

# Design & Creative Practice ECP Four Year Reflection

—A few stories from the field

The ECPs have facilitated and codesigned *cultural change* around engagement and impact. This includes:

- Facilitating and curating cultural change around doing impactful and collaborative research and research translation
- Fostering interdisciplinary collaboration
- Enabling researchers with diverse expertise, experiences, and similar interests to collaborate through agile vehicles (networks)
- Supporting early career researchers (ECRs) and higher degree by research (HDR) students to work within different contexts, disciplines, industry engagement.

The Design & Creative Practice (DCP) is committed to interdisciplinary solutions to real-world problems, and co-designing for social, digital innovation and inclusion.

Read the Four Year Review Report here: <https://dcp-ecp.com/reports/dcp-four-year-review>

## KEY INITIATIVES



## DCP FOUR KEY PRIORITY AREAS & ASSOCIATED PROJECTS

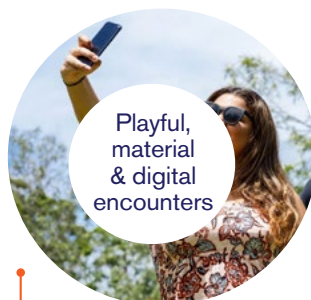


Resilience,  
health &  
care

### AUS CO FUNDED PROJECT: CARE-FULL DESIGN LAB'S SOMAESTHETICS PROJECT

K. GECK, A. NGUYEN &  
J. HEE-JEONG CHOI

Co-creating an interactive platform for real-time kinetic audiovisual performance by artists with intellectual disability. Development of the initial project prototype was made possible through the 2019 DCP Design Challenge funding.



Playful,  
material  
& digital  
encounters

### PLAYABLE CITIES PROJECT T. INNOCENT

A 2019 CDF grant kickstarted the project with the Urban Play Symposium, which resulted in Playable Brunswick and extended into international contexts such as the DCP workshop 'Cities as Playgrounds' at RMIT Europe. This project has also been awarded a \$900k Creative Victoria Grant.



The social  
& sustainable

### EU HORIZON 2020 FUNDED PROJECT: CREATURES (CREATIVE PRACTICES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE FUTURES)

JAZ HEE-JEONG CHOI,  
2018–22 VC SENIOR  
RESEARCH FELLOW

This project explores creative practice pathways to achieve sustainability, social cohesion and peaceful co-existence during times of rapid change.



Design &  
creative  
practice  
industries

### INDUSTRY REPORTS: COVID-19, DIGITAL INCLUSION, AND THE AUSTRALIAN CULTURAL SECTOR: A REPORT SNAPSHOT

I. HOLCOMBE-JAMES

### COVID-19 WAS AN UNEXPECTED INTERMISSION FOR CREATIVE WORKERS IN VICTORIA: BUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

N. HENDRY, J. FLORE  
& A. GAYLOR



## Industry Engagement: Sector Expert Research Advisory Group (SERAG)

The DCP Sector Expert Research Advisory Group (SERAG) is made up of a diverse cohort of arts industry experts who provide sectorial advice and pathways to the DCP.

### NATALIE KING, VCA (DCP SERAG CHAIR)

"Experimental and visionary, DCP ECP has piloted a number of initiatives including creative explorations of community ageing, gaming and mental health whilst fostering partnerships with the corporate sector."

### SEB CHAN, ACMI

"...[The] exposure to research projects and the ability to input into them has really helped reframe how ACMI and RMIT are able to collaborate."



Kirsty Ritchie  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
ARTS WELLBEING  
COLLECTIVE



Natalie King  
ENTERPRISE PROFESSOR  
OF VISUAL ARTS, VCA



N'arweet Carolyn  
Briggs AM  
ELDER + CHAIR, BOON  
WURRUNG FOUNDATION



Simone LeAmon  
CURATOR, DESIGN &  
ARCHITECTURE, NGV



Michael Hudson  
DIRECTOR, CREATIVE VIC



Emma Crimmings  
DIRECTOR, ART BANK



Seb Chan  
CHIEF EXPERIENCE  
OFFICER, ACMI

8

SERAG  
Meetings



DISCUSSIONS AROUND  
KEY INDUSTRY ISSUES,  
FOR EXAMPLE MENTAL  
HEALTH ISSUES WITH ART  
CENTRE MELBOURNE'S  
THE ARTS WELLBEING  
COLLECTIVE.

