

Melbourne Social Equity Institute

COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH NETWORK

December 2025 Speakers



DOMINICA MEADE

PhD Candidate, Sociology,
School of Social and Political Sciences

Gender, volunteerism, disasters, community-engaged research

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- PhD research on the gender dynamics of informal volunteerism post disaster
- Research Assistant, Melbourne Social Equity Institute
- Community Engaged Research Community of Practice (Graduate and Early Career Researchers) Leadership Group



Contact

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[LinkedIn – Dominica Meade](#)



ALAN BECHAZ

PhD Candidate & Sessional Tutor,
School of Languages and Linguistics

*Applied linguistics, health communication, mental health,
multilingualism, communication ethics*

Current Project

- Talking about mental health in multilingual and transcultural contexts: A collaborative case study with members of communities from Afghanistan in Victoria

Contact

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LinkedIn – Alan Bechaz



PROFESSOR RUTH NETTLE

**Rural Innovation Research Group, School of
Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences**

*People in agriculture, farm workforce change, climate adaptation,
advisory and extension systems, rural community resilience, action
research and participatory and engaged research methods, rural
sociology, innovation systems*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Securing the next generation in farming and food careers
- Victoria Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub
- AgriFutures: Employer of Choice – best management people management practices on Australian farm
- One Basin CRC: Digital Irrigation Advisory Systems
- ZeroNet emissions in Agriculture CRC
- International Association on Work in Agriculture



Contact

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[LinkedIn – Ruth Nettle](#)

safes.unimelb.edu.au/research/rirg



ASSOCIATE PROF KAREN BLOCK

Migration and Health Unit Head, Nossal Institute of Global Health
Deputy Director, Melbourne Social Equity Institute
Academic Convenor, Anti-racism Hallmark Research Initiative

*Migration and Refugees, Anti-Racism, Coproductive Research,
Gender-Based Violence, Sport and Social Inclusion*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- The FAIR Project: Family violence affecting children from immigrant and refugee backgrounds
- Settling well in regional Australia: Experiences of people from refugee backgrounds
- STARS: Standing Together Against Racism in Sport
- Migrant and refugee experiences of intervention programs for men who use domestic, family and sexual violence



Contact

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LinkedIn – Karen Block



Melbourne Social Equity Institute

COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH NETWORK

September 2025 Speakers



DR SARAH WOODLAND

Senior Lecturer in Theatre,
Victorian College of the Arts

Applied and socially engaged theatre, participatory arts, community engaged research

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- 'Let Me Speak, Listen to My Story, No More Silence': Engaging formerly incarcerated women in creative practice pathways
- THE SCORE: Participatory theatre for sexual health education in First Nations communities



Contact

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[LinkedIn – Sarah Woodland](#)



STEFANIE DIMOV

Research Fellow & PhD Candidate, Melbourne
School of Population & Global Health

*Young people, disability, intellectual disability, mental health, lived
experience inclusion in research*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- The Research Alliance for Youth Disability & Mental Health (RAY)
- PhD: Post-school transitions and mental health for young people with intellectual disability



Contact

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[LinkedIn – Stefanie Dimov](#)



DR DAVE MCDONALD

Senior Lecturer in Criminology,
School of Social and Political Sciences

Institutional abuse, child sexual abuse, cultural truth telling

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Care leaver perspectives on the Australian Orphanage Museum
- Experiencing institutional 'care': Oral histories as public memory
- Telling stories with ribbons: Ballarat, Loud Fence and the aftermath of institutional child sexual abuse



