



Centre for
Urban Research

Annual Report 2013



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Above photo: John Gollings,
<http://architectureau.com/articles/2012-national-architecture-awards-urban-design/#img=0>

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Director's Report

The year 2013 has been a highly productive, formative year for the Centre for Urban Research (CUR). Founded only in December 2012, the activities implemented throughout the Centre's first year of operation focused on developing a strategic direction for the Centre, setting the foundations for developing a thriving and stimulating academic environment, and devising internal processes for ensuring the Centre can operate effectively in an environment of rapid growth and constrained administrative resources.

With over twenty post-doctoral staff and an equal number of PhD students affiliated with the Centre, it is essential that the Centre provides regular and frequent opportunities for collaboration and the exploration of new, cutting-edge ideas across its research themes. Many of the Centre's activities conducted in 2013 focused on, or made a contribution to, enhancing internal collaboration and cohesion. These included our monthly seminar series, a regular PhD students networking meeting, several research ideas brainstorming sessions, and a full-day planning session conducted jointly with academics from the RMIT Sustainability and Urban Planning teaching team. A major objective of these activities has been to not only enhance collaboration among CUR staff, but to also open up the Centre to members from other parts of the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies (GUSS). The increasing number of academics and PhD students choosing to associate themselves with the Centre is testimony to the success of this approach.

Some of the highlights of our achievements in 2013 include:

- **Research grant successes:** 2013 has been an extremely successful year for the Centre with regard to securing funding for new research projects, including from new funding bodies. CUR was highly successful in the 2014 Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) Ltd. grant round, with four out of nine submitted proposals being funded, to a total value of over \$600,000. This outcome made RMIT the most successful university in the 2014 funding round. CUR researcher Associate Professor Sarah Bekessy was successful with an ARC Future Fellow application, while Dr Crystal Legacy succeeded with an Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Early Career Researcher Award application. Both ARC grant successes are a first for GUSS, and various CUR researchers are in the process of preparing ARC applications for submission in 2014. In 2013, the Centre had 45 active research projects, and the Centre exceeded its research income target for 2013 by 49%.
- **An active and well-functioning Research Strategy Committee:** In early 2013, we formed the Centre's Research Strategy Committee (RSC) to address strategic issues and to give direction for the Centre's research activities, with a strong commitment to collaboration and representation to enhance the research outcomes of the Centre. The Committee consists of eleven members, including senior researchers, GUSS and the College of Design and Social Context (DSC) representatives, and a higher degree research (HDR) student representative. In 2013, the Committee met eight times, and meetings were well attended. The RSC has proven to be an effective and important strategic body for the Centre.
- **Setting up the CUR Advisory Committee:** In 2013, we set up an Advisory Committee for the CUR, consisting of leading thinkers and professionals from state and local government, the consulting and the not-for-profit sectors (see Organisation for a list of committee members). The Advisory Committee provides strategic guidance on major directions for urban research carried out by the Centre, as well as important linkages to government and industry for pursuing collaborative research grants.

Dr Hartmut Fünfgeld has over ten years of experience in research, consulting and practice on climate change and sustainability with international governmental and non-governmental organisations

He arrived at RMIT University in October 2010 to take up the position of Research Fellow, Climate Change Adaptation Program, Global Cities Research Institute and then took on the position of Senior Research Fellow, School of Global, Urban and Social Studies. He became CUR Acting Director in April 2013, working closely with Professor Robin Goodman, Director of the AHURI RMIT University Research Centre to develop and build the CUR as a large school-based research centre. Hartmut has a PhD in human geography from the University of Heidelberg, Germany.

- **Marketing and communications planning:** The CUR has liaised with the DSC College Office in developing a marketing and communications plan for the centre. The plan was developed by a working group consisting of five researchers from across the centre and the plan was completed and endorsed by the Centre's Research Strategy Committee in November 2013. Implementation of the plan has already commenced, and, as one of the key priorities, our new website was launched in October 2013 (www.rmit.edu.au/research/urban).
- **Research and business planning:** In November 2013, we held a joint planning day, involving all CUR researchers and staff from the Sustainability and Planning discipline in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies. Part of the planning day activities focused on developing ideas for research-related activities that the Centre should implement. Subsequently, we formed a CUR working group, to develop an updated three-year plan for the Centre, based on ideas generated during the planning day and additional consultations with key centre staff and members.

Increasingly, the Centre is shifting its efforts towards engaging with industry, professionals and government officials outside the university, to achieve greater research impacts and to generate new ideas that bridge current frontiers of academic thinking and practical needs. We now have a solid base from which we can project our research into the realms of policy and practice, as well as drawing increasingly on our government and industry networks to develop joint research projects, both in Australia and abroad. A significant achievement to support these efforts has been the establishment of a CUR Advisory Committee. I have no doubt that the support of these experienced practitioners will greatly enhance the CUR's ability to have real impact with its research in the years to come. The Centre is indebted to the commitment and enthusiasm shown by the members of the Advisory Committee.

