projects Grant for 2022 to extend its work.



## INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYABILITY EVENT ATTENDANCE IN IMPROVING STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY

### RESEARCHERS

Dr Karina Wardle (Lead), Kay Geronikos, Dr Khalil Al Jerjawi, Noor Lazar, Krishan Prasad.

Today's graduates face an increasingly competitive entry-level job market, while at the same time employers from all areas of business plead for alumni who are 'work-ready'. Employability is of strategic significance for the School and for the University as a whole, just as it is for the University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City, as it is a key challenge for universities to produce work-ready graduates. While it is a relatively straightforward process to measure the outcomes of the key academic underpinnings of business theory, it is less clear how to quantify the success of the institution at building students' soft skills.

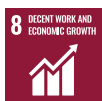
Developing professional relationships and networks at undergraduate stage is highlighted for graduates from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as access to professional networks through family and friends is limited. Such students also lack confidence in their capabilities to network and to secure a professional role. A curriculum response was to embed highly engaging employability experiences in mandatory careers subjects within the Bachelor of Business.

This research investigates the value of employability event attendance in improving student employability. An iterative action research process with partnership pedagogy, reflective practice and peer review inform the approach. Explorative research evaluated the effectiveness of compulsory employability event attendance in improving student

employability. Key benefits identified related to strengthening of soft skills, enhanced motivation and self-confidence to network, and encouragement of students to increase self-awareness through self-reflection on their skills and progression in their academic and career plans.

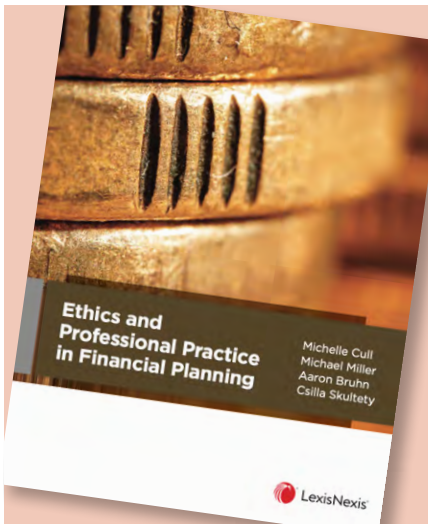
### CURRENT PROJECTS

- We have been accepted to present at HERDSA 2022, the annual conference of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.
- We are also working on a series of journal articles for publication.
- The team is seeking to extend the exploratory study into the value of employability event attendance in improving student employability by pursuing a longitudinal quantitative assessment and incorporating the total Western Sydney University and University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City business student population.



# HIGHLIGHTED RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Disseminating the findings of our research in high-quality publications is an important way of ensuring that it has maximum impact within broader academia, the professions, industry and the wider community. This section highlights some of our most significant publications in 2021, including books, quartile 1 journals and research reports. Quartile 1 journals, based on current Scimago Journal Rankings, are recognised as being in the top quartile of all peer-reviewed journals in their respective fields globally, and as such are an important outlet for disseminating School of Business research findings. A full list of all the publications produced by our researchers in 2021 is provided as Appendix 1 to this report.



## BOOKS

Cull, M., Miller, M., Bruhn, A. & Skultety, C. (2021). *Ethics and Professional Practice in Financial Planning*. Lexis Nexis.

<https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws:62192/>

*Ethics and Professional Practice in Financial Planning* is a comprehensive resource that brings together different aspects of ethics that comprise compulsory education requirements for both existing and new entrants to financial planning. It discusses the application to financial planning of ethical development, theories and decision frameworks. Real-life scenarios, such as Storm Financial and other cases handled by the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), illustrate the hard consequences when things go wrong and the role that process plays in ensuring and demonstrating ethical behaviour.

## QUARTILE 1 JOURNAL ARTICLES

Shen, H., Wu, H., Wu, X. & You, J. (2021). Once bitten, twice shy: The effect of experiencing a client with an environmental accident on audit effort. *Auditing*.

We investigate whether individual auditors increase their audit efforts for other clients after auditing a client involved with a major environmental accident, using a mixed-methods approach. Results from archival and survey data show that (1) auditors work harder, as proxied by abnormal audit fees and audit report lags, after the environmental accident experience; and (2) the effects of environmental accident experience on auditing efforts are (i) moderated by situational factors (industry pollution level and regional environmental regulation) and individual factors (auditor age and position), and (ii) mediated by auditor risk awareness. Our further analyses on the influence of Auditing Standard No. 1631, The Consideration of Environmental Matters in the Audit of Financial Statements, show that auditors' knowledge of this standard strengthens the effects of environmental accident experience on audit efforts, although the standard per se has little impact on audit behaviour. Together, this study offers a psychological account for audit behaviour.

Fan, H., Tang, Q. & Pan, L. (2021). An international study of carbon information asymmetry and independent carbon assurance. *British Accounting Review*.

<https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bar.2020.100971>

Protecting the environment is now a major aspect of corporate social responsibility. However, voluntary carbon disclosure includes disclosing private information on future sustainability that external stakeholders cannot easily verify. Drawing on information asymmetry theory, we predict that companies with higher carbon information asymmetry between insiders and outsiders have a greater incentive to voluntarily engage an external party for the independent assurance of their greenhouse gas statements. Using data from the CDP, we test this hypothesis and find that our proxies for carbon information asymmetry (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions, energy structure) are significantly associated with the adoption of carbon assurance. Further analyses suggest that the probability of carbon assurance is enhanced when carbon disclosure is inadequate to diminish information asymmetry. Finally, our sample companies adopted carbon assurance in addition to financial auditing. This highlights the key point that resolving carbon information asymmetry requires carbon assurance, which cannot be substituted for by financial auditing.

Zhang, L., Tang, Q. & Huang, R. (2021). Mind the gap: Is water disclosure a missing component of corporate social responsibility? *3 Accounting Review*.

<https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bar.2020.100940>

Corporate water stewardship is conventionally internally focused, but now it is becoming a critical issue in a wider sociopolitical context. Drawing on the theory of self-regulation, we investigate the rationale behind, and the factors contributing to, corporate decisions to voluntarily disclose water information via the CDP. The study uses innovative proxies for corporate self-regulation, including water governance, water policy, water actions and water performance. Our results show that these proxies are significantly related to the propensity of the companies participating in the CDP to disclose water information. Furthermore, belonging to a water-intensive industry may moderate the impact of self-regulation on water transparency. Finally, sharing water information privately with key institutional investors is a strategic tool for implementing self-regulation. The study suggests that corporate self-regulation can play a powerful role in reducing corporate water opaqueness when mandatory water legislation is absent or not yet applicable.

Farzanegan, M.R., Gholipour, H.F., Feizi, M., Nunkoo, R. & Andargoli, A.E. (2021). **International tourism and outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19): A cross-country analysis.** *Journal of Travel Research* 60(3), 687-692.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520931593>

This study examines the relationship between international tourism and COVID-19 cases and associated deaths in more than 90 nations. We use a cross-country regression analysis and find a positive correlation between international tourism and the cumulated level of COVID-19 confirmed cases and death by 30 April 2020. Our regression analyses show that countries exposed to high flows of international tourism

are more prone to cases and deaths caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. This association is robust even after controlling for other socioeconomic determinants of COVID-19 outbreak and regional dummies. Based on our estimations, a 1 per cent higher level of inbound and outbound tourism is associated with 1.2 per cent and 1.4 per cent higher levels of confirmed COVID-19 cases and death, respectively, controlling for other factors. When we normalise the number of cases and death by size of population, the statistical significance remains robust, especially for the COVID-19 deaths, while the effect size reduces.

Chen, S., Ying, X., Wu, H. & You, J. (2021). **Carrying on the family's legacy: Male heirs and firm innovation.** *Journal of Corporate Finance*.

<https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcorpfin.2021.101976>

We predict that entrepreneurs are more likely to have a long-term orientation to their decision making if they have male heirs, because traditionally sons, not daughters, have been expected to carry on the family business. Our results support this prediction. Specifically, we find that when entrepreneurs have at least one son, have more sons, and have a firstborn son, their firms are more innovative. The results are robust to a battery of robustness tests, including alternative measures of innovation, instrumental variable approach, and Heckman two-step correction for selection bias. Our further analyses show that the positive association between male heirs and firm innovation is stronger for entrepreneurs with a greater son preference and is weaker for entrepreneurs who are more affected by China's one-child policy.