Contact

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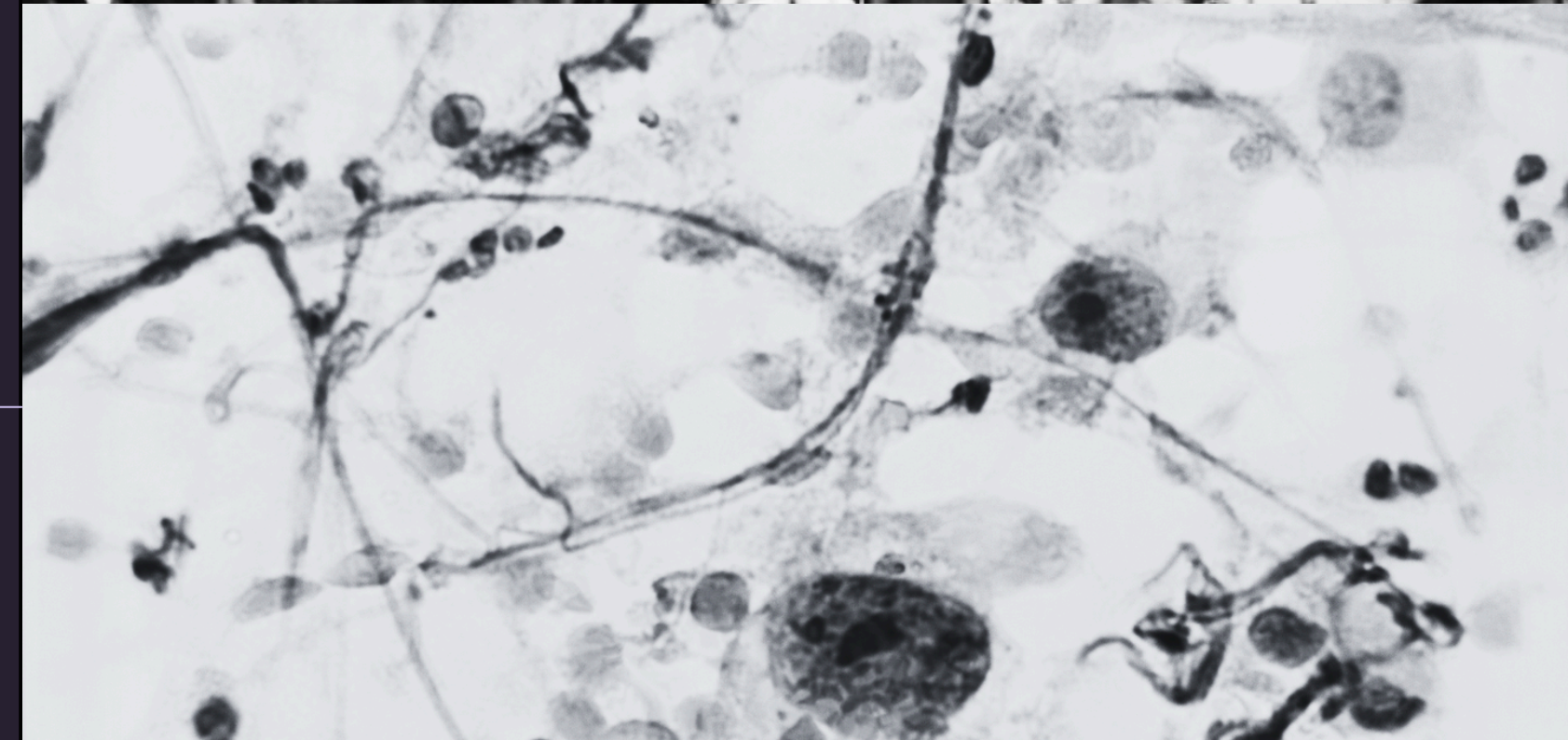
DR MADHURIMA DAS

Lecturer, Department of Mechanical
Engineering

*Ethics, equity, and justice in engineering design; design creativity;
design education*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Making it a real choice: Improving accessibility of cervical screening self-collection swabs for people with disability
- Grounded futures: Indigenous innovation in the afterlife of aircraft
- Opportunities and challenges in using large language models as interviewees for user needs elicitation in design research



Contact

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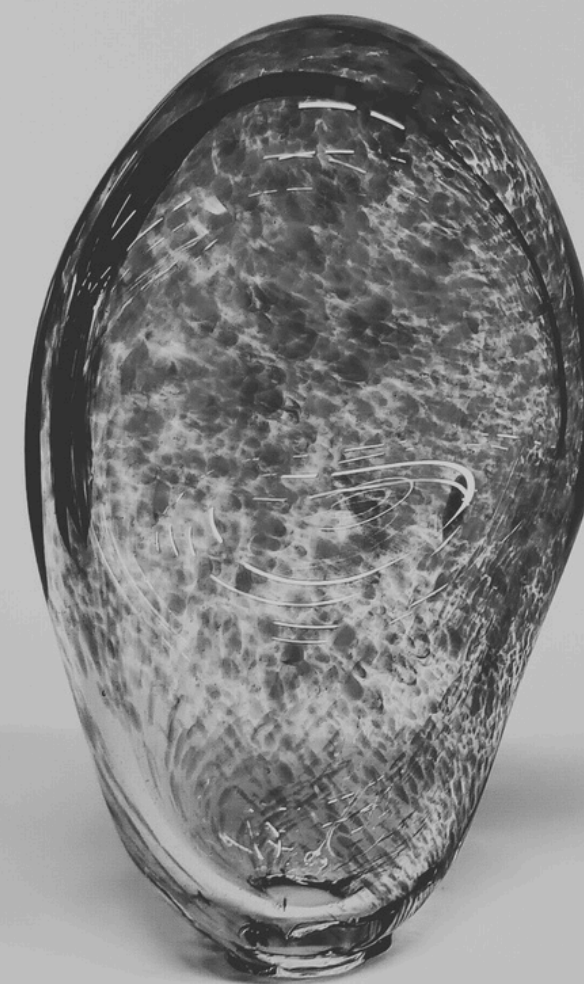
PROFESSOR EVA ALISIC

Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

*Children and young people, domestic homicide, war, mental health,
art for science communication*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Homicide at Home: Minimising the Impact on Young Survivors
- Better Learning Project (Lebanon, Gaza, West Bank)
- Art to Communicate Trauma Research



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Melbourne Social Equity Institute

COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH NETWORK

June 2025 Speakers



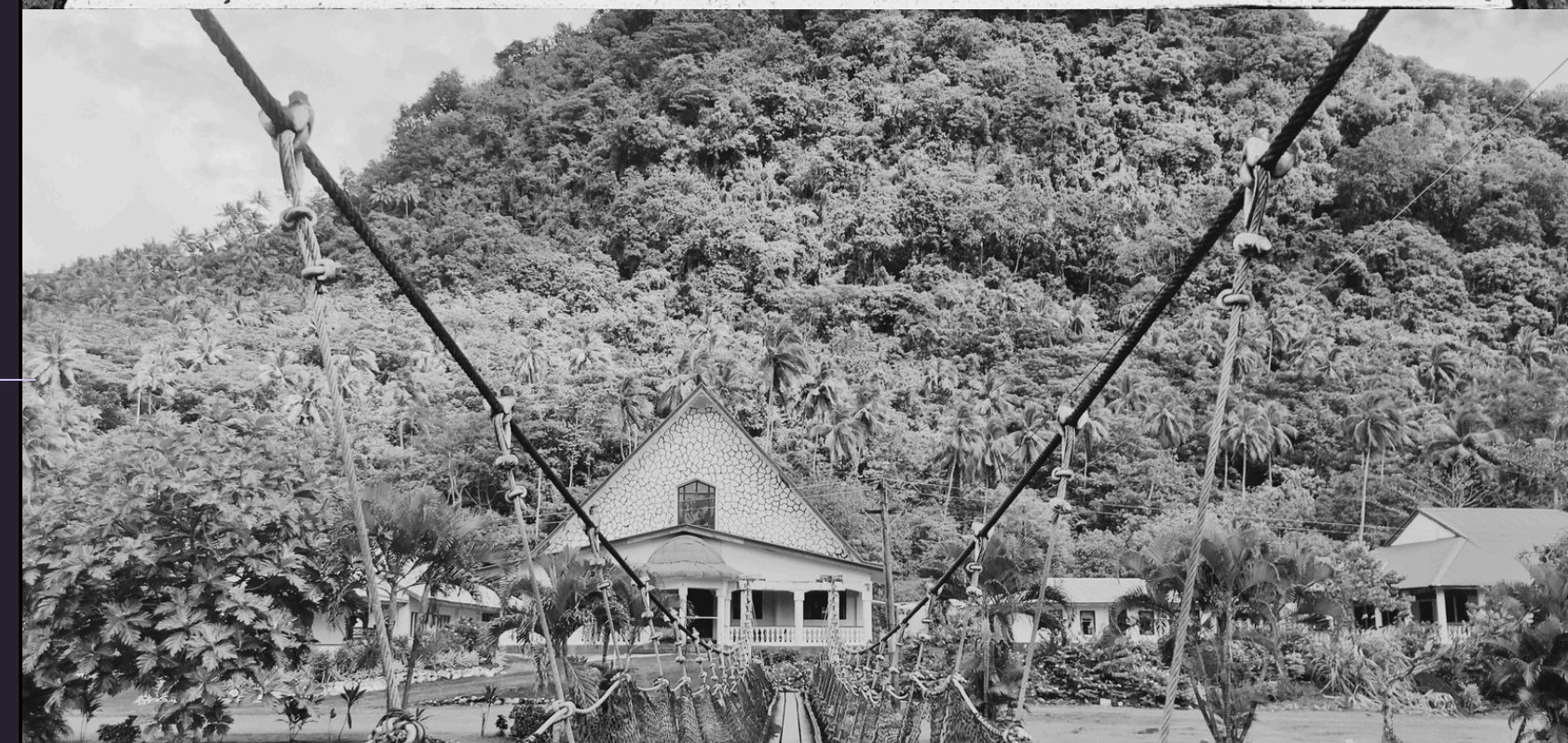
RITA SEUMANUTAFAPALALA

Research Fellow, Oceania Institute

Ethnomusicology, The musical traditions of Samoa, Samoan research methodology, Pacific choral music

