

# Newsletter

**October 2023**

Cairns  
Singapore  
Townsville





## Welcome!

The Cairns Institute supports JCU's strategic intent to create a brighter future for life in the tropics world-wide through graduates and discoveries that make a difference. [www.jcu.edu.au/about/strategic-intent](http://www.jcu.edu.au/about/strategic-intent).

The Cairns Institute's location in tropical north Queensland and proximity to neighbouring countries in the Pacific and South East Asia offers unique opportunities to enhance human life in the tropics and contribute to a brighter, more equitable and enriching future for its peoples. The Institute is committed to understanding and informing critical processes of social and environmental transformation in the tropics.

As the world's tropical zones face immense social, economic and environmental challenges, the Institute aims to provide innovative research with local, national and global applications. The Institute's core business of research, training and dialogue is embedded in commitments of excellence, social justice and engagement with the societies in which we work. Our unique profile is built on the following key concerns:

- Creativity and innovation
- Cultural and linguistical transformations
- Indigenous futures
- Social and environmental justice
- Sustainable development

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Prof Hurriyet Babacan



## New Chair of RDA Tropical North

Early this year, Professor Hurriyet Babacan AM was appointed as the new chair of Regional Development Australia (RDA) Tropical North. Hurriyet who also serves as Vice Chair of the Cape York Natural Resource Management Board was the Foundation Director of The Cairns Institute and is currently a Research Fellow with the Development in the Tropics team at the Institute.

She has a distinguished career over the last 25 years with a proven track record of achievement in senior leadership and strategic management roles. She has a notable record in scholarships in research, teaching and learning, community and professional service. She has held senior roles in higher education, public administration, research and training such as Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic and Research), Dean, Head of School and Director of Research Institutes, Commissioner and Victorian Manager of Dept of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Hurriyet has delivered keynote presentations at numerous national and international conferences and has been a member of high-level working parties such as the OECD-Council of Europe Working Party on Wellbeing, and a member of the Steering Committee of the United Nations and Queensland Government initiative on engaging communities. Hurriyet has an extensive track record of leading multidisciplinary research in Australia and the Asia Pacific.

Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, and Member for Eden-Monaro, the Honourable Kristy McBain MP stated, "With her extensive experience and networks across government and academia, Professor Babacan is well placed to spearhead RDA Tropical North's work to facilitate initiatives and collaborations that grow the local economy, promote opportunities and attract investment."

Hurriyet who was awarded the Order of Australia 2014 (AM) for outstanding contribution, as academic and author, and for furthering multicultural community, education and social policy development, said that "I am pleased to have the opportunity to lead RDA Tropical North and ensure that we are able to transition in a positive way in the face of new global challenges. I am keen to work towards strengthening the region's economy, capitalise on opportunities in net zero economies, ensure workforce development, improve health, wellbeing and liveability and forge stronger relationships with our Indo-Pacific neighbours. This can happen through meaningful collaboration with all levels of government, industry, community and academia."

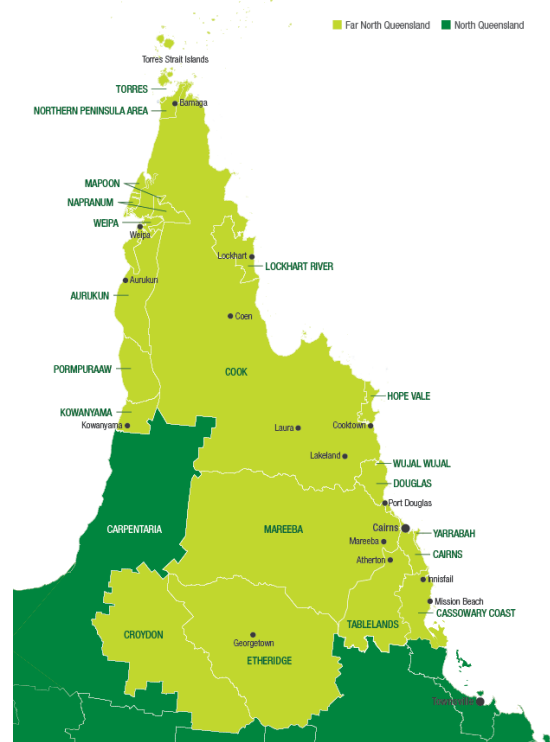


Image: Area covered by RDA Tropical North.

Credit: <https://www.rdatropicalnorth.org.au/our-region/>





A/Prof Heather Winskel



## Do colours affect our emotions?

Associate Professor Heather Winskel at James Cook University (JCU) Singapore campus investigates whether colours affect our emotions.

*"My very considerate dentist has purposefully painted his surgery in a calming light blue. I haven't had the heart to tell him that it doesn't work. On a more serious note, however, research has shown that the colour red has robust associations with threat, danger and anger. This has been explained in terms of biological survival and avoidance behaviours such as avoiding dangerous or poisonous animals, injury as blood is red, and angry red colouration of human faces. Based on this biological account, the red colour-emotion association can be considered to be evolutionarily ingrained and thus, common or universal. An often-overlooked aspect of colour-emotion research is the contribution of environmental and socio-cultural factors in shaping colour-emotion associations.*

*In Chinese culture, the colour red is associated with positive connotations of happiness and joy related to the use of red in festivals and celebrations. Ethnohistorical evidence postulates that this association likely emerged from the Chinese sanctification of red (Shao, 2018). In ancient China, important architectures and infant clothes were red for divine protection (Stuart, 2016). Red's numinous qualities continue today in Chinese celebrations including birthdays (e.g., red-dyed eggs), weddings (e.g., motifs of "囍", transliterated as "double-joy") and Lunar New Year (e.g., red apparel and decorations) (Qiang, 2011). More significantly, red envelopes containing monetary blessings are commonly gifted in celebrations such as Lunar New Year but also during other celebrations (birthdays, weddings or happy occasions) (Xu, 2021).*

*Furthermore, red colour is often used in Chinese linguistic expressions that are positive in nature, for example, individuals who have good luck are described as "红运高照" (red fortune high shine) and successful businesses can be described as "开门红" (open door red) (Bai, 2004). In contrast to most nations, China displays rising stock prices in red and declines in green (Zhang & Han, 2014).*

*We investigated the happy/joy associations with the colour red in Chinese in comparison to non-Chinese participants in Singapore. We used an experimental categorisation task, where emotion words were categorized into one of two semantic categories of anger-related and happy-related written in red and yellow-coloured fonts. Participants do this as fast and accurately as they can by pressing two keys on the keyboard.*

*As the colour red in Chinese has positive happy/joy connotations due to cultural traditions and practices, we predicted that the font colour red would facilitate categorization of happy/joy related words as well as anger-associated words in the Chinese participants but not the non-Chinese participants. This prediction was not supported as both the Singaporean Chinese and non-Chinese showed significant facilitation effects for categorizing anger-related words but not happy-related words when presented in a red coloured font. This pattern of results was similar to a study conducted in Australia with non-Chinese participants (Winskel et al., 2021).*

*In a follow-up study, we compared Singaporean Chinese with Chinese living in China. It was thought that the Chinese living in China might be less affected by globalization and retain greater*





## Do colours affect our emotions? - continued.

*affiliation to Chinese cultural traditions than Singaporean Chinese. This time, we did find a facilitation effect of the font colour red with happy-related words as well as the anger-related words in both groups of Chinese participants. These results indicate a cultural priming effect of the Chinese language. Thus, the Chinese language appears to be modulating this culture-specific tendency. This highlights the close relationship that exists between language and culture.*