Sadly, 2013 also saw the loss of one of our most esteemed and well-known researchers. Associate Professor Paul Mees passed away in June after a 15-month battle with cancer. Paul was a keen supporter of the nascent CUR and will always be remembered by us as a supportive colleague and brilliant academic mind.

The achievements of 2013 would not have been possible without the dedication of CUR academics and professional staff, ongoing support from the leadership of the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, and the interest and commitment shown by our PhD students and our supporters outside the university. I would like to thank them all for their respective contributions. I believe the new Centre now has a solid base on which we can build in the coming years, to become a global leader in innovative urban research that makes a difference to our world.

Hartmut Fünfgeld

Acting Director

Background

The Centre for Urban Research is dedicated to research excellence in the fields of urban planning and social and environmental urban research.

Created in December 2012 as a hub for applied and policy-relevant urban research conducted by researchers from across RMIT University's School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, the Centre for Urban Research builds on the tradition and excellent reputation of the RMIT Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute and Centre for Design.

The RMIT AHURI Centre was established in 1999 and became known for its excellence in applied research on housing and urban planning policy, in particular the role of housing in the economic, social and environmental sustainability of cities and regions.

The Centre for Design was set up at RMIT in 1989 with a focus on environmentally sustainable design. Its key research area 'Climate Change and Social Context' has been incorporated into the Centre for Urban Research.

The CUR has grown rapidly, providing a clear focus and home for all urban research undertaken within the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, part of the College of Design and Social Context. It has brought together existing groups in GUSS, as well as academics from other parts of the university, including:

- RMIT AHURI Centre core and associate members;
- Researchers from the Climate Change and Social Context Program of the former Centre for Design;
- Key research active staff from the Sustainability and Urban Planning program in GUSS;
- Researchers working on climate change and sustainability challenges from other Schools within RMIT; and
- Higher Degree Research scholars within GUSS who are, or wish to become, urban researchers.

The centre's supportive and vibrant research environment provides a strong platform for competitive grant applications for urban research, a critical mass for inter-disciplinary collaboration, and opportunities for better promoting research findings to industry and government audiences.

Founding Vision

- To become the leading centre for urban research in Australia within five years; and
- To ensure deep and strong links between the disciplinary fields of urban planning, environmental and social sciences around the broader theme of applied urban and regional studies, in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies and beyond.

Our Strategic Aims

The Centre for Urban Research aims to better coordinate and capitalise on the strong base of urban research that already existed within the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies. The Centre was founded on the expansion of the RMIT AHURI Centre and the incorporation of parts of the former Centre for Design at RMIT. The new name provides an intellectual home base for a broader range of urban researchers at the university.

In the 2010 Excellence in Research for Australia assessment, *Urban and Regional Planning* was one of only three disciplines at RMIT University to achieve the (equal) highest score in the nation, with a ranking of 4 ('above world standard'). Since its foundation in 2012, the Centre for Urban Research has become the hub for urban research at RMIT University.

The Centre for Urban Research is strongly aligned with the RMIT Strategic Plan 2015 *Transforming the Future*, as a core research hub to help achieve the goal of being 'urban in orientation and creativity, shaping sustainable cities and drawing inspiration from the challenges and opportunities they provide'. Through its significant collaboration with academics in Asia, Europe, and North America and through research partnerships with industry and government, the CUR also actively contributes to achieving the goals of being a 'global' and a 'connected' university. CUR research focuses on the following strategic priorities for research highlighted in the RMIT Research and Innovation Plan 2011-2015:

- Sustainability and climate change challenges; and
- The future of cities.

