



# Melbourne Social Equity Institute

Annual Report 2017



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Enquiries about reprinting information contained in this publication  
should be made through:  
Melbourne Social Equity Institute  
University of Melbourne VIC 3010  
[social-equity@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:social-equity@unimelb.edu.au)



# Melbourne Social Equity Institute



Supporting interdisciplinary  
research for fairer societies





Selamat datang

Hoan nghênh خوش آمدید

Welcome



Wominjeka

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We acknowledge and pay respect to the Wurundjeri people, the Traditional Owners of this land.

Bienvenidos 환영합니다



# About the Melbourne Social Equity Institute

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute brings together researchers to address disadvantage across social life, including health, education, housing, culture, work and transport.**

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute acknowledges an imperfect world. Chances of birth such as class, race, ability or gender can lead to marginalisation and societies are sometimes beset by divisions of culture, economic status or creed. The Institute supports collaborative research between academics, members of community organisations, policy makers and people with lived experiences which helps build fairer societies.

The Institute prioritises rights-based and interdisciplinary research, involving partners from the community and giving those with a lived experience of disadvantage voice in the focus, design and outcomes of research. Interdisciplinary research means drawing on the strengths of each of our university's faculties in order to better solve complex problems of disadvantage. Involving community partners ensures that research is relevant to those outside the academy.

In 2017, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute's research focused on refugees and forced migration, poverty and income inequality and community engaged research. The Institute also auspiced the important work of the Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe). Intersecting with each of these research programs are the lived experiences of disadvantage, such as people with disabilities, Indigenous people, children, LGBTQIA, people seeking asylum, women and older people.

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute is staffed by a small directorate, the members of which co-ordinate research and engagement activities.

In 2017 members of the directorate were:

Professor Bernadette McSherry  
Foundation Director

Charlene Edwards  
Executive Officer

Kathleen Patterson  
Project Coordinator

Claire Smiddy  
Marketing, Communications and Events Coordinator



**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute's work is underpinned by a commitment to community-led research, as exemplified by its highly-regarded Community Fellows Program**



# Letter from the Foundation Director

Throughout 2017, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute focused on raising awareness of the research projects it supports through a series of events beginning with a well-attended Research Showcase. It also developed several strategies to increase community engaged research.

The key feature of community engaged research is a high level of community decision-making about the purpose, design, conduct and use of research. The Institute expanded its Community Fellows Program which brings members of community organisations into the University to develop research skills, while assisting scholars to understand the context in which their research may be used. You can read about some of the work undertaken by the Community Fellows in this Report.

In September, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute collaborated with the Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS) at the University of Birmingham to run a conference on research co-production with communities. The Institute also facilitated a 'Community of Practice' which brought together those interested in community engaged research to talk about their work and swap ideas about methodologies and overcoming challenges.

While there were many memorable events, the highlight for me was the launch of the Unfitness to Plead project report by Advisory Board member, Michael Black QC. The special guest was Marlon Noble, a Yamatji man from Carnarvon in Western Australia, who was imprisoned for ten years after being found unfit to plead. Marlon was imprisoned despite insufficient evidence that he had committed the crimes charged. Following dissemination of the report, I was pleased to receive a letter from the Western Australian Attorney-General advising that reforms to unfitness to plead laws were underway in that state. These reforms will help ensure that what happened to Marlon will not be repeated.


In 2017, the Deputy Director of the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, Professor Julie McLeod, stepped down to take up a position as Pro Vice Chancellor (Research Capability). She was one of the instigators of the institute and her enthusiasm and invaluable advice are sorely missed.

The Institute functions smoothly due to the outstanding work of Executive Officer, Charlene Edwards, Project Coordinator, Kathleen Patterson and Communications, Marketing and Events Coordinator, Claire Smiddy. A big thank you to them and to all the researchers who make 201 Grattan Street such a vibrant place in which to work. I hope you enjoy reading about our endeavours throughout 2017.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernadette McSherry". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Professor Bernadette McSherry  
Foundation Director



A full-page photograph of Professor Bernadette McSherry walking her dog Toby on a residential street. Professor McSherry is a woman with short blonde hair, smiling, wearing a dark green patterned jacket and black trousers. She is holding a purple leash. Toby is a black and white dog, possibly a Border Collie, walking towards the camera. The background shows a street with parked cars and houses under a soft, warm light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

**Professor Bernadette McSherry,  
Foundation Director of the Melbourne  
Social Equity Institute, with  
Toby the Social Equity Dog**

*Photo: Lliam Murphy*



# Reference Group

**Members of the reference group act as champions of the Melbourne Social Equity Institute and its research, as well as providing input on matters of management and strategic focus.**

The reference group is comprised of academics with demonstrated strengths in social equity research from across the University. As well as the directorate and research program leaders, the following researchers made up the 2017 reference group:

Associate Professor Hari Bapuji  
Department of Management and Marketing

Professor Susan Kneebone  
Melbourne Law School

Dr Andrea Cook  
Melbourne School of Design

Professor Julie McLeod  
Chancellery and Melbourne Graduate School  
of Education

Dr Jane Dyson  
School of Geography

Dr Victor Sojo  
Faculty of Business and Economics

Professor Guyonne Kalb  
Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic  
and Social Research

# Advisory Board

**The advisory board is made up of leaders in the business and community sectors. It provides strategic guidance to ensure that research supported by the Institute is relevant to and aligned with important, contemporary social issues.**

The advisory board also increases opportunities to disseminate research and to engage with like-minded organisations with the aim of making societies fairer. The advisory board is made up of:

Jan Owen AM (Chair)  
CEO, Foundation for Young Australians

Roz Hansen  
Former Ministerial Advisory Committee for the  
Metropolitan Planning Strategy

Durkhanai Ayubi  
Restaurateur, freelance writer and inaugural  
Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity

Ross Honeywill  
Executive Director, Centre for Social Economics

Robin Banks  
Former Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Equal  
Opportunity Tasmania

Nyadol Nyuon  
Lawyer, Arnold Bloch Leibler

Michael Black AC QC  
Former Chief Justice, Federal Court of Australia

Paul Ronalds  
CEO, Save the Children

Paige Burton  
Australia's 2017 Youth Representative to the  
United Nations

Michael Traill AM  
Chair, Goodstart Early Learning and Social  
Ventures Australia Leadership Council



# Research Programs

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute supports interdisciplinary research on social equity issues across the full spectrum of social life including health, law, education, housing, work and transport. In 2017 research was focused on the following key themes:**

## **Community Engaged Research**

Led by Dr Cathy Vaughan

Through all Institute research programs there is a commitment to community-led and community engaged research. The key feature of community-engaged research is a high level of community decision-making about the purpose, design, conduct and use of research. It moves beyond seeing members of communities as research 'subjects' to enabling them to drive the research agendas that concern them.