*So finally, responding to the initial question posed Do colours affect our emotions? Yes, there do appear to be common colour-emotion tendencies but also culture-specific ones that are shaped by our culture and environment."*

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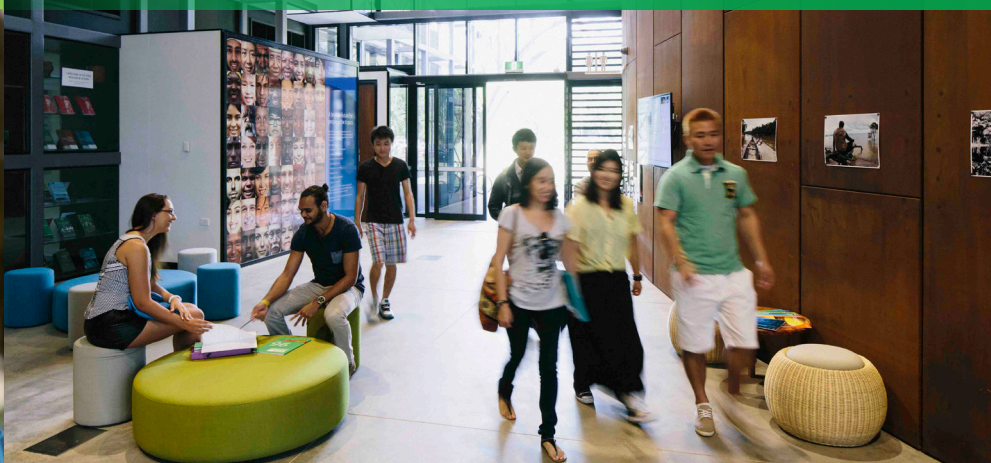
**Invitation to register your interest to be a part of a study that is investigating people's attitudes towards the management of the Great Barrier Reef**







Adjunct A/Prof Lea Scherl



## Journeys to more equitable and effective conservation

The Cairns Institute Adjunct Associate Professor Lea Scherl recently contributed to a new issue of IUCN CEESP's Policy Matters journal which presented case studies illustrating collaborative journeys towards more equitable and effective conservation and acts as a call to reorient Indigenous peoples and local communities' knowledge, practices, and institutions at the centre of a much-needed global transformation in nature conservation.

Lea explained that principles for equitable governance and respect for rights are integral to the ambitious global biodiversity targets for 2030 in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), agreed by parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2022. However, beyond places where Indigenous Peoples and local communities govern their territories with relative autonomy, there are only a small minority of conservation initiatives across the globe currently adhering to these principles. She says it is highly unlikely that the implementation of the GBF targets, including the target for 30% area coverage by 2030, would be effectively or equitably achieved unless the global community of stakeholders and organisations supports the shift towards Indigenous and local leadership exemplified in this set of case studies, and help them upscale quickly.

"Adhering to principles of equity and rights requires a widespread shift in conservation practice. Evidence consistently demonstrates that conservation is more effective when Indigenous peoples and local communities play a central role (as leaders) and when their institutions are respected and form the basis of governing processes (setting objectives, allocating roles and responsibilities, taking decisions)."

However, there is limited understanding of how to reorient site-level practices, overcome barriers, and better reflect current evidence-based principles promoting the rights, roles, and responsibilities of Indigenous peoples and local communities, and their contributions to nature conservation. The cases in this volume describe efforts to bring about such transformations.

### Learning from progressive cases

The 7 cases highlighted in this edition of Policy Matters cover forests, rangelands, coastal, and marine ecosystems containing internationally important species and habitats, and include:

- *Phang Nga Bay community-managed marine and coastal areas, Thailand*
- *Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala, India*
- *Indigenous marine governance at Ulithi Atoll, Yap, Federated States of Micronesia*
- *The Fandriana-Marolambo forest landscape restoration programme in Madagascar*
- *Southern Rift communal rangeland governance, Kenya*
- *Community Forest Governance of Noh Bec Ejido in Quintana Roo, Mexico, within the Selva Maya Forest Ecosystem*
- *Mount Halimun Salak National Park extension and recognition of the Kasepuhan Karang Customary Forest in Indonesia.*

"These innovative cases are examples where communities have resisted externally-dominated processes and worked together to take back power and control over their territories and the ecosystems with which they have an intimate bond and cultural connection, and at the same time have generated positive biodiversity outcomes."





## Journeys to more equitable and effective conservation

The articles cover a variety of social, environmental, and political contexts and capture very different paths toward more equitable and effective conservation.

Lea explained the cases from Madagascar, Indonesia, and India involve existing externally-driven conservation initiatives, where the state agencies and non-governmental organisations in control were forced to respond to local resistance. For example, the Periyar Tiger Reserve case details how steps were taken from the mid-1990s to move away from an exclusive colonial and post-colonial protected area management style by resolving long-term conflicts, with the state building trust and partnerships with local communities. Over time, this shift led to greatly improved forest quality and increasing populations of key species, notably tigers, to transform Periyar into India's most effective tiger reserve according to recent national assessments.

"In the cases from Mexico and Thailand, the externally-driven commercial exploitation of resources in those ecosystems created ecological degradation to such an extent that communities mobilised to realise alternative forms of governance that improved social and ecological outcomes. For example, in Phang Nga Bay, Thailand, restoration efforts covered more than 25,000 ha of degraded mangroves in the aftermath of destructive commercial aquaculture, through the network of locally-managed marine and coastal areas, with clear benefits for multiple marine species and coastal communities."

"The cases demonstrate that for improvements in conservation to be realised at the site level, the implementation of social

objectives must extend far beyond provision of compensation or support for income generation, to also address trust and relationships, recognise diverse worldviews, place-based connections to nature, tenure security, and the cultural values and practices which coalesce in strong local and customary institutions. They also highlight the importance of women and youth as essential in revitalisation processes and decisions, and the importance of holding key roles that see them shape community organisations and strategies."

"It is the responsibility of conservation funders and implementing organisations to support, collaborate in and mainstream Indigenous and local leadership, for both existing and new conservation interventions. The prioritisation of equitable governance by funders, state agencies and conservation NGOs, and ensuring its implementation, can strengthen the legitimacy of customary and local institutions, and ensure that financially-linked power asymmetries do not hinder progressive shifts in governance or the redistribution of power."

"All too often in the name of conservation, local institutions are disrupted or supplanted, even though they are the vehicles through which custodianship occurs. That disruptive cycle must be broken, and swift progress must be made to chart a new trajectory in the way conservation is conceived and implemented globally to ensure both equity and effectiveness."

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Adjunct Prof Craig Volker



## Reconnecting Bremen and New Ireland

For many years, The Cairns Institute Adjunct Professor Craig Alan Volker has documented the language and culture of the Nalik people of Papua New Guinea's New Ireland Province.

For a month from 17 August this year, he collaborated as an intercultural advisor with a New Ireland traditional malagan carver, Adam Kaminiel, his apprentice Anthony Lupai, and colleagues at the Übersee Museum in Bremen, northern Germany in a provenance project related to the Museum's New Ireland collection.

Many of the items in the collection are nineteenth and early twentieth century malagan carvings collected during the German colonial occupation of northern Papua New Guinea (1884-1914), intricate carvings specific to individual northern New Ireland clans that were, and in some villages still are, made to mark the malagan festivities at the end of a long series of events spread out over many years after the death of a clan member. At the end of a malagan, the malagan carvings have fulfilled their purpose and were normally burned. Because of this and the suppression of many malagan practices by Christian missionaries, there are no malagan carvings from the past in New Ireland. The only ones more than a decade or two old are in museums or private collections overseas.