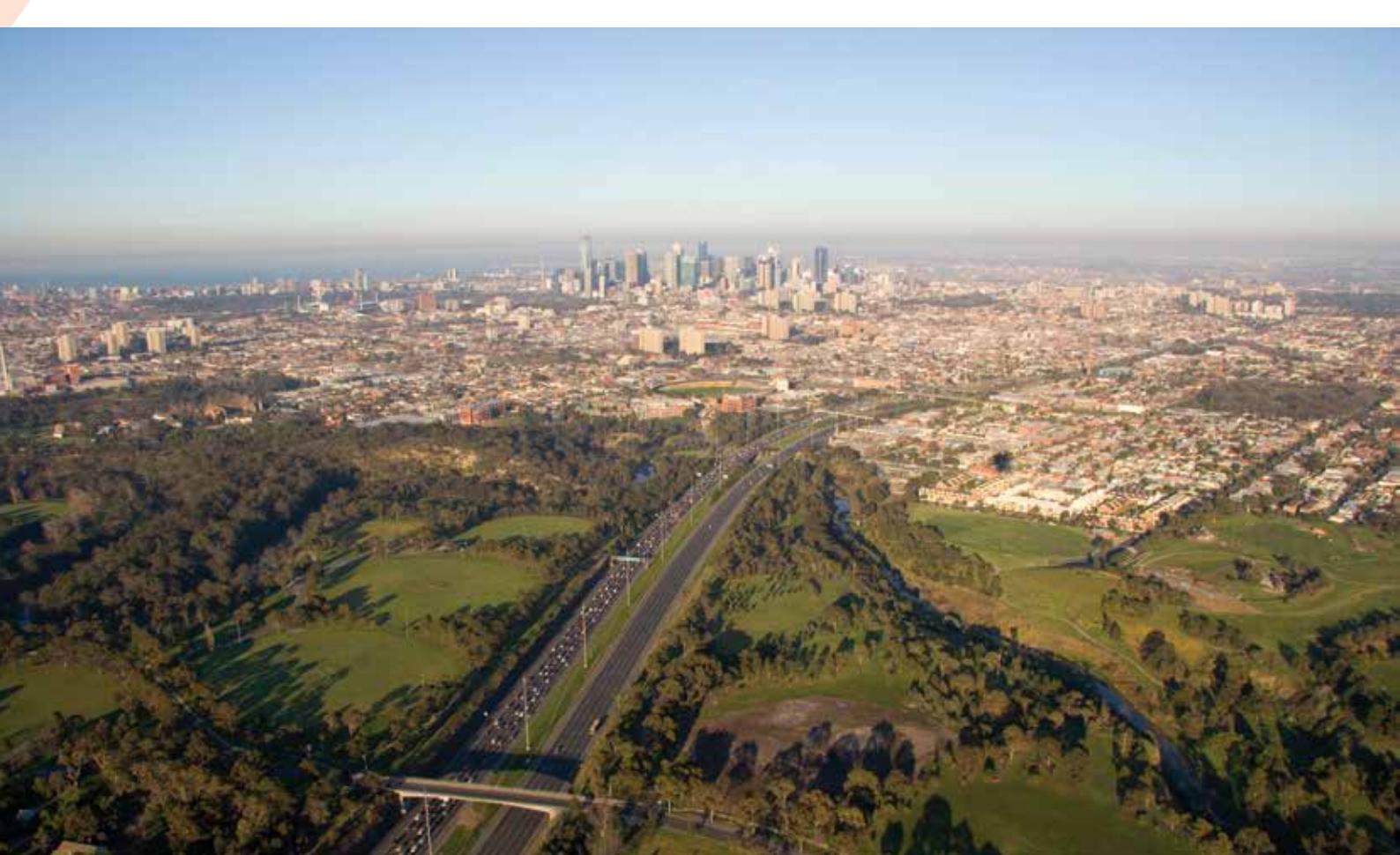
CUR researchers also conduct studies that contribute to the strategic research priorities of 'designing our future', 'smart technology solutions' and 'improving health and lifestyle', by applying an urban studies lens to these themes.

Mission Statement

The RMIT Centre for Urban Research has the potential to become the leading centre for urban research in Australia. With a reputation for innovative, rigorous and influential thinking, we will build on the current reputation of RMIT University as an international leader in urban research.

The Centre for Urban Research will ensure deep and strong links between the University's disciplinary fields of urban planning, environment and social science around applied urban and regional studies. It will:

- Support and build capacity for major research grants and international positioning;
- Raise the profile of RMIT's urban research excellence; and
- Foster Higher Degree Research candidates.