Past and current community engaged research projects supported by the Institute include the Understanding Female Genital Cutting in Inner Melbourne project, the Unfitness to Plead project and the Choice, Control and the National Disability Insurance Scheme project.

## **Poverty and Income Inequality**

Led by Professor Shelley Mallett

Poverty and income inequality are complex issues. Living in poverty often involves missing out on resources or opportunities which are available to others, leading to social exclusion. Income inequality refers to the extent to which income is distributed in an uneven manner among a population. In many countries, the gap between the rich and everyone else has been growing markedly and women's earnings remain lower than men's.

This research program is developed in conjunction with the Brotherhood of St Laurence and focuses on factors leading to poverty and income inequality and what policy can do to address these specific causes. It draws on work already taking place in the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research and the Melbourne School of Government to form new and broader collaborations across the University.

## **Refugees and Forced Migration**

Led by Associate Professor Sara Wills and Professor John Tobin

This research program coordinates and supports interdisciplinary research on issues relating primarily to the resettlement and social integration of refugees and people seeking asylum. It draws together a diverse range of researchers working in this field, including those involved with the University's Researchers for Asylum Seekers network, to examine which programs and services best assist with the social integration of refugees both in Australia and in the Asia-Pacific region.

Supported research projects focused on public attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees, refugee-background children in Australia, supporting refugee-background students, the needs of recently arrived refugees and asylum seekers, inclusion for refugees through sports participation and migrant women in care work.



# Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children (MAEVe)

**The Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe) is an interdisciplinary research network of researchers, survivors, practitioners and community organisations engaged in creating research that helps prevent and respond to violence against women and their children.**

Auspiced by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, MAEVe is headed by co-chairs Professor Kelsey Hegarty and Professor Cathy Humphreys, and a diverse steering committee of academics from across the University. These academics variously specialise in: health sector responses to family violence; children's voices and experience of family violence; sexual violence; technology as a tool in the early intervention of family violence; family violence in migrant and refugee communities; gender-based violence throughout history and across the Asia Pacific; legal responses; and Indigenous experiences of family violence. Its overall aim is to bring together researchers in partnership with community, industry and government agencies, to tackle the problem of violence against women and their children.

MAEVe is focused on the production of research that is rigorous, significant and arises from a deep engagement with those who have lived experiences of domestic and family violence. As part of our commitment to putting the voices of women and children at the centre of our research, MAEVe is advised and guided by the WEAVERs panel (Women and their children who have Experienced Abuse and Violence: Researchers and advisors).

In 2017, the Alliance welcomed the inclusion of researchers from the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences who bring with them a focus on the history and theory of gender-based violence, along with creative and literary representations and understandings of violence against women. During 2017, MAEVe ran a seed funding round focused on Arts-led projects, which saw two grants established and support provided for an additional scoping workshop. The Faculty of Arts also led a workshop entitled Gendered Violence in the Context of Mobility, Trauma and Policing Gender, which was attended by a range of national and international scholars. Throughout 2017, MAEVe ran a successful fortnightly Lunchtime Seminar Series, highlighting the work of University of Melbourne researchers and research partnerships on a range of topics including: Analysing Safety and Place in Immigrant and Refugee Experience; Family Violence in Indigenous Australian Contexts; the National Community Attitudes Survey; and the Abuse of Older People.

In conjunction with the La Trobe Violence Against Women Research Network (LaVAWN), MAEVe hosted a forum entitled 'Early Intervention: Changing the trajectory to prevent violence against women and their children'. This forum, held in April, included presentations from national and international researchers and community organisations, which was attended by around 100 researchers, policy makers and community service workers.



In May MAEVe hosted an exhibition of work that was part of the ANROWS funded research project, Women's Input into a Trauma-informed systems model of care in Health settings (the WITH Study). The exhibition explored the challenges and impact of trauma-informed care by presenting the voices of women who had experienced mental health problems and sexual violence, alongside those of staff and practitioners working in services that respond to their needs.

The year also saw MAEVe support the successful application for a Centre of Research Excellence to promote Safer Families. This is a five-year program (2017–2022) funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and is a national and international collaboration comprising researchers, families and communities, policy-makers, practitioners, community organisations, and health, family and women's services. The CRE research team brings together investigators and scholars with expertise in epidemiology, general practice, social work, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, paediatrics, psychiatry, social science, psychology and biostatistics.

[maeve.unimelb.edu.au](http://maeve.unimelb.edu.au)



*Women's input into a trauma informed systems model of care in health settings (WITH) project exhibition on display at the Royal Women's Hospital*

# Current Research Projects

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute supports interdisciplinary research on a broad range of topics and themes.**

## **Choice, control and the NDIS**

To what extent is the National Disability Insurance Scheme achieving its aims and objectives from the perspective of people with disability?

## **Supporting refugee background students**

Supporting outreach, recruitment and retention of students from refugee backgrounds at the University of Melbourne.

## **19 stories of social inclusion**

Lessons from the lives of everyday Australians on belonging, disability and community contribution.

## **Unfitness to plead project**

Practical options to address the problem of people with cognitive impairments being found “unfit to plead” and subjected to indefinite detention in Australia.

## **Model laws to regulate the use of restraint on persons with disabilities**

Addressing the current lack of a common legal framework for regulating the use of restraint on persons with disabilities in mental health, disability and aged care sectors.

## **Who cares?**

Examining the invisibility of migrant women in care and domestic work in Australia.

## **Sexual harassment and everyday sexism**

Definitions, regulations, strategies and support for young people and children.

## **The WEAVERs project**

Exploring the feasibility and impact of a lived experience panel in the area of violence against women and their children

## **Ethical fashion and preventing violence in Bangladesh**

This project examines the role of ethical fashion enterprises in Bangladesh in the primary prevention of violence against women.

## **Using theatre to raise awareness of HIV and PrEP**

This project seeks to build a set of cultural and ethical protocols around making performance work on HIV.

## **Listening for (a) change**

Identifying strategies for preventing family violence through dialogical research with women with refugee backgrounds.