The project brought the team from New Ireland to Germany to acquaint them with these items, many of which are unknown in modern New Ireland. Professor Volker said the project was a success, paving the way for future collaboration between German museums and New Ireland and, in doing so, strengthening the cultural awareness of young New Ireländers. Kaminiel agreed with this, explaining that it had always been his wish to go to Germany to see images he had had described to him by older carvers but that he had never actually seen.

For the German museum curators, it was an opportunity to learn more about the spiritual meaning of the objects in their care and to explore ways of helping more New Ireländers to reconnect with their cultural heritage. Plans were made to make images of the collection available online so the images are available to schools and individuals in New Ireland. During the visit, a Facebook page was started which carving apprentice Lupai is using to connect other young people with New Ireland items in the museum and make New Ireland culture and the German colonial involvement in Papua New Guinea better known.

At the end of their stay, the Museum and the team from New Ireland celebrated Papua New Guinea Independence Day on 16 September with a special event at the museum that included talks, a PNG cooking demonstration, and films.

*Image (l to r): Anthony Lupai and Adam Kaminiel examining malagan carvings with retired Übersee Museum curator Dieter Heinze.*

*Credit: Craig Volker*







Prof Komla Tsey



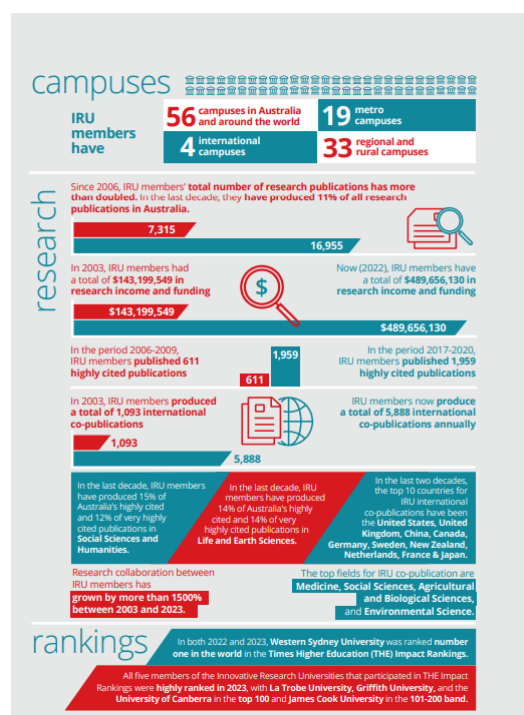
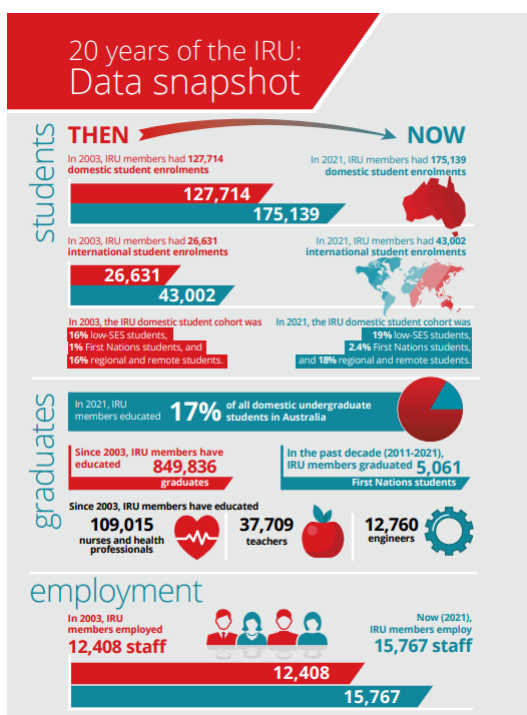
## Family Wellbeing project featured in IRU

In 2007, James Cook University (JCU) became a member of the Innovation Research Universities (IRU) Australia. IRU includes Flinders University, Griffith University, Latrobe University, Murdoch University, Western Sydney University and the University of Canberra.

IRU Chair Professor Paddy Nixon states "The universities in the IRU champion access and equity, with a student-centred approach that values innovation in teaching and learning. They are research universities with a commitment to new knowledge and its application. IRU members' commitment to deliver impact spans local, national, and international communities."

For its 20th anniversary this year, the IRU produced a publication to showcase the impacts of its education and research on regional communities over the past twenty years. Each member university was asked to provide three impact case studies. For JCU, the 3 case studies featured are: the impact of the medical and other clinical schools; the impact of the cyclone testing station on more resilient housing; and the impact Family Wellbeing (FWB) empowerment training on First Nations Community wellbeing.

<https://iru.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/iru-anniversary-publication-digital.pdf>







Emily Harrington



## Scholarship opportunities available

Are you passionate about agriculture and want to help your community be resilient to our ever-changing climate?

The Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub (TNQDH) is offering scholarship opportunities, up to the value of \$5000, to JCU students who are interested in undertaking an Honours project in 2024 on a topic that aligns with the following themes:

- drought and climate change adaptation
- land management
- innovation, and technology
- enhancing skills and human capacity
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait agricultural enterprise

To apply, please complete the Expression of Interest form: <https://ems.gs/3KjM0duerqR> Applications close 30 November.

The hub currently has eight students who are on the way to reaching their first milestones.

Jacob Vallely's study focused on the growth and assimilation of the Bush food industry into the mainstream Australian food market, emphasizing the underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals in this sector and the protection of their traditional knowledge. It identifies challenges including a historical fear of exploitation, inconsistencies in organic materials, and issues related to supply and demand dynamics.

Declan Cargill's study aimed to optimize a drone survey method for precise digital terrain modeling in gullied savanna

rangelands, found that that camera angles of 70° and 80° consistently produced the most accurate drone-derived digital terrain models which can help with practical applications in optimizing drone survey workflows, erosion monitoring, catchment hydrology analysis, and land condition assessment.

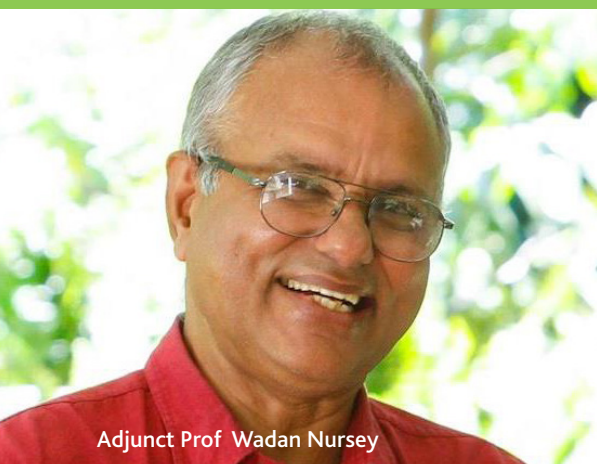


Image: The DJI Phantom 4 used for the drone surveying for Declan Cargill's study

To learn more about the students work, visit [www.tnqdroughthub.com.au/tnq-hub-scholarships](http://www.tnqdroughthub.com.au/tnq-hub-scholarships)

For further information, email [tnqhub@jcu.edu.au](mailto:tnqhub@jcu.edu.au)