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Pasefika Vitoria Choir (Pacific Island Creative Arts Australia Inc.)
- Moana Wansolwara Sound Archive Project (UniMelb + Museums Victoria)
- PhD study: Pese o le Fa'aulufalega (Songs for a Church Opening Event): The Musical Traditions of the Samoan Communities of Aotearoa (NZ) from ca.1960 to 2014



Contact

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YASODHARA RANASINGHE

PhD Candidate (under examination)
Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning

Lecturer, Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa
Sri Lanka

*Built Environment and Design, Centrally- Driven Resettlement Solutions,
Marginalised Communities' Voices, Landslides, Sri Lanka*

Current Project

- Community in Disaster Recovery: Towards Community-Inclusive Resettlement Strategies Following Landslide Events in Rural Sri Lanka



Contact

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LinkedIn – Yasodhara Ranasinghe



KATIE LAMB

Senior Research Fellow, Lived Experience Engagement
Safer Families Centre, RESTORE Centre for Research
Excellence

Domestic, family and sexual violence

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Measuring impact of victim survivors teaching health science students about domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV)
- Co-designing a best practice framework for embedding lived experience in research about DFV
- Developing a self-reflection tool to help prepare health care workers to have holistic conversations about wellbeing, violence and trauma (Bigaagarri)
- Exploring the establishment of a Collective for academic DFV researchers with lived experience of violence/abuse



Contact

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DEBRA MCDOUGALL

Associate Professor, Anthropology, School of Social
and Political Sciences

Co-Director, Oceania Institute, University of Melbourne

*Multilingual education in the Pacific, socio-economic and epistemological
inequality, pedagogy, ideas of “community”, rural livelihoods, Solomon
Islands*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Multilingualism, education, and language documentation in Solomon Islands (in collaboration with Dr Alpheaus G Zobule and the Kulu Language Institute of Ranoqa)
- Livelihoods in Forest Ecosystem Recovery (LIFER)



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Melbourne Social Equity Institute

COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH NETWORK

March 2025 Speakers



PROFESSOR JO BARRAKET AM

Director, Melbourne Social Equity Institute

*Social Enterprise, Social Innovation, New Public Governance,
Co-productive Research*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Seedkit
- Blueprint Expert Reference Group
- Activating Employment Futures Through Work Integration Social Enterprise
- Supporting Not-for-Profit Capacity Building Through Evaluation and Monitoring



Contact

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NATALIE CALLEJA

PhD Candidate, Youth Research Collective
Faculty of Education

Young People, Politics of Belonging, Sociology of Youth, Critical Geography Studies, Public Pedagogies, Participatory and Community Engaged Methodologies

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Stories of belonging with young people in inner-western Melbourne in the context of a settler colonial state (doctoral research project - current)
- A social network analysis and implementation study of an intervention designed to advance social and emotional learning and respectful relationships in secondary schools (ANROWS research project, 2021-2023)



[Contact](#)

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DR NICHOLAS HILL

McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellow, School of
Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts

*LGBTIQA+ Mental Health and Suicidality, Critical Mental Health,
Community Engaged Research*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Improving LGBTIQA+ Mental Health: Co-Creating Inclusive Health and Social Care
- Re-Imagining Environments for Connection and Engagement: Testing Actions for Social Prescribing in Natural Spaces
- Improving support for LGBTIQ suicidal behaviour: insight from lived experience
- Closing the mental health care gap: co-designing resources for Emergency Department staff
- Equally Well Healthtalk: Physical Health of People with Lived Experience of Mental Illness



Contact

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LinkedIn – Nicholas Hill



DR MEG LEE

Research Assistant, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

Young People, Regional/Rural Settlement, Geography, Mobilities, Youth Futures, Wellbeing, Racism and Whiteness, Phenomenology, Co-design and Youth Participation, Photovoice and Arts Based Methods

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- The ACCESS Project: Crisis Accommodation for Children and Young People Seeking Safety (photovoice component)
- The Youth Wellbeing Project: Understanding the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young People from Refugee Backgrounds
- 'Doing Life Together': Understanding Everyday Wellbeing with Young People in Rural Victoria (PhD Research and Photovoice Exhibitions)
- Non-academic: Multicultural Youth Work Projects in Rural Victoria