### **Violence prevention and respectful relationships**

Violence prevention approaches within social policy across the life course, starting in early childhood.

### **Title transfers and housing quality**

Examining the effect of title transfers on housing quality and tenant outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.

### **Contested waterfronts**

Informality, floods and capital in Indonesian cities.

### **A novel cure**

A pilot study examining the health and wellbeing outcomes of creative practices in ageing.

### **Support for consumer transactions**

Working with consumers and industry to develop practices and processes to improve access for consumers with disabilities.



People with cognitive disabilities who may experience difficulties with decision-making have a right to be recognised as legal actors. An interdisciplinary team of researchers led by Professor Bernadette McSherry is undertaking a program of research to build expertise and tools for supporting consumers with cognitive disabilities to engage as economic actors on an equal basis with others.

# Postgraduate Students

Each year the Melbourne Social Equity Institute gives Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships and other scholarships to students whose interest in social equity issues aligns closely to our research agenda.

**Aviva Beecher Kelk**

**Sustainability vs profitability: locating stakeholders of Australian disability services in the individual support package model**

Supervisors: Professor Lynette Joubert, Department of Social Work and Associate Professor Helen Dickinson, Melbourne School of Government

**Jaz Dawson**

**Queering constructivist international relations: analysing norm implementation in sexual orientation based refugee law**

Supervisors: Professor Michelle Foster, Melbourne Law School and Associate Professor Sarah Maddison, School of Social and Political Sciences

**Vrinda Edan**

**Consumer and clinicians experiences of Advance Statements under the Victorian Mental Health Act (2014)**

Supervisors: Dr Bridget Hamilton, School of Nursing, Associate Professor Lisa Brophy, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and Professor Bernadette McSherry, Melbourne Social Equity Institute

**Liz Gill-Atkinson**

**How do women with disability in the Philippines understand and experience participatory research practice?**

Supervisors: Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit and Professor Marilys Guillemin, Centre for Health Equity

**Kelly Hutchinson**

**Social impact of technology: digital social innovation in Australia**

Supervisors: Dr Sarah Bice, Melbourne School of Government

**Lauren Kosta**

**Parenting after a disaster: experiences since Black Saturday**

Supervisors: Professor Louise Harms, Department of Social Work, Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and Dr David Rose, Department of Social Work

**Kelvin Lau**

**Understanding emotional distress and help-seeking in young people from a migrant background in Australia using photo-elicitation interviews**

Supervisor: Dr Victoria Palmer, Department of General Practice

**Micheline Lee**

**Disability, law, and all that romance: a cross-disciplinary approach to equality rights for people with disabilities**

Supervisors: Dr Eddie Paterson, School of Culture and Communication, Professor Bernadette McSherry, Melbourne Social Equity Institute and Professor Beth Gaze, Melbourne Law School

**Samantha Mannix**

**Gender equity, social transformations and education**

Supervisor: Professor Julie McLeod, Melbourne Graduate School of Education and Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit

**Erika Martino**

**From shelter to security: affordable housing for intimate partner violence survivors**

Supervisors: Professor Carolyn Whitzman, Melbourne School of Design and Associate Professor Rebecca Bentley, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health



**Melissa Murphy**

**From social connectedness to equitable access: an action research project illuminating the opportunities and the barriers to accessing music for young people with disability transitioning from school to adult life**

Supervisors: Professor Katrina Skewes-McFerran, National Music Therapy Research Unit and Dr Nick Hagiliassis, Scope Australia

**Carol O'Dwyer**

**The gender sensitive care project**

Supervisors: Professor Kelsey Hegarty and Dr Laura Tarzia, Department of General Practice, Dr Sabin Fernbacher, North West Mental Health

**Jacqui Parncutt**

**The social determinants of health of people with disability**

Supervisor: Professor Anne Kavanagh, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

**Alana Roy**

**Mental health & wellbeing of people who are deaf-blind**

Supervisor: Professor Keith McVilly, Disability Research Initiative

**Juan Tellez**

**Model laws and guidelines to regulate the use of chemical restraint on persons with disabilities**

Supervisors: Professor Bernadette McSherry, Melbourne Social Equity Institute, Professor John Tobin, Melbourne Law School and Associate Professor Lisa Brophy, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

**Amita Tuteja**

**Reproductive health and contraceptive needs of migrants from Burma**

Supervisors: Associate Professor Meredith Temple-Smith, Associate Professor Lena Sanci, and Dr Lester Mascarenhas, Department of General Practice

**Alicia Yon**

**Enabling sociospatial justice: an integrated local planning approach to addressing the disability-gender violence nexus**

Supervisors: Professor Carolyn Whitzman, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning and Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit

## **Students Awarded Doctorates in 2017**

**Dr Katie Lamb**

**Embedding the voices of children and young people in the development of programs for violent fathers**

Supervisor: Professor Cathy Humphreys, Department of Social Work

**Dr Gemma McKibbin**

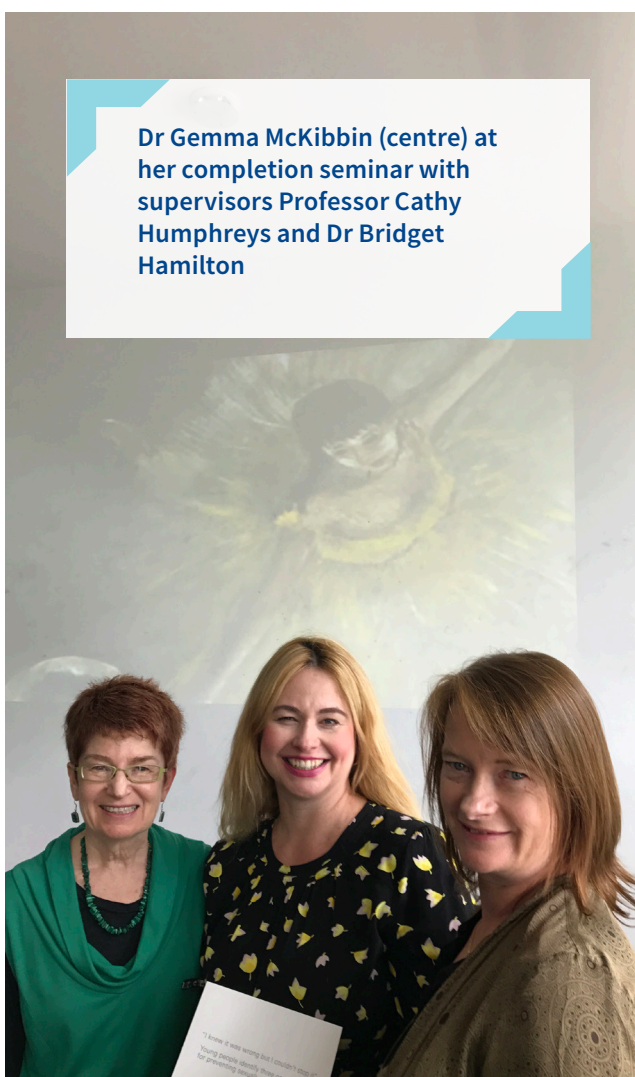
**Sexually abusive behaviour by young people: supporting Victoria's prevention response**