Adjunct Prof Wadan Nursey



## Driving the Public Debate: A contribution to Fiji

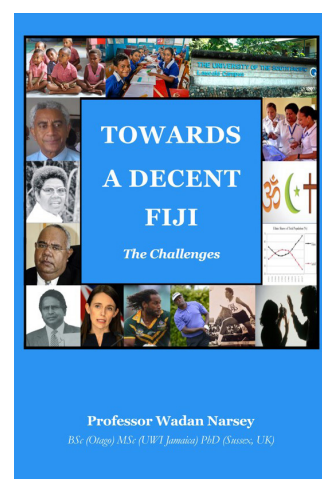
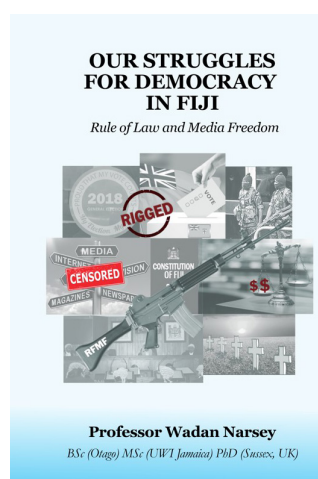
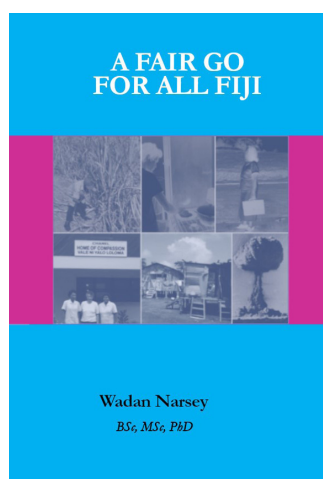
The Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji and Minister of Finance, Planning and Statistics Professor Biman Prasad recently launched four community education books authored by The Cairns Institute Adjunct Professor Wadan Nursey on 5th October at The University of South Pacific (USP).

Professor Prasad stated, "When our PAP/NFP/SODELPA Coalition Government took office on Christmas Eve last year, we inherited some serious economic and social challenges. Some of our economic policies have meant difficult choices for us. This is why we need public dialogue and debate. Professor Wadan Narsey's books, which we are launching today, are a record of some of the most important contributions in the last 30 years to Fiji's public debate. He taught at the University of the South Pacific from 1973 until 2011 when the former Government applied financial pressure on USP to force him out. Professor Narsey also worked in the region as a consultant for donor governments, regional organizations and NGOs like ECREA and FWRM and he brings a wealth of knowledge to his writings, backed by solid statistics."

He continued to say "All university professors write, and many publish books, but no university professor in the history of Fiji has contributed so much to public debate as Professor Narsey."

"He has written about Fiji's growth possibilities: industries such as improving markets for agriculture, the SME tourism hotel chain, retirement homes, the outsourcing industry and value adding from timber. These are all industries we are pursuing and promoting today. He advocated for participation by Pacific Nations in Super Rugby twenty years ago and this is now coming to fruition now with the Drua and Fijiana. He also advocated for increased labour mobility in the Pacific. This too is now happening, with significant increases in remittance income – even if it now presents us new challenges in retaining scarce skills. He has long advocated for a united Pacific Community. This is at the top of my agenda also, as we urge visa free travel to Australia and New Zealand as part of greater economic integration with those countries."

*Images: Front covers of all four books featured below.*







Adjunct A/Prof Adam Voak



## Kampus Merdeka - Independent Campus

During the past year, James Cook University, The Cairns Institute and the State University of Malang in Indonesia have conducted research on Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (Independent Campus Freedom to Learn).

Indonesia President Jokowi's appointment of Minister Nadiem Anwar Makarim as the Minister of Education in Indonesia has created pathways to overhaul the way higher education engages with industry. Nadiem Makarim comes from a business background, having established an innovative business Go-Jek (now valued in excess of \$10B). He is advocating a concept of 'emancipated learning' titled Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM).

MBKM aims to prepare Indonesia's future generation of students by encouraging a learning process that facilitates the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for the world of work.

The research examined the learning experience of Indonesian students who participated in a recent MBKM 'internship program'. The study used a qualitative data collection and analysis method which involved a survey of 107 University of Malang students and involved conducting individual and focus group discussions in order to ascertain the student's individual perspectives on learning.

The research also sought to identify improvements that could be made to the MBKM program in order to enhance the learning experience for the students, university management, industry partners and Indonesian educational policy makers. The research findings included providing clarity of learning achievement by documenting outcomes and facilitating a data bank or jobs desk

within participating internship companies to match student expectations with the most appropriate industry setting.

The Ministry of Education's disbursement of funds to the participating institutions could be more streamlined and simplified, which could assist universities to align their management and curriculum requirements with the industry internship partners.

Their research has been published in the recent edition of Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice, 23(9), 1-17 and is titled: Engaging With Industry Through Internships in Order to Acquire the Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes for the World of Work: The Indonesian Student Experience.

The University of Malang collaborators are Associate Professor Dr Muslihati, Ahmad Yusuf Sobri, Surjani Wonorahardjo and Ani Wilujeng Suryani. The Cairns Institute researchers include: Adjunct Associate Professor Adam Voak and Dr Brian Fairman (*pictured below*).







Ben Jarihani



## JCU receives a share in over \$350K grant funding

James Cook University (JCU) is one of four recipients to have received a share in \$350,000 in funding, thanks to the Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub's (TNQDH) Tropical North Queensland Drought Resilience Grant Scheme. The funding will support JCU in evaluating the factors of bare soil conditions, where they will use their findings to shape land management strategies and rehabilitation approaches.

Senior Research Officer at JCU Dr Jack Koci said this research was crucial in improving productivity and profitability for farmers whilst minimising environmental impacts. "Across the Southern Gulf region of north-west Queensland, there are thousands of hectares of persistently bare soil," said Dr Koci.

"Bare soil areas are unable to capture and retain moisture, produce no feed for livestock, are prone to weeds, and are highly susceptible to runoff and erosion. This has detrimental consequences on downstream ecosystems, water quality and water availability."

"In this project we are seeking to improve understanding of what drives the development of persistent bare soil and how this information can be used to inform land management strategies and guide rehabilitation approaches."

"Thanks to the support from the Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub, we can work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to deliver new knowledge and information that can help improve agricultural and rangeland productivity, profitability and resilience."

TNQDH Director, Professor David Phelps said the new grant funding initiative was open to organisations throughout northern Queensland who had capacity to deliver projects that would improve drought resilience for farms and communities where agriculture is a strong contributor to the economy and society.

"We were looking for great ideas from community groups, not-for-profits, primary producers, and agribusiness that would help the agricultural sector and communities become more drought and climate resilient," said Professor Phelps.

"The projects needed to demonstrate tangible benefits in implementing or accelerating the adoption of new technologies, knowledge sharing, and enhancing the capacity for farms and communities to adopt and sustain these practices and programs."

"JCU's initiative is a prime example of projects and research that are playing a key role in ensuring the agricultural industry can become more sustainable and drought resilient."

Other recipients also included Gulf Savannah Natural Resource Management (GSNRM), Southern Gulf Natural Resource Management (SGNRM) and Terrain Natural Resource Management (NRM).

All projects are due for completion by June 2024, with each recipient also required to commit to a co-contribution.