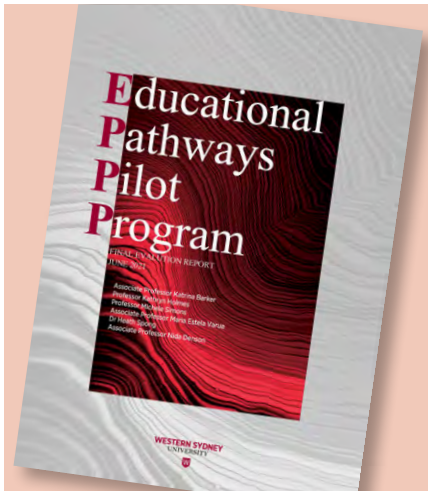


“ The restrictions of the pandemic presented unique opportunities to interact online with colleagues both within and outside Western Sydney University, which not only helped ease the pressure of isolation but provided an opportunity to focus on research. My keen interest in stock market behaviour and how it can be analysed during events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of cryptocurrency really motivated my research effort, and this led to meaningful discussions with my colleagues during the lockdown period. As a result, my colleagues and I successfully collaborated and, through focus, motivation and teamwork, were able to produce a book chapter and six high-impact journal articles during 2021. ”

**DR WALID BAKRY**

PHD, MSC, MBA, BBA  
POSTGRADUATE ACADEMIC COURSE  
ADVISOR, ECONOMICS AND FINANCE;  
AND LECTURER IN FINANCE  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

## RESEARCH REPORTS

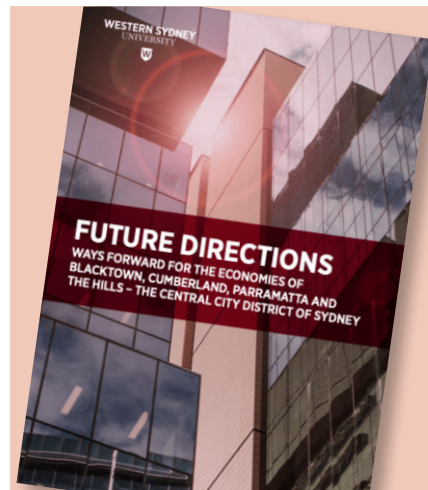


Barker, K., Holmes, K., Simons, M., Varua, M., Spong, H. & Denson, N. (2021). Educational Pathways Pilot Program: Final Evaluation Report.

<https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/serap/Download/?id=443>

This report provides an external evaluation, conducted by Western Sydney University and funded by the NSW Department of Education, of the Educational Pathways Pilot Program (EPPP). The NSW Department of Education describes the EPPP as an innovative program designed to improve further education and career outcomes for young people. It consists of 10 unique pilots, which were trialled in 24 high schools in South West Sydney (n = 15) and on the North Coast (n = 9) of NSW in 2020. The evaluation was informed by quantitative and qualitative sources of data. Surveys were conducted to capture the experiences and views of all stakeholder groups, including students (n = 1,129), parents/carers (n = 40), educators (n = 123), training organisations (n = 21) and businesses/employers (n = 26). Interviews with all stakeholder groups (n = 134) and various Department datasets were used to examine the implementation of the EPPP and informed five in-depth case studies. The case studies served to provide a

contextualised understanding of the perceived value of the pilots and the factors that affected implementation. An accompanying cost-benefit analysis drew from both the survey and case study findings to assess the benefits and costs for each of the EPPP pilots. The evaluation (1) reports on the views and experiences of all key stakeholders; (2) outlines the EPPP intervention-related benefits; and (3) identifies the strengths and areas for improvement to inform future delivery and scalability of the pilots.



O'Neill, P. & Tannous, K. (2021). Future directions: Ways forward for the economies of Blacktown, Cumberland, Parramatta and The Hills – the Central City District of Sydney. <https://apo.org.au/node/312578>

This report examines the economic trajectory of the Central City District economies of Western Sydney (Blacktown, Cumberland, Parramatta, The Hills) in the boom years prior to the COVID-19 recession. The effects of the recession are evaluated in the context of the strengths and weaknesses of these local economies. Pathways to the future are assessed, particularly those relating to the role of local lead firms, the importance of value chain strengthening, and the role of strategic centres.



Cull, M. & Attard, C. (2021). Improving financial capability among university students using a mobile app: Wallet\$mart project evaluation. <https://doi.org/10.26183/r6bs-s098>

This report details the findings of a research evaluation conducted for UniBank (Teachers Mutual Bank Ltd) exploring the effectiveness of the Wallet\$mart mobile app in improving university students' financial capability. Students undertook to trial the Wallet\$mart app during 2020 at Western Sydney University, in partnership with UniBank and supported by app developer Tangible. This report evaluates the effectiveness of the trial and makes recommendations for further development of the app prior to the app being rolled out to university students more broadly.

# RESEARCH PROJECTS

## WITH EXTERNAL FUNDING

PROJECT TITLE	RESEARCHER(S)*	FUNDING BODY	GRANT	FUNDING PERIOD
Active Rugby Hubs: Evaluating the Impact of an Australian Rugby Program	Dr Emma George <b>Dr Jess Richards</b>	Rugby Australia	\$44,600	2020-2022
Articulating Value in Housing Cooperatives	Assoc. Prof. Louise Crabtree-Hayes <b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b> Assoc. Prof. Emma Power	Australian Research Council Common Equity NSW Western Sydney University	\$232,178	2020-2023
Building a System of Indicators to Assess the Effectiveness of Financial Autonomy Mechanism at a Public University in Vietnam	<b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b>	Ministry of Education and Training Vietnam	\$73,837	2017-2021
Clinical Evaluation of Residential Treatment for Eating Disorders	<b>Prof. Phillipa Hay</b> <b>Dr Deborah Mitchison</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> <b>Sinead Day</b>	Butterfly Foundation Postgraduate Research Scholarship	\$90,000	2021-2025
Clinical Evaluation of the Wandri Nerida Residential Care Facility	<b>Prof. Phillipa Hay</b> <b>Dr Deborah Mitchison</b> <b>Prof. Aunty Kerrie Doyle</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Lucie Ramjan</b> <b>Dr Haider Mannan</b> <b>Dr Janet Conti</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> Dr Katherine Gill Dr Kristin McMahon	Butterfly Foundation	\$130,000	2021-2025
Connecting Women Social Entrepreneurs in India and Australia	<b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Felicitas Evangelista</b> <b>Dr Heath Spong</b> <b>Dr Rina Datt</b> Prof. Purva Kansel Meena Sharma	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	\$64,575	2019-2021
Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan: Research Strategy and Implementation	Dr Paul Rymer Assoc. Prof. Uffe Nielsen Prof. Jeff Powell Dr Yolima Carrillo Dr Catriona Macdonald Prof. Matthias Boer Prof. Elise Pendall Dr Rachael Nolan Benjamin Moore Assoc. Prof. Markus Riegler Prof. Juan Francisco Salazar <b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b>	Department of Planning and Environment (NSW)	\$1,800,000	2021-2025
Designing a Dementia-friendly South Western Sydney	Dr Diana Karamacoska Assoc. Prof. Genevieve Steiner <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b> Prof. Nicky Morrison	Maridulu Budyari Gumat	\$2,000	2021-2022

\*Researchers from the School of Business are listed in bold type.