## DCP Executive Committee

The DCP's Executive Committee is a strategic group of key leaders representing expertise in priority areas aligned to the DCP ECP. The group meets regularly to support the development of DCP initiatives and provide advice to help shape DCP activities.

### DANIEL PALMER, ASSOCIATE DEAN, RESEARCH (SCHOOL OF ART) – DCP EXECUTIVE MEMBER

"...DCP initiatives like the Impact Observatory help articulate how creative practitioners' work demonstrates impact in diverse ways."

9

DCP Exec Meetings

25

DCP Exec Members

2

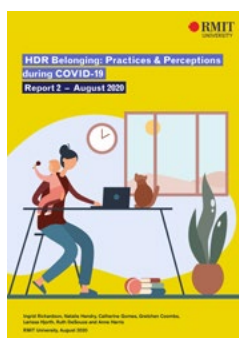
HDR Representatives

## HDR Engagement

The DCP is committed to enhancing HDR's experiences as part of emerging research cultures—HDRs and ECRs are integrated in our impactful research and industry engagement initiatives.

### DCP HDR WORKING GROUP ON WELLBEING AND BELONGING

An interdisciplinary team of researchers brought together to understand the lived experiences of HDRs during COVID-19. Read the full report published [here](#).



15+

HDR Workshops (~320 attendees)

7

HDR Working Group Members

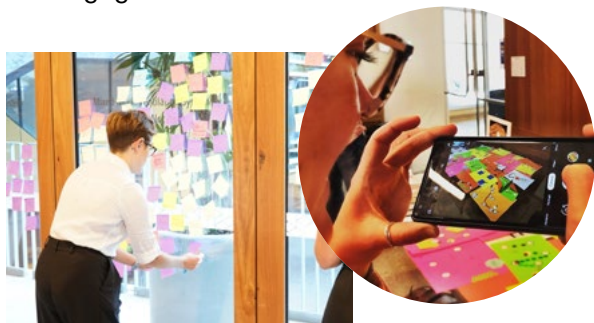
26

HDR candidates interviewed  
for the reports



**JACINA LEONG, PHD CANDIDATE IN MEDIA & COMMS  
+ HDR REPRESENTATIVE, DCP EXEC COMMITTEE  
ON HER INVOLVEMENT WITH THE DCP ECP:**

"...has provided many opportunities to connect with and contribute to responsive and collaborative, critical and creative research and industry-focused engagement."



**CAITLIN MCGRANE, PHD CANDIDATE IN DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY  
RESEARCH CENTRE, ON BEING PART OF THE DCP ECP:**

"...[it] has enriched my scholarship and challenged me to think critically and creatively. By getting involved I have learned and developed essential skills for a research career both in and outside the Academy."

## VC Fellows

**4**

Senior Research Fellows

**5**

Postdoctoral Fellows

**1**

Indigenous Research Fellow

The DCP's researchers are the collaborative and curious thinkers with the inspiration, drive and ideas changing Australia—and the world—for the better.

## DCP FELLOW KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

**2**

DECRA's

**5**

ARC Linkage Project Grants

**1**

2020 EU Horizon Grant

### DR VICKI COUZENS, 2018-21 VC INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

Dr Couzens' projects produce models, pathways and resources for continuing the reinvigoration of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing. The DCP helped fund the film *The power that we have...Listen Up!* — the impact reach of this project is significant in these changing times where non-Indigenous Australians are seeking genuine ways to be educated about Indigenous engagement and partnerships.



### DR ROHIT ASHOK, 2017-20 VC POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

Dr Ashok works in the field of Human-Food Interaction and changing health and social environments. He started out as a DCP HDR before being awarded a VC Postdoctoral Fellowship. His project focusing on augmented eating interfaces to address the contradiction between the concept of mindful eating and the reality of screen cultures has since received DECRA funding.

### DR PETA MURRAY, 2018-21 VC POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

Dr Murray works in the field of arts-and-health; her research focuses on playful and material thinking to develop coherent narrative spaces that counter ageism and promote meaning-making.

In 2020, Murray, along with colleagues from Monash, was awarded an ARC Discovery grant for *Staging Australian Women's Lives: Theatre, Feminism and Socially Engaged Art*. A research project that sees the stage as an ideal laboratory for crafting and rehearsing responses to social inequalities.



## DCP Design Challenges

The DCP's Design Challenge was an annual initiative that sought to build, strengthen and coalesce our interdisciplinary collaboration.