More information at [www.tnqdroughthub.com.au](http://www.tnqdroughthub.com.au)

*Image top inset: Senior Research Officer Ben Jarihani taking a soil sample from a bare ground restoration project site.*





Recent cohort of Hone and Harvest



## Hone and Harvest

Congratulations to the final cohort of Hone and Harvest teams who have graduated from the Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub's (TNQDH) business accelerator program in partnership with Farmers2Founders. Over the last 12 months, the hub has been looking for agtech ideas to help make a positive impact for the agricultural industry within Tropical North Queensland and beyond.

The most recent round of teams have challenged their thinking, developed their confidence and learnt skills to help grow their ideas and businesses. Though the hub's network of producers, industry and government, the teams will be able to continue their commercialisation journey through trials, funding opportunities and being linked with important stakeholders.

*Image top inset: Agricultural Innovation Program Lead Nicole Lucas and the recent cohort of Hone teams.*

These teams are working on technologies that range from low-tech innovations that pump water runoff to rehabilitate landscapes and turning fruit and vegetable waste into biproducts for the animal feed industry, through to a quality assurance compliance service to help keep up to date with industry standards.

Congratulations to the Harvest teams, Four Daughters and Spades and the Hone teams, Ocean Orchards, PSKL, Aqua Perception, Hillbillie Hogs, Nutriq, Custom Enzymes, GPS Trapping and Biochar.

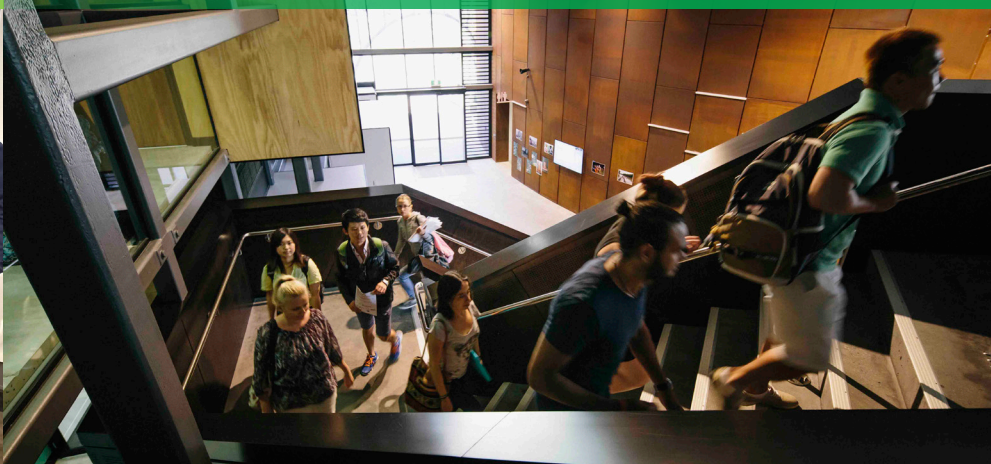
Find out more about the Agricultural and Innovation and Commercialisation Programs <https://www.tnqdroughthub.com.au/programs/>







Bernard Lee Singleton &amp; Prof David Phelps



## New artwork collaboration

The Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub (TNQDH) has unveiled a new artwork as part of their way to acknowledge and pay respects to Indigenous knowledge, created in collaboration with Cairns artist and cultural practitioner, Bernard Lee Singleton.

The artwork, entitled *Bana Mundu (Water is a Spirit)*, was launched at September's Queensland Connects Disaster Resilience Workshop, which brings together key rural and regional stakeholders to discuss opportunities for building community resilience in the face of flood and drought.

Mr Singleton, who is an accomplished craftsman, curator and designer, said the artwork embodies the ever-changing patterns of Country.

The artwork explores the concept of drought through four key themes – Water, Wet/Dry Seasons, Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous Perspectives on Environmental Impacts.

TNQDH Director Professor David Phelps said they commissioned the artwork to capture an Indigenous perspective on the changing climate and drought.

"Through Bernard's artwork, we wanted to showcase an Indigenous viewpoint on the evolving climate and the challenges posed by drought," said Professor Phelps.

"We are always keen to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives and knowledge through our work at the Hub."

Professor Phelps said that the artwork not only bears significance for the work of the TNQDH but also mirrors the current realities of our shifting climate.

"Here at the TNQ Drought Hub, we are dedicated to finding innovative solutions to navigate the challenges of drought and build long-term resilience within our communities," continues Professor Phelps.

"In line with this, a key program of ours, the Sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprise Program is focused around enhancing Indigenous resilience in their own communities and utilising land and water resources to reflect their culture."

"Bernard's artwork is not only extremely relevant to our ongoing efforts but provides captivating insight into the evolution of the land and where the past intertwines with the challenges of the present."

"His perspective encompasses not just the practical aspects but also the cultural, spiritual, social and environmental impacts of increased water insecurity, changing patterns and extreme weather events."

"It is certainly a remarkable piece and we're thrilled to have been able to work with Bernard on bringing this project to life."

You can view the artwork at The Cairns Institute.

*Image top inset: Artist Bernard Lee Singleton and TNQDH Director Prof David Phelps with Bana Mundu (Water is a Spirit)*





Jaime Gane, Dennis Fay &amp; Fraser Nai



## SATSIE presence at DNA Conference 2023

The Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub's (TNQDH) Sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprise (SATSIE) program sponsored 5 Indigenous business owners, entrepreneurs and leaders from Cape York, Cairns, the Torres Strait and Alice Springs to attend the July Developing Northern Australia (DNA) Conference in Darwin as part of an Indigenous Business Scholarship package.

The sponsored delegates joined other sponsored delegates from the NT and WA. They were all selected as individuals working for/running an Indigenous organisation working to elevate Indigenous business capabilities in Northern Australia. All of the scholarship recipients gave very positive feedback and felt that their attendance would have positive outcomes for their businesses and individual development.

Fraser Nai one of the recipients who also stepped into being a panel member for the Enabling Infrastructure for Northern Australia workshop said that; 'Going to DNA is about knowing the latest Data, Trends, Geopolitics, Geo-Economics and Geo Technologies affecting our world. If we are to consolidate our

place in the world, then being relevant in the things that are shaping our place in this world is of upmost importance. Visionary courageous leadership is what this moment is calling for.'

A great feature of the conference was the well-received first keynote session. The plenary Indigenous Business session was chaired by Jerome Cubillo of the Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN), Northern Australia Reference Group (IRB). Speakers were;

- Michelle Deshong, Acting CEO – Supply Nation
- Julie-Ann Lambourne, Qld Indigenous Business Network
- Naomi Antess, NT Indigenous Business Alliance.

In her presentation, Julie-Ann was able to outline the emerging development of the Queensland Indigenous Business Network (QIBN). These speakers spoke about how we can unlock Indigenous Business excellence. Two of the keynote speakers, Julie-Anne Lambourne and Michelle Deshong have both previously given a TEDxJCU Cairns talk.

Further information, email [jennifer.mchugh!@jcu.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.mchugh!@jcu.edu.au)



Images: Workshop sessions and panel discussions. Credit: Jennifer McHugh.





Gerry Turpin addressing the audience



## Reconciliation through Research

The Tropical North Queensland Drought Hub (TNQDH) was delighted to partner with Tropical Indigenous Ethnobotany Centre, the Australian Tropical Herbarium and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to hold an event celebrating Reconciliation through Research.