Organisational Structure and Research Strategy

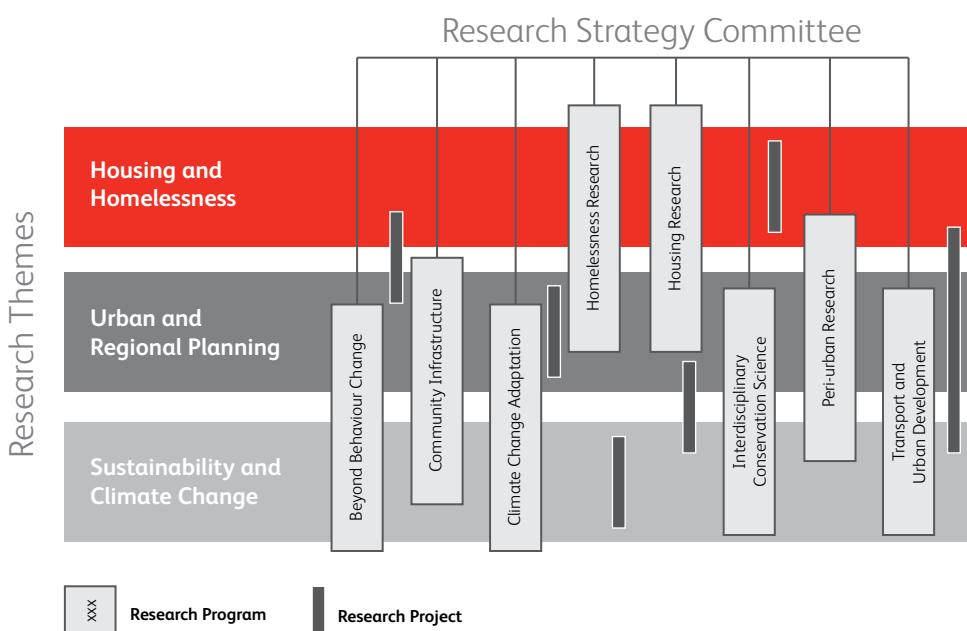
During 2013, CUR researchers identified three strategic Research Themes that form the intellectual backbone of the Centre:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Urban and Regional Planning
- Sustainability and Climate Change.

Each of these Research Themes is supported by several Research Programs and a multitude of active research projects. The Research Programs are constantly evolving, with new ideas coalescing into pilot projects and developing into new Research Programs over time. In 2013, the CUR consisted of the following Research Programs:

- Beyond Behaviour Change
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Community Infrastructure
- Homelessness Research
- Housing Research
- Interdisciplinary Conservation Science
- Peri-urban Research
- Transport and Urban Development.

Most of the Centre's current Research Programs cut across Research Themes, providing a strong basis for multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research and collaboration. The strategic direction of the Centre and its Research Programs are overseen by the Research Strategy Committee.



Research Themes

Housing and Homelessness

Researchers under the theme **Housing and Homelessness** investigate the complex space of social and housing policy, homelessness, welfare, housing finance and economics, along with associated cultural dynamics and stigma. This research theme extends internationally and positively contributes to a wide range of other research programs within the Centre.

Research Programs contributing to this theme include:

- Homelessness Research
- Peri-urban Research.
- Housing Research

Urban and Regional Planning

Urban and Regional Planning encompasses research examining the characteristics of peri-urban, urban and metropolitan regions and their development and planning under various drivers of change.

Research programs contributing to this theme include:

- Beyond Behaviour Change
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Community Infrastructure
- Homelessness Research
- Housing Research
- Interdisciplinary Conservation Science
- Peri-urban Research
- Transport and Urban Development.

The goal of this research theme is to assist planners and policy makers to make strategic, informed decisions about the future of our urban spaces and the communities within.

Sustainability and Climate Change

Researchers under the banner of the **Sustainability and Climate Change** research theme are concerned with the interplay of policy and regulation, industry, economy, demography, culture and social practices, in the transition towards sustainable communities under a changing climate.

Research programs incorporated within this research theme include:

- Beyond Behaviour Change
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Community Infrastructure
- Interdisciplinary Conservation Science
- Urban and Regional Planning
- Peri-urban Research
- Transport and Urban Development.

The interdisciplinary nature of this theme draws on a range of areas of expertise across RMIT University, developing collaborative and applied research in varying contexts.

CUR Research Programs 2013

Beyond Behaviour Change

Co-research leaders Dr Cecily Maller, Dr Yolande Strengers

Research themes *Urban and Regional Planning, Sustainability and Climate Change*

The Beyond Behaviour Change research program draws on theories of social practice to inform research aimed at reorienting policy and programs intending to achieve social and environmental change. In seeking to go ‘beyond’ behaviour change, researchers understand change as a product of transforming socially-shared and materially-shared practices, such as cycling, laundering, heating, cooling, exercising, eating or travelling. The focus of the team’s research is on understanding how these practices are established as ‘normal’ ways of living, working or playing, how and why they are changing, and what opportunities exist to reorient them in more ‘sustainable’ directions.

Climate Change Adaptation

Lead researcher Dr Hartmut Füngfeld

Research themes *Urban and Regional Planning, Sustainability and Climate Change*

The Climate Change Adaptation research program advances knowledge and explores methods and techniques for addressing the impacts and opportunities created by a changing climate. Research is undertaken into the needs and capacities of governmental and non-governmental organisations and communities, with the aim of building their resilience and increasing their adaptive capacity.