Supervisors: Professor Cathy Humphreys, Department of Social Work and Dr Bridget Hamilton, School of Nursing

**Naomi Pfitzner**

**Engaging new fathers: learning from baby makes 3**

Supervisors: Professor Kelsey Hegarty, Department of General Practice and Professor Cathy Humphreys, Department of Social Work



# Externally Funded Projects

## Research team

Professor Bernadette McSherry (Melbourne Social Equity Institute), Associate Professor Jeannie Paterson (Melbourne Law School), Associate Professor Lisa Brophy (Melbourne School of Population and Global Health), Dr Anna Arstein-Kerslake (Melbourne Law School) and Dr Yvette Maker (Melbourne Social Equity Institute).

## Better Support for Consumers with Decision-making Impairments

*Assisting industry to develop practices and processes to support consumers with disabilities*

The practices of telecommunications and utilities providers in relation to consumers with disability have come under growing scrutiny from consumer watchdogs, advocacy groups, and the media in recent times. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has identified conduct that detrimentally affects consumers with disabilities as one of its 2017 compliance and enforcement priority areas. In partnership with retailers in the electricity, water, and telecommunications sectors, University of Melbourne researchers are undertaking a research project to develop, in consultation with consumers, clear, best-practice guidance on supporting consumers at different stages of transactions.

The research team is working with seven industry partners who are involved in the new Thriving Communities Partnership, a collaboration of essential service providers working to improve access to services for all Australians. These industry partners are AGL, City West Water, Energy Australia, Origin Energy, Telstra, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water.

## Thanks a Bundle

*Making telecommunications services more accessible for people with cognitive disabilities*

The Thanks a Bundle project is developing effective tools to enable telecommunications providers to make consumer transactions more accessible to consumers with cognitive disabilities. The project has three objectives. The first is to analyse the extent to which telecommunications providers' online information and sales materials currently comply with consumer protection law and human rights. The second is to increase awareness among telecommunications providers of their legal obligations in relation to this group, as well as the corporate, social and economic benefits of making services more accessible. The third objective is to support better outcomes for consumers by providing practical guidance materials to telecommunications providers to make their information and sales material accessible for this consumer group. These materials will be distributed widely to telecommunications providers, regulators and industry bodies.

This project is funded via the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) 2017-18 Grants Program. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.



# Visiting Fellows

## International

- Dr Alison Strang, Senior Research Fellow in the Institute for Global Health and Development, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, United Kingdom
- Professor Jean V. McHale, Professor of Health Care Law, Birmingham Law School, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom
- Dr Benjamin White, School of Humanities, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom
- Dr Simon Chapple, Director, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies, School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand
- Maitreyi Misra, Sahana Manjesh and Yash S. Vijay, Centre on the Death Penalty, National Law University of Delhi, India

## National

- Professor Peter Whiteford, Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University, Canberra
- Frances Quan Farrant, Senior Research Policy Officer and Social Worker, People with Disability Australia



*Professor Jean V. McHale (centre) with Associate Professor Briony Dow, Co-Chair of the Hallmark Ageing Research Initiative and Professor Bernadette McSherry, Foundation Director of the Melbourne Social Equity Institute.*

# Partnerships

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute is committed to working in collaboration with like-minded organisations and individuals with lived experience to ensure that research is relevant and impactful.**

## **Scope Australia**

The Institute works closely with Scope Australia, a leading provider of disability services throughout Australia. Jointly, the partners strive to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities through research, teaching and learning and public engagement programs. This partnership is led by Professor Keith McVilly, Chair of Disability and Inclusion, a shared position between Scope Australia and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne. The partnership has experienced a productive year, with a number of research projects underway and a new undergraduate subject due to commence in Semester 1, 2018.

## **Brotherhood of St. Laurence**

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) is a community organisation that works to prevent and alleviate poverty across Australia. For a number of years, the University and BSL have enjoyed a formal research partnership that includes a number of jointly funded positions. Professor Shelley Mallett (joint Professorial Chair at the University and Director of the BSL's Research and Policy Centre) is a member of the Institute's leadership group. In 2017, and on behalf of the BSL and the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, Professor Mallett lead a series of symposiums entitled 'Investing in Australia's Future: The Promise and Pitfalls of the "Investment" Approach to Welfare' across Canberra, Hobart and Melbourne.

## **The Smith Family**

The Smith Family is a national, independent children's charity helping disadvantaged Australians to get the most out of their education, so they can create better futures for themselves. The University of Melbourne and The Smith Family formalised a partnership to jointly pursue their common commitment to improving educational opportunities for young Australians from disadvantaged backgrounds. Professor Julie McLeod, former Deputy Director of the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, chairs the partnership steering group.

## **Vision Australia**

Vision Australia is a leading national provider of blindness and low vision services in Australia. In 2017, Vision Australia and the Melbourne Social Equity Institute embarked on a joint research project to better understand the impact of vision loss and labour force outcomes. The partners also presented a lunchtime panel discussion focused on how research and advocacy are helping to build an equitable society entitled 'The Scientist, the Advocates and the Change We Can All Feel'.



## **Institute for Research into Superdiversity, University of Birmingham**

Over a number of years, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute has developed relationships with the Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS) at the University of Birmingham, UK. Together, the universities co-hosted the Research Co-production with Communities conference in September 2017.

IRiS and the Institute were also successful in a bid to the Volkswagen Foundation to undertake research in sexual and gendered-based violence experienced by people seeking asylum. For the Australian component of this research project, the University of Melbourne has partnered with the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (known simply as Foundation House). Foundation House provides services to advance the health, wellbeing and human rights of people of refugee backgrounds in Victoria who have experienced torture or other traumatic events in their country of origin or while fleeing those countries.