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PUNEET SANSANWAL

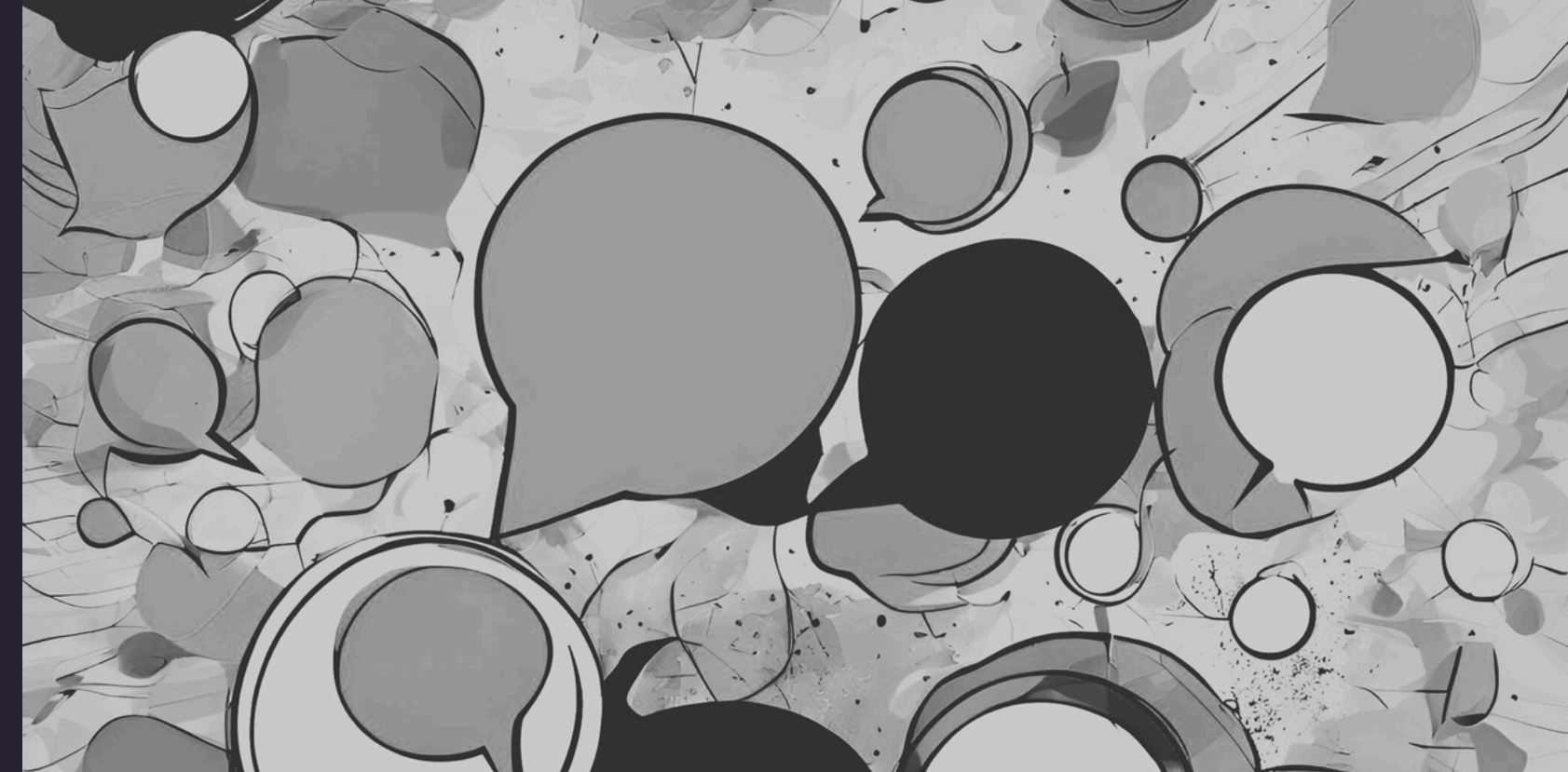
**Consumer Academic, Centre for Mental Health
Nursing, University of Melbourne**

PhD Candidate, Law School, La Trobe University

*Co-produced Research, Lived Experience Workforce, Lived Experience
Leadership, Human Rights, Disability Rights, Consumer Rights, Trauma
Informed Practices*

Selected Current & Recent Projects

- Clinical Supervision Masterclass Evaluation Project
- Factors Affecting Community Treatment Orders Research Study
- Lived and Living Experience Workforce Support Program
- Research Priorities Survey Project for Translation Research Strategy
- Mental Health Improvement Program Evaluation Project
- Lived Experience Strategy, Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing



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