Community Infrastructure

Lead researcher Dr Ian McShane

Research themes *Urban and Regional Planning, Sustainability and Climate Change*

Community Infrastructure is concerned with the civic, cultural, educational and recreational infrastructures, facilities, networks and programs that shape and sustain social, cultural and economic life. The research program covers the institutions, structures and sites that are a significant part of our urban physical and social fabric, as well as emerging digital infrastructures and networks.

Homelessness Research

Lead researcher Dr Guy Johnson

Research themes *Housing and Homelessness, Urban and Regional Planning*

Research in this program examines the processes leading to homelessness, and the factors that enable homeless people to get out and stay out of homelessness. In 2013 CUR staff were employed on two evaluations seeking to better understand the impact of intensive long term support, as well as housing. CUR staff were also involved in the Journeys Home project, the largest longitudinal study focusing on at risk and homeless individuals undertaken in Australia. CUR staff, in collaboration with staff from the University of Melbourne, are using the Journeys Home data set to explore the impact of housing and labour markets on patterns of entry and exit from homelessness, the first study of its type.

Housing Research

Lead researcher

Professor Gavin Wood

Research themes

Housing and Homelessness, Urban and Regional Planning

The housing research program within CUR comprises a multidisciplinary team of housing and urban researchers with interests in homelessness, public policy, housing markets, housing and wellbeing outcomes, urban renewal program evaluation and spatial analysis. Researchers within the program are involved in projects investigating the wellbeing outcomes of low income renters, the role of intergenerational wealth transfers on housing wealth and the dynamics of housing affordability. The program brings together a team with expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Interdisciplinary Conservation Science

Lead researcher

Associate Professor Sarah Bekessy

Research themes

Urban and Regional Planning, Sustainability and Climate Change

The Interdisciplinary Conservation Science research program works to understand the interaction between society and our environment. Managing biodiversity demands a multidisciplinary approach that reconciles ecological, social and economic dimensions.

The Interdisciplinary Conservation Science research group examines these diverse drivers of change, particularly in urban and semi-rural environments, with the aim of addressing the gap between conservation theory and real world practice in complex planning environments.

Peri-urban Research

Lead researcher

Professor Michael Buxton

Research themes

Urban and Regional Planning, Sustainability and Climate Change.

Peri-urban areas form belts of non-urban land fringing metropolitan centres. They usually contain important natural resources, remnant biodiversity and significant landscapes. These areas are under increasing worldwide threat from development and overuse. This research examines characteristics of Melbourne's peri-urban regions, the impacts of settlement patterns and other drivers of change on land use, vegetation, agriculture and water, and proposes alternate futures for the strategic use of these regions.

Transport and Urban Development

Research Leader

Assoc Prof Paul Mees, Dr Jan Scheurer

Research themes

Urban and Regional Planning, Sustainability and Climate Change

The Transport and Urban Development program within CUR brings together researchers with strong records of research into questions of metropolitan transport strategy, land-use and transport planning, and sustainable transport. Current research within the theme is investigating transport governance as well as public transport network planning.

Key Research Projects 2013

Homelessness: Re-shaping the policy agenda?

Researcher	Chris Chamberlain
Grantor	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Ltd.
Total Grant	\$45,016

In 2012, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released a new definition of homelessness and new estimates of the homeless population using 2011 Census data. This research will assist policy-makers in understanding the changes and to consider policy adjustments that may be needed to halve homelessness by 2020.

The experience of marginal rental housing in Australia

Researchers	Robin Goodman, Anitra Nelson, Tony Dalton, Melek Cigdem; Michelle Gabriel, Keith Jacobs (University of Tasmania)
Grantor	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Ltd.
Total Grant	\$222,337

Increased demand from students, retirees and families excluded from private rental has put new pressures on marginal rental accommodation. However residents—especially those with high needs—remain vulnerable in this tenure and often experience poor management, lack of safety and low quality or expensive housing. Better regulation and governance of the sector, licensing of operators and effective outreach programs to relocate the most vulnerable to more secure accommodation are required to address these problems.

Enhancing affordable housing investment via a social housing guarantee

Researchers	Julie Lawson, Mike Berry; Carrie Hamilton, Hal Pawson (UNSW)
Grantor	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Ltd.
Total Grant	\$155,229

The project developed two options for increasing institutional investment in affordable housing, utilising a review of six international housing guarantee schemes, interviews with industry stakeholders and international experts and a Think Tank, directly engaging key stakeholders in the Australian financial services and affordable rental sector.

An implementation plan was presented for the preferred model—an Affordable Housing Finance Corporation. This involves establishing an expert financial intermediary to assess and aggregate the borrowing demands of registered community housing providers and issue bonds with a carefully structured and targeted guarantee. It is relatively simple and transparent and works with existing policy directions including the National Regulatory System for not-for-profit providers and subsidies including Commonwealth Rent Assistance and the National Rental Affordability scheme. It also minimises the impact on government budgets and lowers the comparative cost of finance to providers.