Around 40 people attended the Reconciliation event which featured short, informal talks from Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and scholars, who showcased projects that bridge Traditional and Western knowledge systems through mutually beneficial and respectful partnerships to deliver great science. Speakers included:-

- Dianne Cadet-James, Healthy Ageing Research Team, College of Medicine and Dentistry
- Gerry Turpin, Tropical Indigenous Ethnobotany Centre
- Professor Darren Crayn, Director, Australian Tropical Herbarium
- Fiona Smallwood, Project Officer, Indigenous Science and Engagement, CSIRO
- Dr Pethie Lyons, Research Scientist, Collaborative and Indigenous Science, CSIRO
- Dr Nick Piper, Linguist, Mer Island
- Dr Phurpa Wangchuk, Senior Research Fellow, AITHM

Many of the speakers touched on the importance of engaging with deeply First Nations people around research and including Indigenous researchers. They also discussed the deep levels of knowledge and understand that First Nations people have with country.

Torres Webb was the Master of Ceremonies and also kept the crowd entertained musically also featuring Senior Indigenous Ethnobotanist Gerry Turpin and special guest Indigenous writer, filmmaker, musician and consultant applying traditional knowledge in a contemporary context, Victor Steffensen.

Learn more about the TNQDH at  
[www.tnqdroughthub.com.au](http://www.tnqdroughthub.com.au)



*Image: Special guest Victor Steffensen from Firesticks and Senior Indigenous Ethnobotanist Gerry Turpin*





## Australian American Leadership Dialogue to JCU

The Development in the Tropics team hosted a delegation of forty leaders from across Australia and the United States on Sunday 6 August as part of the Australian American Leadership Dialogue (AALD) 2023 Young Leadership Dialogue Alumni (YLDA) Academy. The Academy's first official event was held at The Cairns Institute.

The AALD is a private diplomatic initiative, which brings together Australian and American leaders from government, enterprise, media, education and the community to help review and refine the parameters of the Australian-American bilateral relationship. It aims to strengthen Australian-US partnership on the understanding that the relationship is critical to enhance regional security and help underwrite economic and cultural prosperity, not only for Australians and Americans, but for the entirety of the Indo Pacific region.

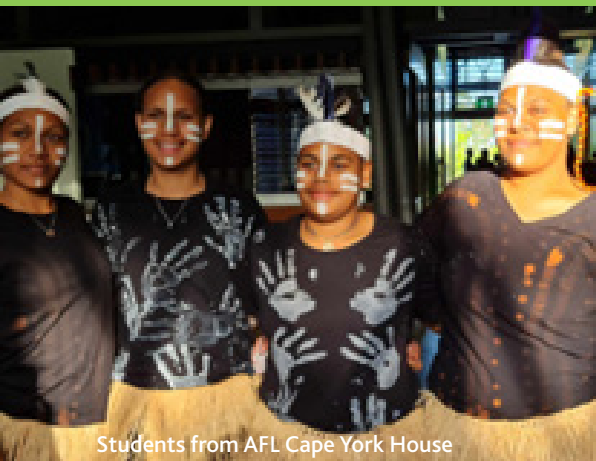
The YLDA Academy is an important annual forum that the AALD coordinates to provide opportunities for leaders from across industry sectors to engage in meaningful dialogue and learn from thought leaders on issues of importance to the bilateral relationship. The 2023 Cairns Academy Program Manager, Anna Alexander, is a former member of the JCU leadership team and now works for the Office of Northern Australia. Anna was selected for the YLD in 2016 and said the delegation to Cairns provided a significant opportunity to showcase the strategic importance of Northern Australia to current and future leader.

Anna said that "Cairns and more broadly, Northern Australia, are of huge importance to Australia's future – and to the bilateral relationship. Delegates were able to learn about the opportunities and challenges in the region through engaging with thought leaders and experience across a range of sectors.

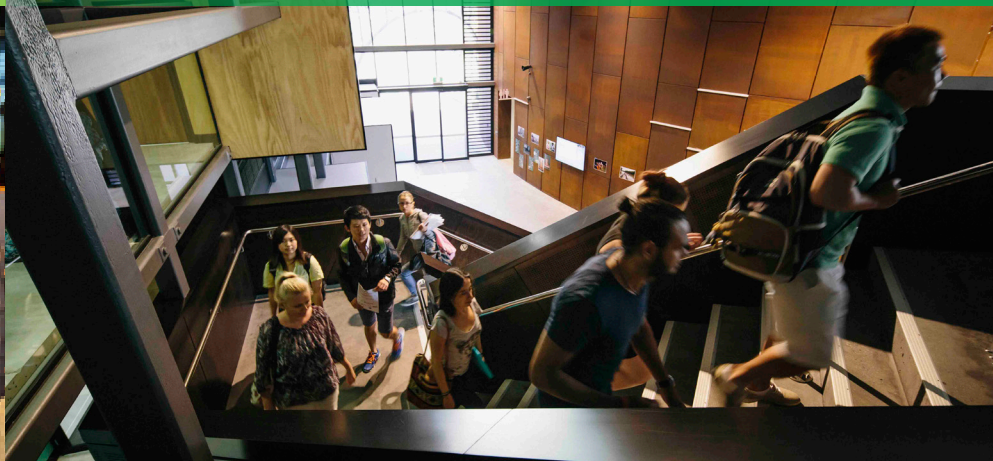
The Academy explored issues from mining and resource and their role in the transition to net zero, the exciting opportunities in space, through to the important social and environmental research and strategic investments in defence in the north."







Students from AFL Cape York House



## Australian American Leadership Dialogue to JCU

The Academy was opened by dancers from AFL Cape York House, before Professor Allan Dale gave the welcome keynote speech followed by a fireside chat on challenges and opportunities facing the governance of Northern Australia. This was followed by a fireside chat with the Honourable Michael Steele, former Lt. Governor of Maryland and the chair of the Republican National Committee 2009-2011. Michael was the first African American to hold both of those posts. Allan and Michael discussed governance issues of mutual relevance to Australia and America.

Delegates then moved to the JCU Ideas Lab where they learned about the emerging space industry in FNQ. The three-day Academy also included trips to the Great Barrier Reef, the Pacific Maritime Training College and HMAS Cairns before continuing to Canberra.







Prof. Allan Dale



## Queensland Plan Ambassadors

The Cairns Institute was very pleased to host the Queensland Plan Ambassadors (QPA) to James Cook University (JCU) for an Ambassadors Council Meeting in Cairns on the October 10. The Cairns Institute's Professor Allan Dale was appointed as the Deputy Chair of the Premier's Queensland Plan Ambassadors Council by Premier Palaszczuk earlier this year. The Deputy Chair works closely with the Chairperson of the Council, the Honourable Tony McGrady AM, to coordinate ambassador activities and events. The Council meets regularly in various locations.

Allan Dale said that "The Queensland Plan is a legislated document that sets out a long-term vision for the future of the state, working across shorter term electoral cycles.

The Ambassador's Council keeps a strong link between the Government of the day and the Queensland community about progress towards the implementation of the plan."

The Plan is based on the belief that every Queenslanders should have a say in the future of the state. The long-term community-based vision of for the Plan emerged from the largest statewide community engagement activity of its kind ever undertaken in Queensland, with more than 80 000 people contributing to the process. The results within the Plan have articulated community aspirations for the next 30 years, setting a roadmap for growth and prosperity.

While in Cairns, the Ambassadors meet with The Cairns Institute Director, Professor Stewart Lockie and many other regional stakeholders, community leaders and Traditional Owner groups as attending a tour of the JCU Ideas Lab.

A copy of the plan is available at <https://www.queenslandplan.qld.gov.au/assets/images/qld-plan.pdf>







## Standing up to domestic and family violence

AFL Cape York Boys House hosted their annual 'Stand up to domestic and family violence' event in October. The event raises much needed funds for domestic violence services and provides an opportunity to bring people together to have a conversation about an issue that affects every community in Australia.