# Community Fellows Program

**The Community Fellows Program is the Institute's signature initiative that enables small to medium-sized organisations to access academic expertise for the benefit of their organisation and the communities that they serve.**

The program began in 2016 with a pilot of six fellowships. Its key objectives are to generate quality research outcomes, meet community-based needs for research and to foster community-academic collaborations. Each fellow is assigned an Academic Supervisor with relevant expertise. The supervisors and the program team work with the fellow to design the project. During their placement Community Fellows are encouraged to participate in a range of academic and professional development activities.

In 2017, the program expanded to include partnerships with the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Research Initiative, the Melbourne Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children (MAEVe) and the Disability Research Initiative and supported a total of 18 community organisations to undertake their own research.

The following research projects commenced in 2017 as part of the Community Fellows Program:

**Jessica Tran, 100 Story Building**

Development of participatory evaluation toolkit

**Bridgid Junot, Athletics Australia**

Assessing long-term outcomes of Raise the Bar Academy

**Nick Cooper, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre**

Measuring #RightTrack digital engagement and uptake

**André Dao and Michael Green, Behind the Wire**

Behind the Wire: a case study of collaborative activism

**Jennifer Coburn, Deafness Foundation (Victoria)**

Understanding the needs of people who are deaf or have hearing loss

**Denise Cauchi, Diaspora Action Australia**

Understanding how South Sudanese and Sri Lankan communities in Australia contribute to peace-building in their countries of origin through community harmony and reconciliation initiatives

**Julian McDonald, Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre**

Analysing police complaints data from community legal centres

**Emmanuel Musoni, Great Lakes Association for Peace and Development**

Identifying major issues that affect the settlement and integration of migrants from the Great Lakes Region of Africa to Australia

**Ruth Barson, Human Rights Law Centre**

The use of solitary confinement in Australia's youth justice facilities



**Anna Dollard, Kids Own Publishing**

South Sudanese storytelling: creative expression, cultural and intergenerational understandings

**Matt Addison, No To Violence (Incorporating Men's Referral Service)**

Better lives: applying rehabilitative principles to family violence perpetrator interventions

**Ajak Kwai, oArt – Optimistic Art Projects**

Culture shock - a multi-artform exploration

**Helen Greig, Oakwood School – Caulfield Park Community Campus**

Equipping young men to avoid becoming perpetrators of family violence

**Dominic Golding, RISE (Refugees Survivors and Ex-detainees)**

Overcoming impairment: disabled refugees and their perceptions of accessing disability support

**Jenny Chapman, Royal Women's Hospital**

Older women's experience of family violence

**Belinda Briggs, Shepparton Art Museum**

Increasing the representation of Yorta Yorta and southeast Indigenous art in the Shepparton Art Gallery

**Sarah Diplock, The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency**

An evaluation model for arts-based social enterprises

**Katrina Cornwell, Women's Circus**

Evaluating the effectiveness of Women's Circus' programs



**Behind the Wire is an award-winning oral history project documenting the stories of the men, women and children who have been detained by the Australian government after seeking asylum in Australia.**

**Community Fellows André Dao and Michael Green are being mentored by historian Associate Professor Sara Wills from the Faculty of Arts.**

*Photo: Abdul Aziz Muhamat from Behind the Wire's The Messenger podcast.*

Visit [go.unimelb.edu.au/8ad6](https://go.unimelb.edu.au/8ad6) to listen to the series

# Community of Practice in Community Engaged Research

**The Community of Practice brings together people from a range of backgrounds to explore the ethics, methods and approaches to community engaged research.**

Melbourne Social Equity Institute, in collaboration with a number of University of Melbourne research networks, received a grant from Chancellery (Engagement) to establish a Community of Practice to explore models for community engaged research. Community engaged research is characterised by the involvement of individuals and communities with lived experiences in determining the purpose, design, conduct and use of research that affects them.

The Community of Practice welcomed participants from numerous universities, members of the communities with which they worked, and individuals from associated community sector and government organisations.

At the time of writing, six Community of Practice workshops have been conducted:

Date	Host Organisation	Topic
17 July 2017	Disability Research Initiative	What is community-engaged research? Perspectives from disability research
24 October 2017	Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children (MAEVe)	Discussion between researchers and women with lived experience of partner violence about the best ways to collaborate.
17 November 2017	Hallmark Ageing Research Initiative	Community engaged research in ageing.
29 November 2017	Children's Lives Research Initiative and the Children's Lives in Contemporary Australia network	Participatory research with children
12 February 2018	Melbourne Social Equity Institute	Who has the right to research? Research with, for and by people with lived experiences of seeking asylum
6 April 2018	Indigenous Research Initiative	Community engaged Indigenous research: presented as part of the Place and Partnerships Conference

Melbourne Social Equity Institute continues to engage with this network to distribute information and resources. A symposium focused on the common themes established across the six workshops is planned for the second half of 2018.



Feedback from participants in the Community of Practice strongly indicates that the workshops provided inspiration, reassurance and collegiate support to people often working in isolation, as well as opportunities for community members who have traditionally been regarded as research subjects to meet with researchers and other professionals on an equal footing. The presentations made across the sessions demonstrate that collaborative research with communities can lead to research of a quality that cannot be reached by traditional research relationships.

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute will continue to draw together the learnings from the Community of Practice. In the latter half of 2018 the Institute will host a symposium to showcase successful models for community engaged research and will also develop a practice toolkit to assist researchers in undertaking engaged research.



*Dr Steven Baker, Lena Gan and Ruby Lipson-Smith, speakers at the Community of Practice workshop on community engaged research in ageing. (Photo: Ruth Williams)*

# Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies

**Forced displacement is a major contemporary global challenge demanding responses based on enhanced understanding of its complex and multifaceted causes and consequences. In 2017 the Melbourne Social Equity Institute launched a new interdisciplinary PhD program to provide advanced training to doctoral candidates from across the University of Melbourne.**

Co-ordinated by Dr Karen Block, the program addresses the contemporary issues of asylum-seeking and forced migration across the areas of law, health, culture, education, creative arts, history, social policy, housing, social sustainability, community wellbeing and mental health. It includes research training informed by a range of disciplinary, theoretical and philosophical perspectives. Ethics and research methods are key components of the program, as are approaches for communicating research to diverse audiences across and beyond the academy.