The structural drivers of homelessness in Australia 2001-2011

Researchers	Gavin Wood, Melek Cigdem; Deb Batterham, Shelley Mallett (Hanover)
Grantor	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Ltd.
Total Grant	\$199,723

Focusing on the structural factors underlying homelessness in Australia, the first stage of this project details the analysis undertaken with large secondary data sources to examine the spatial dynamics of homelessness from 2001 to 2011. Stage two models the role of housing and labour markets, household income, and household characteristics in shaping the spatial distribution of homelessness.

Following an increased national focus on homelessness, the ABS has for the first time developed a statistical definition of homelessness that could be applied to multiple ABS census collections (2001, 2006, 2011), and for geographical units at different levels of aggregation. This recent development has enabled the examination of patterns of homelessness.

Housing affordability dynamics in Australia: new insight from the last decade

Researchers	Gavin Wood, Melek Cigdem; Rachel Ong (Curtin University)
Grantor	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) Ltd
Total Grant	\$180,827

This project explores the duration of housing affordability stress (HAS) in Australia. It updates research findings previously reported by Wood and Ong (2009), which tracked the housing affordability trajectories of Australians over the period 2001-2006. The project offers more up-to-date estimates of duration in HAS and affordable housing by exploiting a longer, 11-year, timeframe (2001-2011). The dataset employed in this (and the previous) project is the nationally representative Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey.

Implementing tools to increase adaptive capacity in the community and natural resource management sectors

Researchers	Hartmut Füngfeld, Karyn Bosomworth, Sophie Millin, Alianne Rance
Grantor	Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research
Total Grant	\$374,000

The aim of this project was to undertake a systematic empirical analysis of the capacity for climate change adaptation in regional and metropolitan community service and catchment management organisations. A range of support tools and approaches for organisational climate change adaptation planning were trialled during action research and the results were used to guide the development of improved climate risk management procedures and practices. Project outputs included two reviews of literature and institutional context; five case study reports; and a final report on engaging the community sector in climate change adaptation.

Adaptation toolkit training

Researcher	Hartmut Füngfeld
Grantor	City of Greater Geelong
Total Grant	\$19,800

This project supported the development of a practitioner's toolkit to integrate climate change adaptation into processes and decisions (i.e. mainstream climate change adaptation) and support robust decision making in the face of uncertainty. The toolkit is relevant for government and organisations considering the impacts of climate change to their business, services and/or community.

Discussion paper on the state of knowledge of adaptation in local government and community sectors

Researchers Hartmut Fuenfgeld, Susie Moloney
Grantor Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research
Total Grant \$6,000

This project produced a discussion paper on climate change adaptation policy to support partnerships with local government and the community. The discussion paper was presented at the Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research (VCCCCAR) Strategic Think Tank: Adaptation Research Beyond 2014, October 2013, Melbourne.

Horsham Catalyst - sustainability research and evaluation services

Researchers Yolande Strengers, Cecily Maller, Ralph Horne
Grantor Director of Housing/Department of Human Services
Total Grant \$109,912

The Victorian Government's Department of Human Services has engaged the Beyond Behaviour Change research team to undertake an evaluation of a sustainable housing project in Horsham (rural Victoria). The focus of the research is on four public housing units built to best practice environmental sustainable design principles. The units are intended to lower utility bills, improve indoor comfort and provide greater resilience to predicted climate change impacts. The evaluation project aims to inform future policy development.



Environment Protection Authority approaches to behaviour change

Researchers Ralph Horne, Yolande Strengers

Grantor EPA Victoria

Total Grant \$32,020

EPA Victoria is responsible for ensuring businesses comply with existing laws designed to prevent pollution and other related impacts on the environment and the community. However compliance is influenced by a range of variables and practices, which in turn impact on whether a business is ‘willing’ and ‘able’ to comply. As part of a behaviour change strategy that EPA Victoria developed in 2012, a segmentation framework was developed to map businesses across quadrants based on the dimension of willingness and ability to comply. Knowing where a business falls within these quadrants can assist EPA Victoria to more effectively tailor and implement strategies to foster compliance. This pilot project looked at existing EPA databases and consulted field staff to gather data to improve quadrant allocation and hence future compliance outcomes.

Low carbon urban transitions – an international comparative network

Researchers Ralph Horne, Susie Moloney.