PROJECT TITLE	RESEARCHER(S)*	FUNDING BODY	GRANT	FUNDING PERIOD
Developing a Predictive Model for Credit Demand using Machine Learning and Big Data Models (Capital Markets CRC PhD Scholarship: Geoffrey Cheng Kang Chang)	<b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> Assoc. Prof. Oliver Obst	RoZetta Institute	\$180,000	2017-2021
Economic Burden of Diabetes-related Foot Disease in Australia: Evidence from NSW	<b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b>	South Western Sydney Local Health District	\$120,000	2017-2021
Educational Pathways Policy Pilot Program	Dr Katrina Barker Prof. Kathryn Holmes Prof. Michele Simons Assoc. Prof. Nida Denson Dr Nathan Berger <b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> <b>Dr Heath Spong</b>	Department of Education (NSW)	\$336,697	2020-2021
Establishing Canterbury-Bankstown as a Dementia-friendly Community	Dr Diana Karamacoska Assoc. Prof. Genevieve Steiner Prof. Nicky Morrison <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b> Eman Shatnawi	Clubs NSW	\$11,855	2021-2022
Evidence Bank Development for the Two Priority Vulnerable Groups	Prof. Brian Stout <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b> Prof. Pru Goward Dr Rebekah Grace <b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b>	Department of Communities and Justice (NSW)	\$136,364	2020-2021
Expert Opinion: Work Value Case in the Fair Work Commission	<b>Assoc. Prof. Meg Smith</b> <b>Dr Michael Lyons</b>	Gordon Legal	\$57,500	2021
FPRJ Early Career Researcher Award: Financial Planning	<b>Dr Michelle Cull</b>	Academy of Financial Services United States	\$6,570	2019-2021
Greenescapes: Co-designing Public Spaces in a Virtual World	Dr Cathy Kaplun Mauricio Novoa <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b> Dr Amy-Marie Gilpin	James N Kirby Foundation	\$11,850	2022-2023
Impacts of the Productivity of Industrial Crops on Economic Development in the Central Highlands of Vietnam	<b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b>	Ministry of Education and Training Vietnam	\$60,000	2018-2022
Job Plus Assessments	<b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b>	NSW Treasury	\$9,090	2021
Kicking Goals for Western Sydney: Fan Engagement and Experience at Bankwest Stadium	<b>Dr Jess Richards</b> <b>Dr Tim Hall</b> <b>Dr Michelle O'Shea</b> <b>Dr Francine Garlin</b> <b>Dr Daniela Spanjaard</b>	Parramatta National Rugby League Club	\$10,000	2019-2022

\*Researchers from the School of Business are listed in bold type.



PROJECT TITLE	RESEARCHER(S)*	FUNDING BODY	GRANT	FUNDING PERIOD
Market Analysis: Aged Care Services (Stage One)	Prof. Nicky Morrison <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Felicitas Evangelista</b> Dr Jed Montayre Dr Diana Karamacoska	Catholic Care Social Services	\$50,000	2020–2021
Measuring Cost Savings and Environment Sustainability of Innovative Clean Technology to Organically Recycle Waste in the Health Sector	<b>Dr Michelle Cull</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b>	Opes Industrial	\$135,000	2021–2024
Measuring Cost Savings and Environmental Sustainability of Innovative Clean Technology to Organically Recycle Waste in the Health Sector	<b>Dr Michelle Cull</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b>	Opes Industrial	\$135,000	2021–2024
MSNW: Evaluating Land Use, Placemaking and Wider Economic Benefits	<b>Assoc. Prof. Neil Perry</b> Assoc. Prof. Raye Dufty-Jones	Transport for NSW	\$195,000	2020–2023
My Care Partners: Evaluation Partner South Western Sydney Primary Health Network	<b>Prof. Jennifer Reath</b> <b>Dr Steven Trankle</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b>	South Western Sydney Primary Health Network	\$109,972	2021–2023
No Place to Call Home: How to End Tent Cities	Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich Dr Elizabeth Conroy	Wentworth Community Housing	\$40,000	2020–2022
Outscaling MARVI in ABHY	Prof. Basant Maheshwari Dr Dharma Hagare <b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> Dr Brenda Dobia Assoc. Prof. Roger Packham	Australian Water Partnership	\$95,150	2020–2022
Outscaling of MARVI: Managing Aquifer Recharge and Sustaining Groundwater Use through Village-level Intervention in India	Prof. Basant Maheshwari Dr Dharma Hagare <b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> Dr Brenda Dobia Assoc. Prof. Roger Packham	Australian Water Partnership	\$55,250	2019–2022
Predictive Modelling of Health Trajectories	<b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> <b>Jaehyeon Yun</b> Prof. Daniel F Heitjan	Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre	\$238,560	2020–2022
Quality, Equity and Systems Transformation in Primary Health Care (QUEST-PHC): Developing and Testing a Tool to Measure Quality in Australian General Practice	<b>Prof. Jennifer Reath</b> <b>Dr Natalie Cochrane</b> <b>Dr Steven Trankle</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> Assoc. Prof. Penelope Abbott <b>Prof. Andrew Page</b> <b>Prof. Kath Peters</b> <b>Dr Phyllis Lau Chan</b>	Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre	\$506,896	2021–2023

\*Researchers from the School of Business are listed in bold type.

PROJECT TITLE	RESEARCHER(S)*	FUNDING BODY	GRANT	FUNDING PERIOD
Review of SAFE START Policy	Prof. Virginia Schmied Prof. Hannah Dahlen Distinguished Prof. Lynn Kemp <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b>	Health Administration Corporation	\$99,000	2020–2021
The Economic Costs of the Health Impacts of Residential Fires: A Case Study in NSW	<b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> <b>Dr Gulay Avsar</b> Assoc. Prof. Kingsley Agho	Fire and Rescue NSW	\$37,500	2021–2023
The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Uptake of Digital Financial Advice	<b>Dr Greg Cunningham</b> <b>Dr Michelle Cull</b> <b>Csilla Skultety</b> <b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b>	Accounting and Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand	\$6,837	2021
The Health Impacts of Residential Fires in New South Wales	<b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b>	RoZetta Institute	\$86,250	2018–2021
The Pasifika Preventing Diabetes Program	Distinguished Prof. David Simmons Assoc. Prof. Freya Macmillan Prof. Jennifer Reath <b>Assoc. Prof. W Kathy Tannous</b> Dr Kate McBride Dr Catharine Fleming Prof. Wah Cheung Mandy Williams Assoc. Prof. Emily Hibbert Prof. Bin Jalaludin Greg Gamble Dr Glenden Maberly Dr Olataga Alofivae-Doorbinnia Assoc. Prof. Stephen Corbett Andrew Sargeant Dr Barbara Depczynski Dr Cheri Hotu Dr Jan Fizzell Julie Dixon Patrick Bolton	National Health and Medical Research Council NSW Health Pathology Maridulu Budyari Gumal Central and Eastern Primary Health Network South Western Sydney Local Health District South Western Primary Health Network Sanofi-aventis Australia Nepean Blue Mountains Health District WentWest Limited South Eastern Sydney Local Health District NSW Department of Health Wentworth Healthcare Limited Diabetes NSW Western Sydney Local Health District	\$2,267,964	2019–2024
Tobacco Retailing and Smoking in Australia	<b>Prof. Suzan Burton</b> <b>Dr Francine Garlin</b>	Cancer Council NSW Cancer Council WA	\$105,690	2021–2022
Water Matters for India: Delivering Innovative Young Water Professional Training	Prof. Basant Maheshwari Dr Dharma Hagare Jen Dollin <b>Prof. Yi-chen Lan</b> Assoc. Prof. Ricky Spencer <b>Assoc. Prof. Maria Estela Varua</b> Prof. Sathaa Sathasivan	eWater Ltd	\$274,500	2021–2022
What Constitutes a Brilliant Model of Aged Care?	<b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b>	Maridulu Budyari Gumal	\$27,000	2021–2022
You Can't Ask That: Myth-busting Community-based Palliative Care	<b>Assoc. Prof. Ann Dadich</b>	South Western Sydney Local Health District	\$3,993	2018–2022

\*Researchers from the School of Business are listed in bold type.



# RESEARCH SHOWCASES AND CAPACITY- BUILDING EVENTS

The annual Research Week symposium and Research Showcase, together with the quarterly research newsletter, are ways in which the School of Business communicates its research projects and activities. These events are designed to enhance research collaboration across the University and with external stakeholders. Research collaborations provide opportunities for researchers to learn how approaches from complementary disciplines are applied to existing problems that may eventually lead to innovative solutions. In addition, the School also ran a number of professional development events to enhance the research and networking skills of early and midcareer researchers.

## RESEARCH WEEK

The 2021 Research Week symposium was conducted online, with the theme of 'Bold Research Futures in Business'. Projects presented by School of Business researchers under two broad research themes are outlined below.

### SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMES) @ SOB

#### Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Greater Western Sydney: A Survey of Growth, Resilience and Critical Challenges

##### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chikweche, Dr Michelle Cull, Dr Anna Evangelista, Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelista, Associate Professor Ann Dadich, Dr Sheree Gregory.

This project proposes a framework for understanding business sentiment and resilience to contribute to a better understanding of how SMEs can adapt and respond to disruptions, enabling innovation, economic growth and job creation.

#### Effects of COVID-19 on Small to Medium-sized Enterprises' Supply Chains in Greater Western Sydney

##### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chikweche, Associate Professor Dilupa Nakandala.

#### A Framework for an Inclusive Integrated Support System for Small-sized Indigenous Business Enterprises in Greater Western Sydney

##### RESEARCHERS

Dr Tendai Chikweche, Dr Aila Khan, Dr Michael Lwin, Dr Francine Garlin.

#### Digital Transformation of SMEs in Australia and Vietnam

##### RESEARCHERS

[Western Sydney University](#): Associate Professor Felicitas Evangelist, Farid Ahmed, Dr Anna Evangelista, Dr Edward Mariyani-Squire, Associate Professor Maria Estela Varua, [University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City](#), Lien Nguyen, Associate Professor Nguyen P. Nguyen, Phuong Lisa Tai, Associate Professor Dong Tran.

This project looks at recent trends in SME digital uptake, including within the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

### SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

#### The Social Impact of Green Roofs

##### RESEARCHERS

[Western Sydney University](#): Dr Aila Khan, Dr Nicole Ibbett, [University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City](#): Dr Tuan Doan, Hoai Anh, [University of Technology, Sydney](#): Professor Sara Wilkinson, Dr Rebecca Cunningham.

The Green Roof Project outlines how we can reduce the consumption of natural energy and improve the energy efficiency that plays such an essential role in the development of society as well as the transition of urban environment.

#### Western Sydney University Tax Clinic

##### RESEARCHERS

Dr Connie Vitale, Dr Michelle Cull.

Researchers report on how the Western Sydney University Tax Clinic assists vulnerable clients to meet their taxation obligations and raises awareness and understanding of issues in the current tax system with clients and students alike.

#### Why Superannuation Funds Should Have Healthcare Property Investments in Their Portfolios

##### RESEARCHERS

Dr Jufri Marzuki, Professor Graeme Newel.

Findings regarding the Australian health care property sector will report on the strong market fundamentals underpinned by space demand linked to macro-demographic factors.

“What lies ahead for our society in a post-pandemic world? There has never been a better time to rediscover how business-led research can address the economic, environmental and social needs of the communities in which we live and breathe. This requires bold thinking as we drive solutions to the wicked problems of the future. Join the School of Business and our industry partners to hear about some of the latest joint research projects driving bold solutions for the future. These projects have a focus on improving environmental, financial, health and wellbeing outcomes to create sustainable, liveable cities and communities of the future.”

**ASSOC. PROFESSOR MARIA ESTELA VARUA**

ASSOCIATE DEAN RESEARCH

## RESEARCH IMPACT COMPETITION

The Research Impact Competition (RIC) is a flagship event hosted during Western Sydney University's Research Week. It aims to showcase research from across all the University's research themes to an audience of staff, students and selected external stakeholders. It provides an opportunity for researchers to consider their research in terms of current and future impact, and to effectively explain to a non-specialist audience.

In 2021, the School's representative was Dr Michelle Cull, who presented her work on the WalletSmart mobile phone app. Dr Cull (as lead investigator) collaborated with Professor Catherine Attard from the School of Education and partnered with UniBank, which funded development of the app to improve the financial capability of university students.

A user experience workshop with 50 diverse Western Sydney University students identified barriers to financial capability, desired styles of learning and student habits. Students said they would like to see a budget tracking tool and real-life scenarios. Students also contributed to the app development by participating in short videos built into the app which covered the following topics relevant to them as young adults and students:

- budgeting
- saving
- borrowing
- buying a car
- employment
- student fees
- moving out of home.

A total of 530 students participated in the app's pilot study, which involved a diagnostic test, quizzes and digital badges to motivate students. More than 75 per cent of student survey respondents had increased financial capability since using the app, with more than 65 per cent taking further action or changing their behaviour. Budgeting and savings topics were found to be most useful, and the app aided students' understanding of superannuation and taxation, and assisted them in making decisions about buying a car.

This research has featured in news articles, on radio and in a research report, with interest from the federal government's MoneySmart team. The WalletSmart app has led to students engaging in positive financial habits that will be of benefit long after they have completed university. Building financially capable adults will also contribute to a society that exhibits both financial and overall wellbeing.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

The School of Business aims to improve the research capability of its staff by providing a supportive environment that encourages them to be more engaged in research and enables them to publish in high-quality journals. This means improving research skills, as well as access to research information and resources. It also means paying special attention to where there are skills gaps, such as in research grant writing and networking. In 2021, the following workshops were offered.

### NETWORKING RULES: HOW TO EASILY ENGAGE WITH INDUSTRY

This practical seminar was facilitated by Steve Semmens, a networking specialist who 'walks the talk' by only doing business through networking and referrals. The seminar was designed for academics who seek to improve their ability to network, connect and engage with industry leaders and business owners successfully, without ever having to cold call. It provided participants with tips and techniques to make this important aspect of their research role effective and, at the same time, ensure that they enjoy promoting themselves and the University, while building lifelong relationships with industry stakeholders.

## SUMMER RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research Enterprise and International (DVCRI) runs the Summer Scholarships program. This initiative gives undergraduate students the opportunity to learn more about university research by providing them with a placement in a formal research environment supervised by leading Western Sydney University academics. Students gain experience in carrying out a research project and presenting their findings in the form of a written report and seminar presentation. In 2021, the School of Business offered the following projects in this program.

### Can Professional Identity be Adapted for Interprofessional Care? A Systematic Review of Interventions

#### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Associate Professor Ann Dadich

**Macquarie University:** Dr Stephanie Best

### How do Clinicians' Professional Bodies use Social Media to Promote Interprofessional Care? An International Study

#### RESEARCHERS

**Western Sydney University:** Associate Professor Ann Dadich

**Macquarie University:** Dr Stephanie Best

### Reconciliatory Action and Australian Professional Sport Organisations

#### RESEARCHERS

Dr Michelle O'Shea

### Supporting Students' Transitioning Journey to the New Normal in Education

#### RESEARCHERS

Dr Nicole Stegemann, Dr Dorothea Bowyer.

### Policy and Practice: Charting Parental Leave in Women's Sport in an Australian and International Context

#### RESEARCHERS

Dr Michelle O'Shea, Dr Sarah Duffy.

## SEMINAR SERIES

Our seminar series is a fortnightly program of academics, adjuncts and higher degree by research candidates presenting to their peers and colleagues on current research projects. These opportunities keep the School up to date on research activities and, importantly, give researchers opportunities for peer review, and for constructive feedback from senior researchers in their field.