A suite of focussed study circles allow students to extend their knowledge in specialist areas. Students are supported to build networks across the University and with relevant external organisations and to develop their research in reference to current real-world challenges. The program enriches the PhD experience by creating a strong cohort and intellectual community that will assist students in developing their post-doctoral pathways.

**“This program opens up possibilities for future collaborations and significant ongoing conversations, which I believe is very exciting and sustaining.”**

*Sarah Strauven  
University of Melbourne PhD Candidate*





## Program Participants and Thesis Topics

### Adrienne Anderson

Every woman is an island: bridging the gap between 'mainland' refugee claims and women's domestic abuse cases

### Anh Nguyen

Towards a new historical and psychological perspective of acculturation and success: oral history of Vietnamese Australian child refugees as adults

### Asher Hirsch

The right to seek asylum in an age of extra-territorialisation: the legality of Australia's deterrence and disruption activities beyond its borders

### Brandais York

The legal rights and protections of Cambodian women within international marriage migration to China

### Caitlin Douglass

Young people of refugee backgrounds in Victoria

### Carol O'Dwyer

The gender sensitive care project

### Ebony King

The role of services in facilitating the resilience of unaccompanied asylum seeking minors

### Estelle Boyle

Mobilising belonging: the role of networked communication in facilitating social inclusion of resettled refugees

### Evan Jureidini

Trauma and the altered self

### John van Kooy

Surplus to requirements? Local inclusion of humanitarian migrants in Australia

### Kelly Soderstrom

The 'I' in Team: an analysis of the implementation gap in EU refugee policy. A case study of solidarity

### Kyli Hedrick

Deciphering despair: a study of self-harm among the Australian asylum seeker population

### Lila Moosad

An ethnographic study of young Pasifika women in Melbourne

### Louise Olliff

Refugee diaspora organisations in the international refugee regime: motivations, modalities and implications of diaspora humanitarianism

### Maria Hach

Intergenerational hauntings: memory, embodiment and affectivity of historical trauma among Cambodian-Australian women

### Mikel Moss

Meisner focused drama therapeutic interventions in colonized other communities

### Rasika Jayasuriya

Protecting the right to family unity: the impact of low-waged labour migration on children left behind

### Rose Iser

Realising the academic and social potential of second-generation children of African refugees in the classroom

### Sanaz Nasirpour

Diasporic relations and women's leadership: the question of women's rights in Iran

### Sarah Strauven

Exploring collective narrative work with traumatised refugees

### Shane Harrison

Sexual exploitation and abuse of boys in conflict

### Shannon Owen

Projecting futures through documentary film

### Toby Markham

Towards a re-framing of asylum seeker discourse in Australia

# Choice, Control and the NDIS

A Melbourne Social Equity Institute research team recently undertook a project to explore the degree to which the NDIS is achieving its aims and objectives from the perspective of people with disability using these services.

Introduced in 2013, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the most significant reform of disability services in Australia in a generation. The scheme aims to increase both the funding available for disability services and the control that people living with disabilities have over the design and delivery of their care. It does this, in part, by handing greater control over care budgets to people with disabilities and their families so that services might be designed and delivered in a way that better meets their particular needs.

With Australia recently ranked last in an OECD study of quality of life of people with disabilities, and with the significantly worse outcomes experienced by people with disabilities, the NDIS is a welcome reform. The research team took a novel approach to the research process, which was participatory in nature involving community researchers with disabilities working with university-based experts. Involving people with disabilities in the research process improved the quality of the project and its ability to collect and analyse evidence effectively.

## CHOICE, CONTROL AND THE NDIS





# Unfitness to Plead Project

**This two-year project developed culturally appropriate supports for accused people with cognitive disabilities at risk of being found unfit to plead.**

People with cognitive disabilities are over-represented in the criminal justice system. The Victorian Department of Justice reports that 42% of male prisoners and 33% of female prisoners have an acquired brain injury compared to 2.2% of the general population. Unfitness to stand trial laws aim to protect accused persons with cognitive disabilities who are deemed unable to take part in criminal proceedings. But in reality, people found unfit to stand trial can be detained indefinitely in Australia, and for longer than if they were convicted in a typical trial. They are also more likely to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The research team and their community partners co-designed, delivered and evaluated a six-month Disability Justice Support Program for accused persons with cognitive disabilities at risk of being found unfit to plead. The program reduced the need for unfitness to plead determinations by assisting accused persons to participate in proceedings and exercise their legal capacity. The findings suggest that the Disability Justice Support Program provides a cost-effective and rights-affirming approach that improves access to justice. The project was funded by a National Disability Research and Development Grant administered by the New South Wales Family and Community Service Research and Data Working Group.

The project findings were disseminated in a range of formats, including an Easy English guide for people with cognitive disabilities and a brochure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy groups. The project generated considerable media coverage, including in The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald, SBS Television, NITV, ABC Radio National and the Central Australia Aboriginal Media Association.



**Marlon Noble attending the launch of the Unfitness to Plead Project Report in Melbourne in September 2017.**

**Mr Noble was imprisoned for ten years without trial after being found unfit to plead .**

# Count Me In

**In 2017 the Count Me In project received a VicHealth Award for Building Health through Sport. Held annually, the VicHealth Awards are Victoria's highest accolade for health promotion.**

Count Me In promotes wellbeing and inclusion through sports participation for migrant and refugee-background young people. The project was seed-funded by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute in 2014. It is now jointly-led by the University of Melbourne and Merri Health and overseen by a steering committee comprising local government, community organisations, schools and sporting clubs.

For refugee and migrant youth, participating in organised sports can be a critical mediator for achieving positive settlement and the capacity to engage meaningfully in Australian society. Participation is associated with lower levels of depression and suicidality; greater levels of psychosocial maturity, self-esteem, social connectedness and social competence; reduced involvement in antisocial activities; and higher academic outcomes.

Traditionally, refugee and migrant youth have low participation rates in sport. Identified barriers include costs, discrimination and a lack of cultural sensitivity in sporting environments, a lack of knowledge of mainstream sports services on the part of refugee-background settlers, lack of access to transport, culturally determined gender norms and family attitudes. Count Me In employs bicultural Community Support Coordinators to lead work at a community level, providing guidance to ensure practices are culturally appropriate. Their role is to engage directly with families, facilitate involvement with their chosen sports, and provide ongoing support, encouragement and mediation between families and clubs.