Grantor European Science Research Council, RMIT University

Total Grant \$50,000

Over four years the chief investigators will work with leading scholars investigating and comparing low carbon urban transitions around the world. The network includes Professor Simon Marvin, Professor Harriet Bulkeley, Durham University UK ; Professor Pauline McGuirk, University of Newcastle, Australia; Dr. Maria Francesch-Huidobro, City University of Hong Kong, China; Mr Aromar Revi, Indian Institute for Human Settlement, India; Professor Mark Swilling, Stellenbosch University, South Africa; William Solecki, Hunter College CUNY, USA.

Spatial network analysis for multimodal urban transport systems (SNAMUTS) – a planning decision support tool

Researchers Paul Mees, Jan Scheurer, Carey Curtis (Curtin University)

Grantor Australian Research Council

Total Grant \$448,000

This project aims to build an international database on public transport-land use integration and accessibility planning, to establish quantifiable benchmarks and assessment criteria of global best practice in public transport accessibility and planning. The SNAMUTS tool will be applied to a sample of 23 cities on four continents and tested for its relevance in the planning process through stakeholder engagement exercises and collaborative links to other research networks.

Facilitating professional engagement with planning research

Researcher Joe Hurley; Elizabeth Taylor (University of Melbourne)

Grantor University of Sydney (Henry Halloran Trust)

Total Grant \$9,960

This project was commissioned to explore the nature of research-to-practice exchange in the field of urban and regional planning. The project involved interviews and a focus group with academics and practitioners to explore the barriers and enablers to the use of applied planning research in policy development and application; and to recommend actions to support more effective information exchange.

Opportunity Spaces – community engagement in the planning, use and governance of shared school facilities

Researchers	Ian McShane, Chris Wilson, Denise Meredyth; Jerry Watkins (University of Canberra)
Grantor	Australian Research Council, Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Total Grant	\$180,000

This project focuses on joint school-community shared use facilities, physical and digital. It examines the role played by educational and civic infrastructure in community building, the benefits of coordinating social and educational services, and the potential of schools as community learning resources.

Public Wi-Fi in Australia

Researchers	Ian McShane, Chris Wilson, Denise Meredyth
Grantor	Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation
Total Grant	\$20,000

This project is examining the emergence of local-level interest in public broadband and internet access, particularly through the provision of public Wi-Fi networks. The project locates recent Australian developments in international contexts, and examines the social, technical and policy dimensions of local government and community investment in broadband.

Alternate futures for Melbourne's peri-urban region

Researchers	Michael Buxton, Kath Phelan
Grantor	RMIT University Research and Innovation
Total Grant	\$320,000

This research examines alternative development models for peri-urban regions to reduce the impacts of settlement patterns and other drivers of change on land use, vegetation, agriculture and water. It also models the potential for regional township development linked to metropolitan centres.

Reimagining the suburb – planning for biodiversity

Researchers	Sarah Bekessy, Georgia Garrard
Grantor	Myer Foundation
Total Grant	\$412,484

This project focusses on improving planning for Melbourne's critically endangered grasslands. There are two components to the research: 1. Planning for grasslands within housing developments - the project proposes a new concept of 'biodiversity sensitive urban design' highlighting possibilities for maintaining and even improving grasslands within urban development. 2. Planning housing development to avoid grasslands - using planning scenarios to evaluate big-picture planning approaches as alternatives to urban sprawl. The principle aim is to assess the likely consequences of status quo and alternative plans for Melbourne's remnant grasslands and a range of liveability criteria.

ARC Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions

Researchers	Sarah Bekessy, Ascelin Gordon, Christopher Ives, Georgia Garrard
Grantor	Australian Research Council
Total Grant	\$1,166,370

Sarah leads the 'socio-ecological modelling and analysis for environmental decisions' theme of this ARC Centre of Excellence. The Centre is a partnership between several Australian and international universities and aims to be the world's leading research centre for solving environmental management problems and for evaluating the outcomes of environmental actions.

Sustainable affordable housing - new models for social housing

Researcher	Ralph Horne
Grantor	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Council on Australia Latin America Relations
Total Grant	\$30,000

This project addresses the growing need for innovative, energy efficient low-income housing that supports sustainable communities. It links leading research in Australia with a leading NGO in Latin America, and enables knowledge transfer through workshops in Australia and Chile.



Publications

Books

- Berry, M. (2013) *The Affluent Society Revisited*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Stengers, Y. (2013) *Smart Energy Technologies in Everyday Life: Smart Utopia?*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Whitzman, C., Legacy, C., Andrew, C., Klodawsky, F., Shaw, M., Viswanath, K. (eds.) (2013) *Building Inclusive Cities: Women's Safety and the Right to the City*, Routledge: London.