PRESENTER(S)	TOPIC
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
Dr Aila Khan, Siddharth Jain	Analysing Donor Behaviour of Pakistani Diaspora in Australia
Dr Jess Richards, Dr Michelle O'Shea, Dr Francine Garlin	Back to PARRAdise: Match-day Insights from Bankwest Stadium
Namita Roy	Theming of Tourist Experiences
<b>MARCH</b>	
Rachel Reyes	Social Sustainability of Supply Chains: A Look at Worker Welfare
<b>APRIL</b>	
Dr Tendai Chikweche	An Exploratory Investigation of Financial Inclusion and Support for Indigenous Business Enterprises (IBEs) in Greater Western Sydney
Dr Hugh Pattinson	The Disruption of B2B Work: Reimagining B2B Sales Jobs in a World of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
Dr Henry Lau	Blockchain Technology (BCT) and Internet of Things (IoT): Sustainable Solutions to Discrepancies in Emissions Data
<b>MAY</b>	
Dr Aila Khan, Dr Anna Evangelista, Assoc. Prof. Felicitas Evangelista	Sugar Reduction Through Marketing Interventions: A Quasi-field Experiment
<b>JUNE</b>	
Dr Neeru Sharma, Sabreena Amin, Farid Ahmed	Customer Experience, App Usage and Satisfaction: Mobile Banking during the COVID-19 Pandemic
Dr Sarah Duffy, Dr Michelle O'Shea	Parental Leave in Name, but Not in Practice: A Study of Parental Leave at Australian Universities
<b>JULY</b>	
Assoc. Prof. Hassan Gholipour, Dr Sharon Yam	Responses of REITs Index and Commercial Property Prices to Economic Uncertainties: A VAR Analysis
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	
Mark Woodbridge	Disruption of Service Businesses: The Impact of Online Travel Agents on Australian Hotels
Marion Cornish	Social Capital of Disability Service NFP Directors in Australia

# AWARDS

## FPRJ EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER AWARD

### THE ROLE OF TRUST IN BUILDING THE CLIENT-PLANNER RELATIONSHIP RESEARCHERS

Dr Michelle Cull

#### FUNDING BODY

Academy of Financial Services, United States, with the assistance of sponsor HSBC Global Wealth Products and Services \$6,570

#### FUNDING PERIOD

October 2019 to March 2021

This project grant was awarded for winning the Early Career Researcher award as part of the inaugural Financial Planning Research Journal (FPRJ) Research Excellence Awards. The award was to recognise a researcher early in their post-PhD career who had made outstanding contributions to research in financial planning.

As a recipient of this award, Dr Cull attended and presented her financial planning research on trust and financial planning at the combined AFS Annual Conference and the Financial Planning Association of the United States Annual Conference in Minneapolis in October 2019.

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR AND VICE-PRESIDENT RESEARCH, ENTERPRISE AND INTERNATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

### EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH – INTERDISCIPLINARY GROUP AWARD

Winners: Menstruation Matters

School of Business members: Dr Michelle O'Shea; Dr Sarah Duffy.

## SCHOOL OF BUSINESS RECOGNITION AWARDS

### CITATION FOR RESEARCH TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

Dr Michael Lwin for playing an invaluable role in the mentoring, development and industry engagement of research students.

### CITATION FOR RESEARCH

Associate Professor Hassan Gholipour, for demonstrated clear evidence of research quality and impact, international recognition, research leadership, and mentoring to junior colleagues in governance roles therefore extending the School's contribution to the achievements of Goals 1 and 3 of the Western Sydney University Strategic Plan, Sustaining Success.









# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: FULL LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### BOOKS

Cull, M., Skultety, C., Bruhn, A. & Miller, M. (2021). *Ethics and professional practice in financial planning*. LexisNexis. <https://west-sydney-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vt0uuc/UWS-ALMA21318420200001571>

### BOOK CHAPTERS

Chikweche, T. (2021). Unbranded: the challenges of branding for Africa's informal economy. In *Marketing brands in Africa: Perspectives on the evolution of branding in an emerging market* (pp. 203-236). Palgrave Macmillan.

Cull, M., Burton, S. & Lam, R. (2021). Ethics in financial products marketing. In *The Sage handbook of marketing ethics* (pp. 301-314). SAGE Publications. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uwsau/reader.action?docID=6379110&ppg=319>

Gangopadhyay, P., Bakry, W. & Suwandaru, A. (2021). On the impacts of globalisation on public employment and human security in India: A long-run analysis. In *New frontiers in conflict management and peace science: With a focus on human security* (pp. 103-114). Emerald Publishing.

Gangopadhyay, P. & Glenn, J. (2021). Central bank independence and economic efficiency: Historical analysis based on knowledge economy. In *Comparative advantage in the knowledge economy: A national and organizational resource* (pp. 25-39). Emerald Publishing. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80071-040-520210003>

Gregory, S. & Verhoeven, D. (2021). Inequality, invisibility and inflexibility: Mothers and carers navigating careers in the Australian screen industries. In *Media work, mothers and motherhood: Negotiating the international audio-visual industry* (pp. 13-29). Routledge. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=http://doi.org/10.4324/9781003082552-3>

O'Shea, M., Duffy, S. & Maxwell, H. (2021). COVID-19 crisis response: Did Australian professional sport move fast enough? In *Time out: National perspectives on sport and the COVID-19 lockdown* (pp. 135-151). Common Ground Research Networks.

Parry, K., Richards, J., Khan, A. & Batey, J. (2021). Walking the walk: Gender-bland sexism, the fan experience, and perceptions of value in professional women's cricket. In *The professionalisation of women's sport: Issues and debates* (pp. 211-227). Emerald Publishing. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uwsau/reader.action?docID=6720072&ppg=232>

Tannous, K. & McGrew, L. (2021). Removing the constraints of disability: How new technology is transforming the experience of disabilities. In *Technological breakthroughs and future business opportunities in education, health, and outer space* (pp. 205-219). IGI Global. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-6772-2.ch013>

Tannous, K. & Quilty, K. (2021). Ageing: Everybody is doing it – life-affirming technology and the longevity economy. In *Technological breakthroughs and future business opportunities in education, health, and outer space* (pp. 240-254). IGI Global. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-6772-2.ch015>

Tannous, K. & Ramachandran, D. (2021). Aged care services in India: Challenges and opportunities for Australian aged care service providers. In *Emerging business and trade opportunities between Oceania and Asia* (pp. 114-143). IGI Global. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-4126-5.ch006>

### JOURNAL ARTICLES

Asogwa, I., Varua, M., Humphreys, P. & Datt, R. (2021) Understanding sustainability reporting in non-governmental organisations: a systematic review of reporting practices, drivers, barriers, and paths for future research. *Sustainability*. MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su131810184>

Bakry, W., Bugshan, A., & Alnori, F. (2021). Shariah compliance and corporate cash holdings. *Research in International Business and Finance*. Elsevier. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ribaf.2021.101383>

Bakry, W., Gunay, S. & Al Mohamad, S. (2021). The Australian stock market's reaction to the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and Black Summer Bushfires: A sectoral analysis. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*. MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm14040175>

Bakry, W., Rashid, A., Al Mohamad, S. & El-Kanj, N. (2021) Bitcoin and portfolio diversification: A portfolio optimization approach. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*. MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm14070282>

Bakry, W., Truong, Q., Tran, Q., Nguyen, D. & Al Mohamad, S. (2021). Football sentiment and stock market returns: Evidence from a frontier market. *Journal of Behavioural and Experimental Finance*. Elsevier. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi-org.ezproxy.uws.edu.au/10.1016/j.jbef.2021.100472>

Bakry, W., Varua, M. & Prasad, M. (2021). Abnormal volatility in seasoned equity offerings during economic disruptions. *Journal of Behavioural and Experimental Finance*. Elsevier. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbef.2021.100509>

Billah, M., & Mamun, M. (2021). Privatisation and workers' compensation in privatised state-owned enterprises in Bangladesh. *Business Management and Strategy*. Macrothink Institute. <https://doi.org/10.5296/bms.v12i1.18070>

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- Bowyer, D., & Tsiligiris, V.** (2021) Exploring the impact of 4IR on skills and personal qualities for future accountants: A proposed conceptual framework for university accounting education. *Accounting Education*. Routledge. <https://ezproxy.uws.edu.au/login?url=https://doi-org.ezproxy.uws.edu.au/10.1080/09639284.2021.1938616>
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- Chowdhury, M. & Chakraborty, M.** (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on the migrant workers and remittances flow to Bangladesh. *South Asian Survey*. Sage Publications India. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971523121995365>
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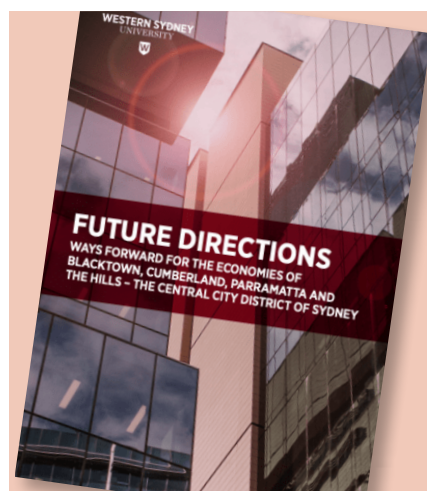
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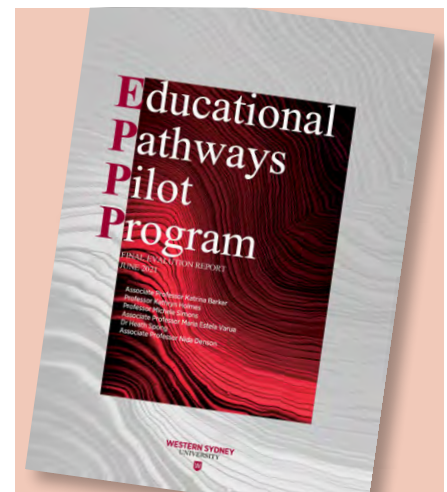
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## APPENDIX 2: HDR GRADUATES IN 2021: THESIS TITLES AND ABSTRACTS