Since July 2016, Count Me In has allowed 191 children from 115 families to begin playing sport regularly. Participants come from 9 different cultural backgrounds and 28 different schools. Count Me In now has partnerships with 11 sporting clubs from a range of codes, including netball, soccer, athletics, Australian Rules football and soccer.

**"I just wanted to have some fresh air  
and to do some activities which are  
mostly outside."**

**Abdullah, aged 13**  
*Cricketer and Count Me In program participant*

Visit [go.unimelb.edu.au/k3t6](http://go.unimelb.edu.au/k3t6) to watch a video  
about Abdullah and his involvement in the  
program





# Centre for Research Excellence in Disability and Health

**An Australian with a disability is more likely to be unemployed, live in inadequate and unaffordable housing, have not completed school, and live in financial stress. The Centre for Research Excellence in Disability and Health seeks to provide the knowledge base to inform policy reform to solve the problem of disadvantage and the consequent poor health of people with disabilities.**

In 2017, a team led by Professor Anne Kavanagh (School of Population Health, University of Melbourne) was successful in their bid to the National Health and Medical Research Council to establish a Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health. Melbourne Social Equity Institute was a collaborator on the bid and will be supporting PhD scholars and the engagement of Community Fellows in the Centre's work.

The Centre was formally opened by the Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Alastair McEwin, on 27 June, 2017. The Melbourne Social Equity Institute supported a booked-out public event to celebrate the launch, featuring the Commissioner, media personality Julie McCrossin, performer Emily Dash and journalist Carly Findlay. Commissioner McEwin remarked on the role of the new Centre "to challenge the assumptions that people with disabilities cannot be included equally within society – this includes access to health, and we know that if we have access to good quality health services, we can really participate equally in the fields of education, employment, community – just as everybody does."



# Publication Highlights

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute and its affiliated researchers produced 55 publications in 2017. A select few are highlighted below.**

Gooding, P. *A New Era for Mental Health Law and Policy: Supported Decision-Making and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Humphreys, C. & Diemer, K. Working with domestic violence. In L. Harms and M. Connolly (Eds) *Frameworks for Social Work Practice*. London: Sage.

Hopgood, F., The Laughter and the Tears: Comedy, Melodrama and the Shift Towards Empathy for Mental Illness on Screen. In Mark David Ryan and Ben Goldsmith (eds) *Australian Screen in the 2000s* (pp. 165-190). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

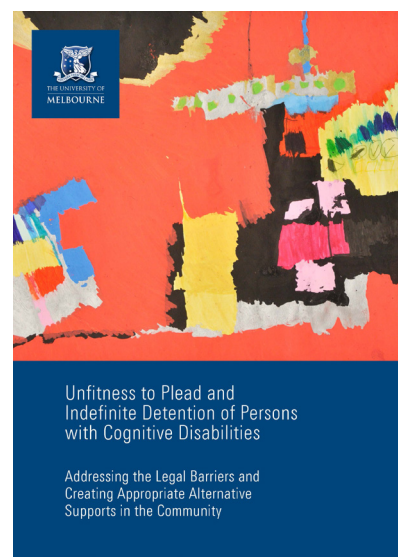
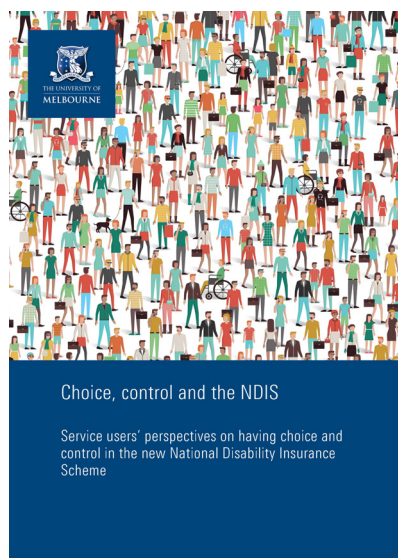
Gilchrist, G., and Hegarty, K. Tailored Integrated Interventions for Intimate Partner Violence and Substance Use Are Urgently Needed. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 36: 3 – 6.

Gooding, P., Mcsherry, B., Arstein-Kerslake, A., & Andrews, L. Unfitness to Stand Trial and The Indefinite Detention of Persons with Cognitive Disabilities In Australia: Human Rights Challenges And Proposals For Change. *Melbourne University Law Review*, 40(3): 816 – 866.

Maker, Y., McSherry, B., Brophy, L., Paterson, J. M., & Arstein-Kerslake, A. Supporting People with Decision-Making Impairments: Choice, Control and Consumer Transactions. *Journal of Law and Medicine*, 24(4): 756 – 762.

McKibbin, G. Preventing Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Child Sexual Exploitation for Children and Young People Living in Residential Care: A Scoping Review in the Australian Context; *Children and Youth Services Review*, 82: 373 – 382.

## Internally Published Research Reports





# Media Highlights

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute counted 201 media mentions in 2017, with the majority resulting from the Choice, Control and the NDIS and the Unfitness to Plead projects.**

Piers Gooding, Interview: A New Report from Melbourne University Social Equity Institute is Calling for More Disability Support Workers. NITV: NITV News

Sue Olney, Interview: Choice, Control and the NDIS. ABC Radio Canberra Drive

Katie Lamb, Interview. Listening to Children on Family Violence. ABC Radio National: Life Matters

Yvette Maker, Interview: Support for young carers through the Young Carers Bursary Program. 2SER

Bernadette McSherry, Interview: Restrictive Interventions in Mental Health Care: Writs and Cures. ABC Radio Melbourne

Micheline Lee, The Art of Dependency: The NDIS Promised Choice and Control. The Monthly

Jen Hargrave, Bumping Into Barriers on the Way to Social Inclusion with the NDIS. Power to Persuade

Cathy Humphreys, We must never ignore the terror behind closed doors. Herald Sun

Bernadette McSherry, Bourke Street: Government's Focus on Terrorism Masks the Real Threats to our Safety. Opinion. Sydney Morning Herald and The Age

Piers Gooding, The forgotten 660,000 locked out of home ownership. The Conversation

Rebecca Harris, Trauma Informed Practice in Action. Teacher Magazine

John van Kooy, Interview: How to Better Help Refugees and Asylum Seekers Enter the Workforce. ABC Radio National: Life Matters



# Global Perspectives on Research Co-production with Communities

**This international two-day conference was held in Birmingham in September in partnership with the University of Birmingham's Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS).**

The Global Perspectives on Co-production with Community conference brought together world-leading academics, practitioners and community researchers to focus on the opportunities and challenges of community engaged research. The conference explored innovative models and methods adopted as part of community-based initiatives and university-community partnerships. It also provided a forum to a range of theoretical, methodological and ethical issues in order to advance thinking and help enhance the impact of community engaged research projects.