### DCP + TELSTRA CHALLENGE

**19** Entries / **4** Teams Finalists

#### 2019 DESIGNING FOR AGEING WELL FUTURES WITH TELSTRA DIGITAL HEALTH

##### WINNER: CATPIN

L. Heiss, P. Beckett, E. Luke, G. Mathews & M. Bush

The wearable lapel pin, presented the idea of “conversation as therapy” to address the issue of loneliness due to a lack of social interaction.

#### 2020 CO-DESIGNING INCLUSIVE CIVIC AND SENSORIAL MOMENTS IN THE CITY WITH CITY OF MELBOURNE

##### WINNER: HAPTIC PATHWAYS

Z. Myers, S. Bekessy, G. Garrard and F. Thomas

Reimagines the suburban street creating diverse sensory experiences that explicitly include urban residents or visitors of all mobilities and neurodiversities.

### DCP + CITY OF MELBOURNE CHALLENGE

**21** Entries / **5** Teams Finalists



## Networks

Interdisciplinary networks further facilitate and enable sustainable interdisciplinary collaboration (internal and external) for impactful research.

### KEY DCP NETWORKS INCLUDE:

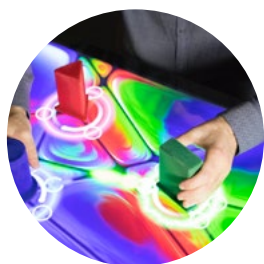
1. Creative Arts and Design Network (CAD)
2. HASH (Health, Arts, Social sciences and Humanities)
3. Design for Social Innovation Network (DSI)
4. Cultural Value and Impact Network (CVIN)
5. Wearables and Sensing Network (W+SN)
6. Space and Spatial Capability Cluster @RMIT (SASCCAR)

6

Key DCP Networks

25

Reports produced



### HASH NETWORK

This network ignites creative connections and collaborations in health research.

The DCP has supported the upcoming *Big Anxiety Festival*—using the power of arts to transform public perception of mental health.

A key associated project is Jonathan Duckworth's *Elements in the cloud*, a brain injury rehabilitation system for clinical and home use (pictured).



### W+SN NETWORK

This network brings together cross-disciplinary clusters to develop world-leading wearable and sensing technologies.

The DCP funded the development of a Capability Mapping toolkit—prototyped and tested with the W+SN. The Tactile Tools methodology have been used in over four industry workshops.



## Restarts

In response to COVID-19, RMIT launched 5 cross-platform initiatives in June 2020 to address various key areas for post COVID-19 recovery. The DCP has been leading the Fairer Start and involved in the Greener Start and Digital Start focusing on codesigning for social inclusion and innovation.

### FAIRER START

The Fairer Start Initiative seeks to curate and amplify RMIT transdisciplinary research and build ideas for policy relevant impactful projects to put us in a strong position to work with external partners in the future.

A Fairer Start has four focus areas, each supported by a thematic working group.

1 Gender equality

2 Sustainable and inclusive work

3 Re-imagining mental health

4 Co-designing ageing futures

### FAIRER START PROJECT: ALONE TOGETHER

Dr Ruth DeSouza, Project Lead

This project sought to understand the experiences of older people from culturally and linguistic diverse community backgrounds during COVID-19. The *Alone Together* project report was translated through a visualisation—a great example of how creative forms of research translation can engage publics in alternative and powerful ways.



Published in  
The Guardian,  
11/02/2021



## Funding and Future Directions

63

CDFs awarded

10

SCDF awarded

3

Opportunity Funds  
awarded

28

Reports

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DCP AFFILIATES, INDUSTRY AND EXECUTIVE:

- Develop a more nuanced communication strategy which engages different stakeholders (staff, HDRs, industry) about what the platforms do. Examples like [DCP Impact Observatory](#) should be developed for the ECP more generally.
- Along with the communication strategy, clear articulation of funding and opportunities need to be developed.
- Cease Engaging for Impact conference. Not good value of investment. Instead redirect funds to researchers.
- Provide funding to support longer, slower scholarship that may or may not yield a tangible outcome, but one that works in tandem with one clear goal of the humanities: creative and critical thinking skills. In the context of education this might come about through innovative pedagogical and creative approaches to understanding education in light of social justice, gender, and climate change.
- Support the “doing” of research (e.g. funding for RAs), not just the networking and communicating of research.
- Broader focus and frameworks around the Asia-Pacific region, including intercultural capabilities, Indigenous-led and collaborative research capabilities.
- More overt KPIs around building a indigenous community of researchers. Current amount of indigenous researchers doesn't provide a sustainable community of practice.