### Technological Diffusion and Productivity Gains through Foreign Direct Investment and Trade

**ZAIRA ADNAN**

Technological advancement is significant for an economy's growth. In recent times, economies focus on efficient and cost-effective production methods, which can only be achieved through the attainment of state-of-the-art technologies. A few countries develop these technologies, which are then disseminated to other countries through the process of technological diffusion. With rapid globalisation, the process of technological diffusion had received wide recognition in recent economic literature. The technology is diffused across countries through various channels, of which trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) are believed to be the most significant channels. This thesis aims to explore these technology transfer channels translated into productivity growth of an economy. The thesis investigates the relationship between productivity and FDI in all the world economies, focusing on the economy of Pakistan and other South Asian countries. It discusses in detail the economy of Pakistan in the past few decades, and explores the total factor productivity (TFP) of Pakistan and its various macroeconomic determinants. Moreover, it explores FDI trends and policies in major South Asian economies over the past few decades and empirically analyses the relationship between FDI and TFP in these countries. This thesis also aims to examine the importance of technological diffusion through FDI for both developing and developed economies. It finds that developing and underdeveloped economies have minimal scope for technical innovations due to lack of resources; hence, they mainly depend on technology transfer from developed countries for their technological advancement and productivity gains.

### The Determinants and Impacts of Carbon Assurance: An International Study

**HANLU FAN**

Protecting the environment is now a major aspect of corporate social responsibility, and there is increasing interest in carbon emissions reporting due to growing pressure from major initiatives such as the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which have exerted increasing pressure on firms to be more transparent about their non-financial information, including carbon emissions. Moreover, emissions trading systems (ETs) and carbon taxes in many countries have emerged as key public policies for reducing carbon emissions. Consequently, carbon disclosure has become a critical part of annual business reporting. However, voluntary carbon disclosure includes private information on future sustainability that external stakeholders cannot easily verify. It is questioned that some of the disclosed information might be subject to manipulation (i.e. 'greenwashing') by managers. Consequently, strong demand is emerging for independent assurance on greenhouse gas (GHG) disclosures. However, the literature on the assurance of carbon emissions remains very sparse (Simnett et al. 2009a; Datt et al. 2018), and previous studies have mainly focused on the incentives for voluntary adoption of carbon assurance from legitimacy and institutional perspectives, choice of assurance provider, the role of internal auditors in GHG reporting, the expertise required for GHG assurance, and the development of an international standard for GHG assurance. Given the scarcity of literature in this area, researchers' understanding of this new type of assurance is very limited. Thus, this thesis fills this gap by studying carbon assurance from two perspectives – the determinants and the impacts of carbon assurance – using an international dataset.

### Migration and Brain Drain: Reassessing Work in Economics

**JISHAN IBNE HOSSAIN**

The study of migration in modern economics has seen many dimensions, from welfare gains, human capital loss and an influx of remittance to brain drain and brain gain, where theories flowed between encouraging and discouraging free movement of human capital across modern borders. Critically tied to this notion are migrants' wellbeing, job market assimilation and workplace quality. The neoclassical view of labour markets and quality of work has been deemed one-dimensional, while happiness research has found that work quality affects the happiness as well as the wellbeing of the migrant workers. Furthermore, migration economics states that high-skilled migration is a brain drain for sending countries due to loss of social capital, and conversely, a brain gain for host countries. This work blends the neoclassical and the happiness research approaches and incorporates the health satisfaction of migrants in an attempt to apply financial satisfaction and life satisfaction together in a composite index of overall 'happiness', in order to explain the quality of work. It is an effort to bridge some of the limitations of the neoclassical approach alongside the happiness or life satisfaction approach to identify drivers of quality of work and thereby the overall wellbeing or happiness of workers. Looking at highly skilled migrants to Australia, the aim of this effort is to shed light onto the phenomenon referred to as 'brain drain' as not only a home country problem but potentially very much also a host country issue if the drivers of quality of work hinder migrant wellbeing and happiness.

### **Institutional and Organisational Constraints on the Growth of Family Takaful in Bangladesh**

**SABINA YASMIN**

Family takaful (FT), an Islamic form of life insurance, is a long-term savings and investment instrument that is an alternative to conventional life insurance. In general, it seeks to offer protection and mutual assurance of financial support in the event of death of the participant. It is based on the Islamic shariah principles of mutual cooperation (ta'awun) and donation (tabarru').

In Islamic finance, conventional life insurance has always been a paradoxical issue that can cause discomfort for some Muslim consumers due to the prevalence of non-Islamic elements; therefore, FT is a viable alternative. The principal objective of this thesis is to understand the institutional and organisational constraints affecting the growth of the (FT) life insurance sector in Bangladesh, and then seek to comprehend how FT operators respond in terms of addressing these constraints. This study evaluates the motivations and goals of FT operators, classifying the institutional and organisational constraints that impact on their goals and also documenting, assessing and discussing how FT operators respond to these constraints.

### **The Impact of Oil Price Volatility on Firm Financial and Market Performance: An Empirical Analysis from Oil Exporting Countries**

**ABDULLAH BUGSHAN**

This thesis examines the relationship between oil price volatility and firms' financial performance and market value. The thesis uses a sample of non-financial firms listed in six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets between 2005 and 2016, and contributes to the literature in a variety of ways. First, it uses the unique setting of the GCC, where the economy is mainly supported by the oil industry, to examine whether the oil price volatility affects firm performance and the market value. In addition, its scope is extended to investigate whether this effect varies between industries and countries. It examines how the industrial and petrochemical industries are affected by oil price volatility, since these industries are directly linked to the oil industry and are therefore expected to be affected by oil price volatility more than other industries. Moreover, given that the GCC countries differ in terms of their reliance on oil income, the thesis explores whether the effects of oil price volatility vary among the GCC countries. The thesis also assesses the impacts of economic reforms that were implemented in GCC countries during the period 2015 to 2016 on firms' performance, investigating whether firm characteristics affect the relationship between the oil price volatility and firm performance by considering two firm characteristics: maturity and shariah-compliance status. Finally, the thesis contributes by extending the earlier literature by examining the relationship between oil price volatility and two measures of performance: financial performance and market value.

### **Evaluating the Effectiveness of Labour Law in Saudi Arabia from the Perspective of Employees in the Private and Public Sectors**

**SAAD ALMUTAIRI**

Labour rights are central to the effectiveness of human capital. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is investing in education, skills development, training and human resources to transform the country from an oil-based economy to a knowledge-based economy, a goal that locates human capital at the centre of all economic activity. The government, keeping in mind the importance of labour, labour reforms and rights, has introduced reforms; however, the effectiveness of these reforms has not yet been evaluated. This thesis explores the labour market in KSA and the various challenges it faces, including high youth unemployment, mistreatment of migrant workers, the kafala system (the sponsorship system defining the relationship between foreign workers and their local sponsor) and gender disparity. The analysis is informed by a conceptual framework developed from three theories: institutional theory, human capital theory and gender discrimination theory. Primary data were collected through an online survey conducted in three Saudi universities, two private enterprises (ARAMCO and a telecommunications company) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, using random sampling. A total of 419 questionnaires were completed, returning 382 cases for statistical analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The results showed a general lack of awareness regarding labour rights and recent changes introduced by the government. Lack of awareness was associated with dissatisfaction with the labour laws and the government. In particular, participants lacked awareness of and were dissatisfied with the labour regulations governing workplace health and safety, work scheduling and rest periods, time to exercise rights, and abuse of the law.