AFL Cape York Boys and Girls Houses are purpose-built facilities providing accommodation, educational, employment and training opportunities for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women from some of Far North Queensland's most remote communities in a culturally appropriate, safe and secure residential environment. They ensure every boarding student has the opportunity to transition successful in to what they want to pursue.

General manager Rick Hanlon said "For our boys, the most influential people in their lives predominately are women; their mothers, grandmothers, aunties, sisters and cousins, and we need to ensure we are teaching our young men that women are not objects and coercive, physical and mental abuse is totally unacceptable."

*Images (below): Students from the boys house taking the pledge to stand up against domestic and family violence, (top right) part of Simone's powerpoint presentation. Credit: Jennifer McHugh.*

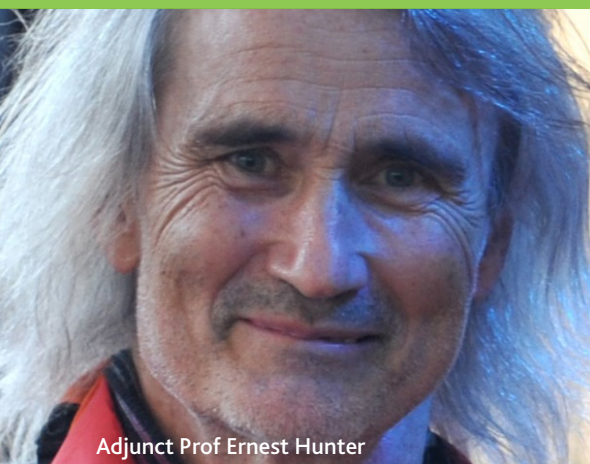


At the High Tea, students from the boys house act as waiters and servers for the attendees and have the opportunity to listen to and meet this year's guest speaker, Simone O'Brien. She is a vocal advocate as a survivor of a horrific domestic violence incident. Her story began in 2012 after ending a relationship, and her former partner used a baseball bat to hit her over 50 times. He broke her arm in two places and her skull was fractured in multiple areas. Simone says she is extremely lucky to have survived. She has endured 52 surgeries, blinded in one eye and requires ongoing physiotherapy to her jaw mobility. She now travels across the world to impart knowledge and empower communities to stand up and speak out against domestic violence.

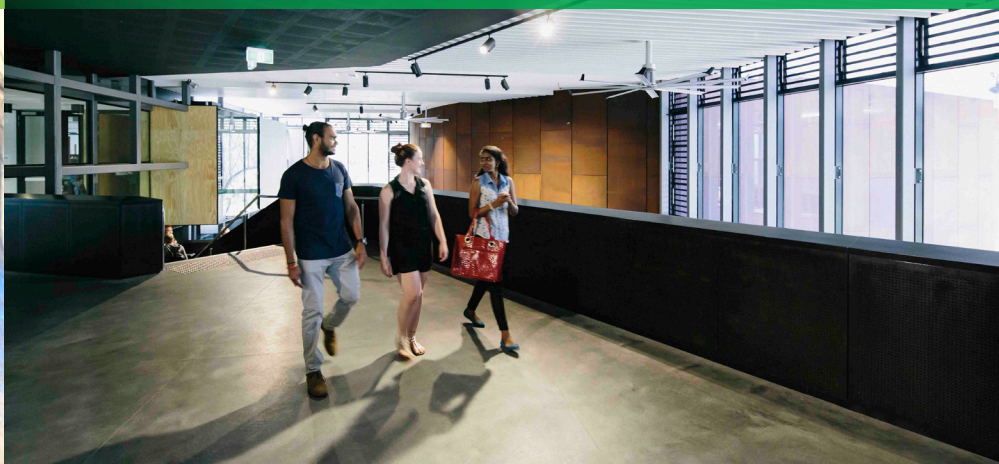
AFL House sees the event as an important part of a program that aims to teach students about appreciation, leadership, culture, and being proud and strong. Jen McHugh attended the event on behalf of the TNQ Drought Hub SATSIE program and felt that not only did the event raise funds it promoted awareness of domestic violence and coercive behaviors.

For further information, contact [Jennifer.mchugh1@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.mchugh1@jcu.edu.au)





Adjunct Prof Ernest Hunter

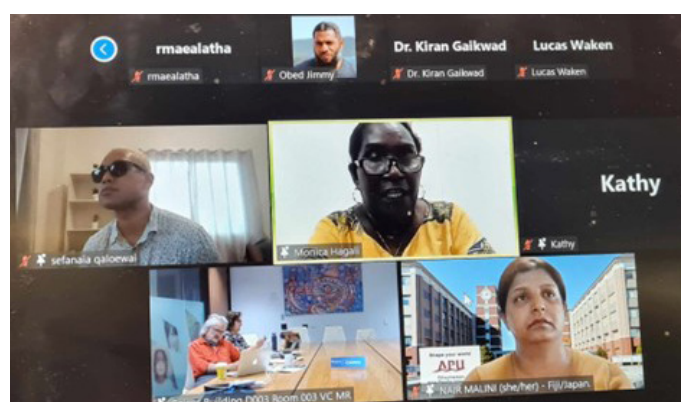


## Responding to Mental Health Challenges

This year is the 20th anniversary of the Creating Futures (CF) collaboration. It has evolved from a conference to a movement that seeks to harness experience, expertise, innovation, and goodwill to build the capacities necessary to improve the mental health status of disadvantaged populations in Australasia and the Western Pacific. CF exists as an independent, task-focused collaboration of individuals and institutions built upon a foundation of relationships of trust across time, terrain, sectors, and special interests.

The Cairns Institute Adjunct Professor Ernest Hunter has been the convener for all of the CF conferences. Ernest is an Australian medical graduate who trained in adult, child and cross-cultural psychiatry, and public health in the United States of America before returning to Australia in the mid-1980s. For most of the last three decades, he has worked in remote Indigenous populations and for the last twenty years in Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands.

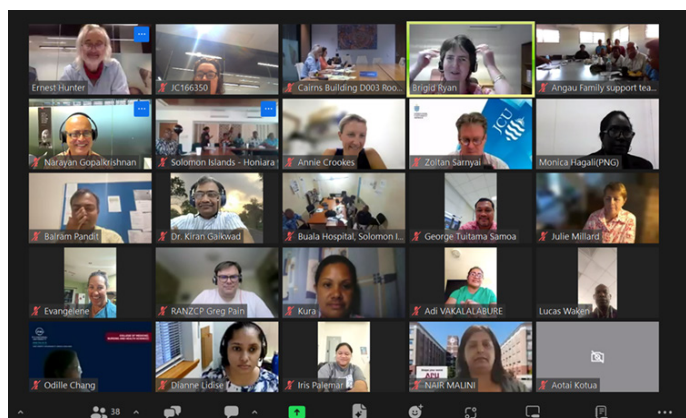
Building on the success of CF21 virtual conference, the 10th Creating Futures Conference was held online during October 16-18.



Themes for Creating Futures 2023 (CF23) centered around 'Responding to Mental Health Challenges in Uncertain Times' and opened with a virtual collaboration (through a half-day overlap in real time) with the inaugural national mental health conference in the Maldives – OEVARU – enabling participants to share understandings of commonality and difference across the Pacific and Indian Ocean Island societies.