The conference included 19 concurrent panel sessions with 50 papers presented. Panel sessions took different forms with some being the traditional academic conference format with papers grouped according to areas of focus while others ran as interactive workshops. Participants came from 16 different countries including the United States, Mexico, India, Japan, Ireland, Spain, Germany and Italy.



*The conference also connected with interested researchers and community groups from around world by encouraging discussion and engagement through social media.*



# Lecture Series for Refugees and People Seeking Asylum

**This annual lecture series aims to give recent arrivals in Australia a better understanding of Australian history and contemporary society.**

The series began in 2014 with the recognition that many refugees and people seeking asylum in the community didn't have the right to work or study, and were experiencing significant social isolation. Attendees have said that they found it an "overwhelmingly positive experience".

The structure and themes for the lecture series were developed in consultation with the Red Cross. Topics covered included Indigenous histories, the history of migration, workplace culture, political systems and human rights. The lectures were delivered in English, with a team of student volunteers on hand to answer questions and lead small group discussions.

The 2017 lecture series attracted audience members from Pakistan, Tibet (China), Eritrea, Assyria, Syria, Iraq, India, Brazil, Germany, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Iran, Singapore and Ethiopia. 95% of attendees had arrived in Australia within the past 5 years, 55% since 2016.

For the first time in 2017, the lecture series was filmed and made available online, making the content of the lectures freely available to people unable to attend the events in person.



## UNDERSTANDING AUSTRALIA: HISTORY, CULTURE & SOCIETY

A Lecture Series for Refugees and People Seeking Asylum

**Starts Monday 18 September**

# Public Events

**The Melbourne Social Equity Institute hosted and supported over 70 events in 2017 including public lectures, research seminars, film screenings and workshops.**

The year began with a showcase event, highlighting the work of the Institute and the research projects it has supported in recent years. The event attracted an audience of over 80 people and provided an opportunity to bring together researchers, from both inside and outside the University of Melbourne, from a broad range of disciplines and areas of expertise. The event also provided an opportunity to discuss future ways that interested researchers could work with the Institute.

A key feature of the year's events program was a fortnightly series focused on research and issues related to refugees and forced migration. Speakers included University of Melbourne academics from a range of disciplines, as well as speakers from external organisations including the International Detention Coalition and the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Topics covered statelessness and the law, changing political debate on asylum seekers, music and refugees in Australia and human trafficking in North Korea.

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute also worked closely with colleagues in the Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children (MAEVe) to present fortnightly events. This series provided an opportunity to learn about the latest research in a range of areas including intersections between violence and disability, psychological perspectives on objectification and violence, gender and activism in Indonesia and online intervention orders. The events attracted strong audience numbers from university academics, research higher degree students and the community sector.

A highlight of a busy events program in May was a half-day forum presented in partnership with the Brotherhood of St. Laurence. This event explored the priority investment approach to welfare, with a particular focus on the experience of this approach in New Zealand. Based on actuarial analysis, the priority investment approach involves identifying members of the community at risk of long-term welfare dependency and providing necessary social, education and employment services to enable them to participate more fully in the labour market and the wider community. The keynote speakers were Dr Simon Chapple, former Chief Economist of New Zealand's Ministry of Social Development, and Professor Peter Whiteford from ANU's Crawford School of Public Policy.

In July, the Institute warmly welcomed a visit from Professor Jean V. McHale, Director of the Centre for Health Law, Science and Policy, University of Birmingham. At a public lecture held in partnership with Melbourne Law School and the the Hallmark Ageing Research Initiative, Professor McHale spoke about health rights and older people, posing the question 'is a convention for the human rights of older people the answer?'

A large audience packed the Melbourne Brain Centre auditorium in October for 'Neurohype: Do All the Answers to Improving Mental Health Lie Within the Brain?', a panel discussion moderated by broadcaster Peter Mares. The session explored the promises and pitfalls of relying solely on neuropsychology to explain mental health challenges. It featured Katharine Annear (Chair of the Autistic Self Advocacy



Network Australia and Co-convenor of Women with Disabilities South Australia), Lisa Brophy (Associate Professor, Centre for Mental Health, University of Melbourne and Principal Research Fellow, Mind Australia), Nick Haslam (Professor of Psychology, University of Melbourne) and Cath Roper (Consumer Academic, University of Melbourne).

The Researchers for Asylum Seekers Postgraduate Conference has been held annually for over a decade and has been supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute for the past four years. The day-long event in November provides an opportunity for postgraduate researchers – both past and present – to present and discuss their work. The 2017 event had a special focus on forced migration and human rights, with many of the participants in the Institute's Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies presenting their research.

The final event supported by the Institute in 2017 focused on maximising the social benefits of public housing renewal. Held at the Flemington Community Centre and led by Transforming Housing and the Melbourne School of Geography, the event began with a panel discussion exploring the scale, timing, geography and process of housing redevelopment, stock transfer to housing associations and international best practice considerations for public housing renewal. Following this, facilitated small-group discussions teased out key concerns and potential solutions.



# Financial Statement

INCOME		
Balance brought forward		\$373
Funds from Chancellery		
– Core Melbourne Social Equity Institute funding		\$1,042,000
– Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children		\$150,000
– Space charges contribution		\$30,000
Internal grants		\$55,817
External grants		\$157,853
Philanthropic donations		\$6,500
	<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$1,442,543</b>
EXPENDITURE		
Directorate staff salaries		\$480,055
Research staff salaries		\$205,199
Research project costs		\$192,770
Operating expenses		\$28,762
Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children		\$150,000
Seed funded projects		\$148,715
Partnership development		\$6,351
PhD scholarships		\$68,060
Events		\$7,366
Space charges		\$30,000
	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>\$1,317,278</b>
	<b>Surplus</b>	<b>\$125,265</b>













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## Contact the Melbourne Social Equity Institute

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 [socialequity.unimelb.edu.au](https://socialequity.unimelb.edu.au)

 +61 3 9035 4738

 [facebook.com/MSEIatUniMelb](https://facebook.com/MSEIatUniMelb)

 [twitter.com/MSEI\\_UniMelb](https://twitter.com/MSEI_UniMelb)

 [social-equity@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:social-equity@unimelb.edu.au)