## The Development of a Competency Model for Allied health Managers

**KA HI MAK**

This study identifies the competencies required for allied health (AH) managers, which is a gap in current research from both the academic and practical perspectives. AH consists of a group of health professionals, excluding doctors, dentists and nurses/midwives (Boyce 2006a; Turnbull et al. 2009; Grimmer Somers, Milanese & Kumar 2012; Boyce & Jackway 2016). AH professionals have been described as one of the pillars of patient-centred care (AHPA 2017). AH professionals are organised based on their professional discipline. A lead or head of department is recruited to manage and govern both professionally and operationally. These heads of departments are the AH managers being studied in this research.

AH disciplines included in this study were dietetics, physiotherapy, speech pathology, occupational therapy and social work. Managers and deputy managers from five hospitals within a Local Health District in NSW were invited to the study. Twenty nine participants completed the survey questionnaire and sixteen interviewees were involved in the semi-structured interviews.

As discussed in the thesis, the role of AH managers is understudied due to the history of the establishment of AH professions and the short history of AH departments and division of the AH stream. In addition to this short history, medical dominance also makes AH unique when compared with their doctor and nurse counterparts. This likely has an impact on how AH managers view their hierarchical positions within the organisation and the ability to exert their authority, which may result in additional challenges in lobbying and bargaining for resources. AH managers are required to possess some unique characteristics (competencies) to tackle these challenges.

This research adopts a mixed methods approach, and contributes significantly to the theory with two major theoretical contributions. The first theoretical contribution of this research is to develop a conceptual model of competency for AH managers, named the Interconnected Nature of Allied Health Manager Competency Model. The second key theoretical contribution is the enhancement of understanding of the AH manager's professional identity. To the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to investigate a competency model of AH as a collective group under the division of AH structure.

The findings of this research can have significant impacts on workplaces and provide suggestions on how current human resources management process can be improved. This research not only identifies the competencies for AH managers but also proposes that competencies are not isolated characteristics; they interact within a complex web. This provides a new insight on how competencies should be viewed on both academic and practical levels.

## Remittances and Their Effect on Female Education in Bangladesh

**MINAKSHI CHAKRABORTY**

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of remittances on female education in migrant households. Using primary data from four migration-prone districts of Bangladesh, this study analyses the extent to which remittance income has the potential to increase enrolment possibility for female as well as male students at primary, secondary and higher secondary school levels at remittance-receiving households. The study also reflects on the other socioeconomic, demographic and cultural factors that affect households' educational decision making. It constitutes analytical and empirical research on this area through an in-depth case study of the migrant households in Bangladesh.

Remittances – the money sent to the family when a migrant worker travels abroad – have the potential to relieve these otherwise poor households of their resource constraints. This allows the households to allocate additional resources to the education of the children and retain their schooling. A major inhibitor of female children's education in many developing countries is lack of sufficient funds, thus remittance income theoretically should enhance the enrolment of female children in remittance-receiving households.

The study finds that both remittance income and remittance receipt have significant and positive effects on the enrolment probability of female children, thereby suggesting that remittances do increase female education and thus augment female human capital formation. The study also displays some male bias in education decisions when the household head is female, and a similar gender bias is also observed in the case of female migrants. This can be explained as a cultural phenomenon, where in Eastern cultures male children have preference over female children in many aspects of life, including in education investment. Another important finding of this study is that parental education, represented by the mother's education in this study, has a positive and significant effect on the enrolment of a child, irrespective of gender.

The overall outcome of the study is interpreted to mean that in the long run international remittance will improve economic growth through the human capital channel.

### **The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment Inflows on Sustainable Development: Evidence from an Emerging Middle-income Economy**

**MUNIRA BEGUM**

Policymakers and global financial institutions promote foreign direct investment (FDI) as a driver of economic growth in developing countries; however, questions remain as to whether FDI actually promotes sustainable development. It may encourage growth but also hinder social and environmental development. In this study, I analyse whether FDI promotes or hinders sustainable development in developing countries, using Bangladesh as an example of an emerging middle-income country.

In the descriptive statistical analysis, manufacturing FDI inflows promote economic growth and exports. Manufacturing FDI inflows also contribute to the expansion of the domestic production base by creating backward linkages and increasing gross capital formation; however, Bangladesh has not been able to benefit from the productivity and efficiency spillover effects of FDI inflows.

The environmental dimension relates to the pollution haven, pollution halo and Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) hypothesis. In the descriptive statistical analysis, I reveal the presence of the pollution haven hypothesis in Bangladesh. In the econometric analysis, the pollution haven and EKC hypothesis for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are investigated. The results of the Non-Linear Auto Regressive Distributed Lag (NARDL) test rejects the presence of the pollution haven hypothesis for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and confirms the existence of the EKC relationship in Bangladesh. For renewable energy consumption, the pollution halo hypothesis is also rejected.

FDI could also positively or negatively affect the social dimension of sustainable development, as measured through employment generation, poverty alleviation, working conditions and income inequality. In the descriptive statistical analysis, FDI inflows can be established as generating a positive contribution to employment and poverty alleviation. Empirically, I examine the Kuznets Hypothesis on income inequality and its relation to FDI inflows using the Two-Stage Least Square method. FDI inflows do not cause income inequality in Bangladesh; however, the Kuznets Hypothesis relationship is present.

In general, the impact of FDI inflows on economic and social sustainability is positive in Bangladesh, while the environmental dimension of sustainable development is hindered. Bangladesh should consider environmental issues seriously in the case for promoting FDI inflows in the country; otherwise, FDI inflows could cause irreversible damage to the environment and hinder sustainable development and social wellbeing.

### **Birth Family Contact for Children in the New South Wales Child Protection System**

**REJANI RAJAN**

Managing birth family contact visits (BFCVs) for children in out-of-home care (OOHC) following statutory child protection intervention while their case is being finalised in the Children's Court is a complicated task with sparse empirical or clinical literature to guide stakeholders. Although the primary reasons for such BFCVs are to maintain parent-child relationships, assess parenting capacity, facilitate restoration and/or maintain the child's identity, there are multiple stakeholders with varied understandings of the purpose of BFCVs involved in their scheduling and implementation. The main purpose of this research was to examine

whether BFCVs achieve these goals for the children involved. Using a multi-method design, the researcher analysed BFCV supervisors' observational reports from contact and OOHC birth family contact meeting records entered by Family and Community Services (FACS) caseworkers available on FACS client databases for two different data sets, and interviewed 12 caseworkers, managers and contact workers from FACS as well as four contact workers from a non-government organisation contact service provider. FACS managers and caseworkers were identified as having the most salience in BFCV scheduling, and were identified as definitive stakeholders, having all the three attributes of power, urgency and legitimacy (Mitchell et al. 1997). However, document analysis results indicated the immense power that contact supervisors wield and that depending on context they could become definitive stakeholders. Given that the stakeholders' attributes and network responded to the dynamic context and issues, the researcher developed a Dynamics of Stakeholder Model to be used in conjunction with Mitchell et al.'s (1997) Stakeholder Identification model.

With the limited information, insights into parent-child attachment, parenting capacity and child's ability to maintain identity could be gained, albeit the numbers were too small to draw any significant conclusion. As a result, the researcher developed a standard template for BFCV supervisors to record their observations. Additionally, process, practice and training recommendations were made so that the information presented in the BFCV observational reports could assist caseworkers and Children's Court magistrates in their decision making to ensure that they are truly in the best interests of the children involved.

## Bank Competition and Financial Soundness

**DUC (ANDY) NGUYEN**

This thesis systematically investigates the effects of bank competition on three dimensions of financial soundness: access to finance, stability, and efficiency. The thesis research contains three essays which employ different strands of literature, three different data samples, and various econometrics techniques.

It then studies the relationship between bank market power and financing constraints (indicated by the likelihood of being discouraged from applying for bank loans) using a large data sample of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from 125 countries worldwide. The estimates from a probit selection model, which addresses selection bias problem, indicate that higher bank market power is associated with lower financing constraints. Moreover, the results suggest the existence of a U-shaped association between bank market power and financing constraints when allowing for a non-monotonic relationship between the two.