As well as individual attendees, a number of viewing/attendee locations were set up including at:

- Australian High Commission, Honiara, Solomon Islands
- Buala Hospital, Solomon Islands
- Cook Islands
- Hong Kong
- Maldives, National Center for Mental Health
- Micronesia
- Papua New Guinea's Angau Hospital in Lae (Family Support Team)
- St Giles Hospital, Suva
- Samoan Ministry of Health
- The Cairns Institute
- Tonga



Images (left and above): Online delegates and panellists.  
Credit: Jennifer McHugh.





Samoa's mental health team



## Responding to Mental Health Challenges

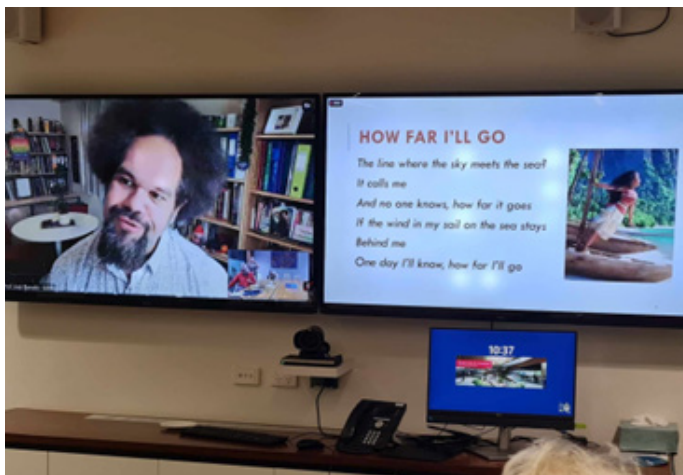
As well as participants from the Pacific, we also had attendees from the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, Philippines, Japan, Eswatini, Nigeria, Kenya, Argentina, Poland, India, Hawaii, and Malaysia. In total, attendees represented 24 countries.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrist (RANZCP) continued their support of Creating Futures as did James Cook University, The Cairns Institute, Fiji National University, The Tropical Brain & Mind Foundation, St Vincents Hospital, University of Queensland and The Pacific Community (SPC).

This year with the support from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, the Australian High Commission in Honiara opened their doors and provided a viewing room for around 15 health workers to attend. Jennifer McHugh from the Development in the Tropics team provided much of the coordination and the logistics of CF23 and since 2012.

Further information about the presenters and program is available at <https://creatingfutures.org.au/>

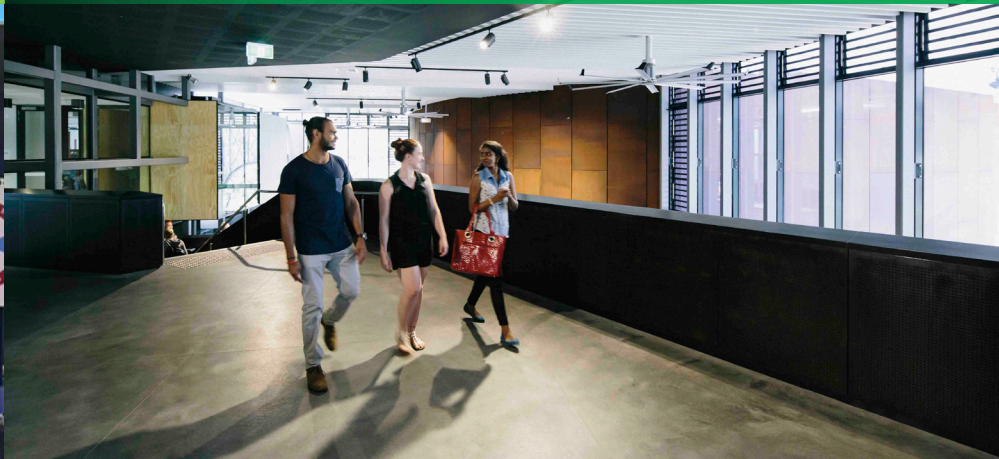
*Images below: Prof Jioji Ravulo at Uni of Sydney. Dr George Tuitama in Samoa. Credit: Jennifer McHugh.*







QIBN Founding Directors



## Queensland Indigenous Business Network

Queensland Indigenous Business Network (QIBN) was officially launched as part of Indigenous Business Month 2023 on the 12th October at the Speakers' Hall, Parliament House in Brisbane. QIBN is a first-of-its-kind network in Queensland, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business leaders to help First Nations owned businesses grow and thrive.

The network was officially launched by The Honourable Di Farmer MP, Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice, The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts and the founding Directors of QIBN, Julie Ann Lambourne, Colin Saltmere, Shane Kennelly and Leann Wilson (pictured above in top inset).

*Image below: QIBN founding Directors, Minister Enoch and Duncan Kerslake from Advance QLD*



*Image above: Minister Enoch, Minister Farmer and Minister Skelton with attendees at the launch.*



Minister Farmer said: "The Queensland Indigenous Business Network is ground-breaking. Investment in QIBN is an investment in the creativity and enterprise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Through the QIBN, Indigenous businesses owners will be able to share their successes, challenges and opportunities, enabling collaboration and partnerships well into the future."

TNQ Drought Hub Sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprise (SATSIE) program has been an early supporter in the establishment of QIBN.

For further information, contact [jennifer.mchugh1@jcu.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.mchugh1@jcu.edu.au)





Panel session in Bamaga



## Bamaga: Indigenous Small Business Month

The Department of Youth justice, Employment, Small Business and Training (DYJESBT), in conjunction with the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP) held a corporate event to celebrate Indigenous Small Business Month on 10 October in Bamaga.

Bamaga is located 40km from the tip of Cape York. It is one of five communities that collectively form the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) at the tip of Cape York. Injinoo, Umagico (Alau), New Mapoon and Seisia communities make up the remainder of the NPA. There are regular flights to Bamaga and a regular Ferry link to the Torres Strait. Despite the tropical location the NPA region often experiences water shortages and water restrictions.

Indigenous Business Month is a nation-wide campaign held 1 - 31 October each year; 2023 is its 9th year. The theme of this year's Indigenous Business Month is 'To Gather, Together' which calls upon First Nations businesses to gather, share and celebrate the power of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's economic, social and cultural contribution. It shines a light on the growing number of successful Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander owned businesses delivering high-quality, value for money products and services across all sectors in Queensland.

The TNQ Drought Hub, Sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprise (SATSIE) program understands that partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses unlocks economic opportunities to build stronger, more resilient businesses and communities while also delivering value for money everyday goods and services. Jennifer McHugh from the SATSIE program attended the event and invited Noel Prakash, National Head of Indigenous Business and Community.

Other attendees included local Indigenous small business owners, Bamaga Enterprise, Council, Education and Ergon representatives, Busy at Work, Local Buy, DYJESBT and DATSIP.

Following an interesting panel discussion, it was decided that next year an event that focuses on the Construction Industry will be held in both Bamaga and Thursday Island.

*Image: Noel Prakash (NAB), local artist Normie Young, Charlene Benson (NAB) and Arts Centre Manager Dev Lengiel.*





What’s happening in the Institute?

Details for these events can be found at: [www.cairnsinstitute.jcu.edu.au/upcoming-events/](http://www.cairnsinstitute.jcu.edu.au/upcoming-events/)

Events in 2024	Date & location
<a href="#">Early Years Conference 2024</a> EYC2024   Cairns Convention Centre	15-16 May Cairns
<a href="#">International Association for Society and Natural Resources</a> IASNR2024   Shangri La Hotel & Conference Centre	23-27 June Cairns

Postcards from Bamaga