Further, it investigates the relationship between bank competition and financial fragility in an international sample of 58 countries from 1999 to 2016. The results indicate a positive association between bank competition (measured by the Lerner index) and systemic risk (measured by the marginal expected shortfall). Moreover, this research shows that higher competition is associated with lower bank charter value (i.e. market over book value of assets), lower return on assets (ROA), and lower profitability from core activities. Results also indicate that the share of non-performing loans, the volatility of profitability, and the share of fee and commission income increase with bank competition. The analysis depicts that bank competition will have more detrimental impacts on banks with bigger size and banks relying more on non-traditional activities, but weaker effects for more profitable banks (i.e. higher charter value and ROA).

Also studied is the association between bank competition and bank efficiency. Using a data sample spanning 24 emerging markets from 2003 through 2016, this study documents a large cross-country variation in the relationship between bank competition (measured by the Lerner index) and bank cost efficiency (estimated using stochastic frontier analysis). While evidence shows that, on average, efficiency increases with market power, an increase in bank market power will have a more substantial impact in countries with stricter capital requirement regulation, better market discipline, higher official disciplinary power, more developed financial markets and lower level of banking penetration.

## Emotions and Mindlines: A Palliative Care Perspective

**MICHAEL JOHN HODGINS**

This thesis explores the relationship between emotion and mindlines in palliative care. This contributes to the processual turn in organisational studies by using Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of the assemblage to illuminate the processual nature of knowledge translation in palliative care. The processual perspective of organisational theory clarifies the mutual shaping between the 'material' and the 'social' when considering how emotion affects knowledge and practice. An emerging paradigm of evidence-based practice privileges the socially constituted nature of knowledge, predicated on interaction and subjectively experienced by individuals. This follows the contention that clinicians do not consistently consult explicit forms of evidence, often in the form of clinical practice guidelines, to inform their practice. Gabbay and le May's (2004) concept of mindlines attends to this paradigmatic shift. The concept focuses on collectively reinforced, internalised tacit guidelines informed largely by clinician interactions with networks of trusted sources. The importance of mindlines in palliative care is evident in extant literature as it accounts for the translation of tenuous and fluid practices that are vital in end-of-life care. However, scholars

are yet to elucidate the ways emotions affect the development and shaping of mindlines.

This study employed a 12-month ethnography within a public community health centre that offered palliative care to patients living at home. Qualitative data was collected while shadowing and observing nurses as they delivered, planned and/or discussed palliative care (and related matters), focusing specifically on critical incidents. The analysis was informed by Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) transcendental empiricism and the concept of the assemblage to articulate how emotions are constituted with other parts of community-based palliative care mindline assemblages and how emotion can stabilise and transform mindlines in this context. Within this conceptualisation, mindline assemblages were considered virtual diagrams of practice, produced through the arrangement of ideas, practices, human and non-human actors, and emotions. This study described the multiple, and at times competing mindline assemblages constructed from interviews, observations and a journal, specifically highlighting the acceptable emotions or emotion rules that were part of the assemblage.

The findings suggest greater attention needs to be given to emotion in the context of knowledge translation by researchers, policymakers, managers and practitioners by accounting for emotions within explicit assemblages of practice and allowing for interpretative, flexible and relative ideas of care within emotional contexts. For managers and clinicians, this study suggests greater opportunities should be provided to clinicians to reflectively and reflexively examine how they are moved by patients, carers, colleagues and managers. In concert with extant research, this study underscores the significance of a model of care that enables transdisciplinary communication, or a globalisation of specialisations and disciplines.

### APPENDIX 3: HDR COLLOQUIUM 2021 PRESENTATIONS

- Farid Ahmed:** The Impact of Digitalisation on the Export Performance of Service Firms
- Taghreed Aljaffal:** Investigating Sustainability Education within Australian Hospitality Management Undergraduate Curricula
- Md Abdullah Al Masum:** The Role of Social Capital: Corporate Decision, Evidence from the Australian Perspective
- Manal Alsaloum:** Developing Entrepreneurial Universities: The Use of External Knowledge
- Muhammad Salman Asif:** Development of a Green Lifecycle Model for the Evaluation and Reduction of Scope 3 Emissions in Food Supply Chains: A Case Study Analysis
- Ikenna Elias Asogwa:** Accounting for Stakeholder Engagement in NGOs: The Case of Nigeria
- Nilanjana Banerjee:** Driving Organisational Sustainability at NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) through Application of Peter Senge's Five Disciplines of Learning Organisation
- John Chan:** Implementing IoT-adaptive Fuzzy Neural Network Model for Supporting Service of Fashion Retail
- Jiahe Chen:** An Empirical Study of Consumer Behaviour in Cross-border e-Commerce
- Sarah Collado:** Conceptualising the Contribution of Traditional Versus Virtual Internships to the Employability of Hospitality Management Undergraduate Students in Australia
- Marion Cornish:** Social Capital of Disability Service NFP Directors in Australia
- Rola Fanousse:** Reducing Uncertainties in Innovation Projects through Intra-organisational Collaboration
- Jie Gao:** Green Media Coverage and Green Innovation
- Nargess Ghassempour:** Estimating the Total Number of Residential Fire-related Incidents and Underreported Residential-fire Incidents in New South Wales, Australia, by Using Linked Administrative Data
- Munyaradzi Gwede:** Leadership for Change Management: Critical Success Factors in Medical Imaging Departments in Public Hospitals in NSW
- Craig Keary:** Can Incorporating Measures of Individual Wellbeing in an Enhanced Financial Planning Process Improve both an Individual's Subjective Wellbeing and Financial Wellbeing?
- Isha Kharub:** iRobot: Conceptualising SERVBOT for Humanoid Social Robots
- Ian Lavering:** The Impact of NSW Mines on Property Values
- Jacie Liu:** A Study of Board Diversity and its Impact on Australian and British Banks
- Martin Moseley:** Why Changes in Policy do not Necessarily Lead to Changes in Practice
- Felix Nguyen:** Board Diversity and Firm Financial Performance in Australian S&P/ASX All Technology Index
- Hoai Anh Nguyen Dang:** Using Concept Cards During Interviews: A Novel Data Collection Method
- Nestor Nonato:** Business Model of Private Non-university Higher Education Providers in Australia
- Uma Panchapakesan:** The Effects of Mindfulness Intervention on Attentional Monitoring, Acceptance and Job Performance in Hotel Employees
- Nilay Patel:** What Can be the Effective Financing Mix to Foster Innovation in Indian Innovative Firms?
- Hai Long Pham:** The Impact of Basel Accords on the Management of Vietnamese Commercial Bank
- Archie Poulos:** The Development of an Instrument to Enhance Clergy Leadership Competency for Sydney Anglican Clergy
- Mason Prasad:** Abnormal Volatility in Seasoned Equity Offerings During Economic Disruptions
- Inu Rana:** Identifying Barriers and Support for Innovation in Manufacturing SMEs in Greater Western Sydney
- Md Reaz:** Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Career Intentions of Business Students in Bangladeshi Public Universities
- M Zulkifli Salim:** Designing Systemic Risk Monitoring Tools: An Applied Network Model Approach
- Nuzhat Sharmin:** Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Potential Young Entrepreneurs in Bangladesh: Challenges and Strategies from a Cultural Perspective
- Sharne Simmons:** What Roles do Public Accountants Perform for Small to Medium-sized Enterprises?
- Csilla Skultety:** How to Promote Empathic Financial Planning
- Nageena Tabassum:** Value Co-creation in Healthcare: An Empirical Study of Chronic Disease Patients in Pakistan
- Emmanuel Junior Tenakwah:** Corporate Governance, Home Country Culture, and MNE CSR: Evidence from Ghana
- Moira Tyler:** Improving the Measurement of Quality of Work in Developing Countries
- WM Samantha Kumari Weerabahu:** Industry 4.0 Readiness of Organisations Towards the Success of Smart Supply Chain Adoption
- Zhili Yang:** High-performance Work Systems and Employee Retention: The Mediating Effect of Employee Wellbeing in Chinese Companies





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