Book Chapters

- Andrew, C., Legacy, C. (2013) 'The role of partnerships in creating inclusive cities', *Building Inclusive Cities: Women's Safety and the Right to the City* (eds. Whitzman, C. et al), Routledge, London, pp. 90-102.
- Ives, C.D., Beilin, R., Gordon, A., Kendal, D., Hahs, A., McDonnell M. (2013) 'Local Assessment of Melbourne: The Biodiversity and Social-Ecological Dynamics of Melbourne, Australia', *Urbanization, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: Challenges and Opportunities* (eds. T. Elmquist et al.), Springer, Netherlands, pp. 385-407.
- Klodawsky, F., Whitzman, C., Legacy, C., Andrew, C., Shaw, M., Viswanath. (2013) 'Conclusion: Women's safety and the right to the city', *Building Inclusive Cities: Women's Safety and the Right to the City* (eds. Whitzman, C. et al.) Routledge, London, pp. 201-207.
- Mehrotra, S., Carmin , J., Fenech, A., Füngfeld, H., Labane, Y., Li, J., Roggema, R., Thomalla, F., Rosenzweig, C. (2013): 'Adapting to climate change in global cities', *Climate Adaptation Futures - Proceedings of the 2010 International Climate Change Conference* (eds. Palutikof, J., M. et al.), John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, pp. 311-321.
- Shaw, M., Andrew, C., Whitzman, C., Klodawsky, F., Viswanath, K., Legacy, C (2013) 'Introduction - Challenges, Opportunities and tools', *Building Inclusive Cities: Women's Safety and the Right to the City*, (eds. Whitzman, C. et al), Routledge, London, pp.1-16.
- Stengers, Y. (2013) 'Peak electricity demand and social practice theories: reframing the role of change agents in the energy sector'. *Environmental sustainability and individual responsibility: encouraging sustainable lifestyles*, (eds. Fudge, S. & Peters, M.), Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp. 18-42.

Special Journal Editions

- Legacy, C., Leshinsky, R. (eds). (2013) 'Tools for equitable urban intensification', *Built Environment*, 39(4) (Special Issue).
- Pierce, J., Strengers, Y., Sengers, P., Bødker, S. (2013), *Sustainable HCI through Everyday Practices - ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction*, 20(4).

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

- Bull J., Suttle K., Gordon A., Singh N. & Milner-Gulland E. (2013), 'Biodiversity offsets in theory and practice', *Oryx* 47: 369-380.
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Our People

Centre Staff



Dr Sarah Bekessy

Associate Professor & Research Program Leader Interdisciplinary Conservation Science

Bsc (Hons), Queensland, PhD, Melbourne

Sarah Bekessy has been teaching in environmental studies and sustainability at RMIT University since 2004. She is interested in the intersection between science and policy in environmental management and is currently involved in an interdisciplinary range of research and consulting projects, including an ARC Future Fellowship titled 'Socio-ecological models for environmental decision making'.



Professor Mike Berry

Professor, Urban Studies and Public Policy

BEc Hons Sydney, MEc BA New England, Grad Dip UrbRegSt Birmingham, PhD Melbourne, DSocSc RMIT

Mike Berry is a leading scholar of urban studies and public policy. His research role at the RMIT University Research Centre of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) has focused on urban development processes, urban social theory, economics and public policy, and housing markets and policy. Mike has been carrying out research of national significance and international reach into alternative financing approaches for affordable housing, and the impact of housing markets on the macro economy.



Professor Michael Buxton

Professor, Peri-urban Research Program Leader

BEc Hons Sydney, MEc BA New England, Grad Dip UrbRegSt Birmingham, PhD Melbourne, DSocSc RMIT

Michael heads research teams carrying out extensive research into urban development and peri-urban regions. Michael has led national and Victorian studies investigating the nature and extent of contemporary peri-urban regions, identified patterns of socio-economic and environmental change, and developed scenarios for future land-use in these regions. Michael has held senior management positions with Victorian planning and environmental agencies and contributed extensively to government policy in advisory capacities, headed the intergovernmental process for developing Australia's National Greenhouse Strategy, and served as a local government councillor and mayor.

**Dr Melek Cigdem***Research Fellow*

BEC (Hons) PhD Latrobe

Melek has co-authored a number of AHURI-funded research projects, including 'Modelling the impacts of the Henry Review tax recommendations on housing supply and affordability', (co-authored with Professor Gavin Wood, Dr Elizabeth Taylor, and Dr Rachel Ong (Curtin University) and 'Cost-effective methods for evaluating Neighbourhood Renewal programs'. Her main areas of expertise are in econometric modelling of large panel datasets, quasi-experimental designs, hedonic price modelling, taxation modelling and data imputation and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) spatial analysis and modelling.

**Dr Val Colic-Peisker***Associate Professor*

BA (Hons) MA PolSc Zagreb, DipEd Rijeka, MPhil UWA, PhD Murdoch

Val Colic-Peisker's research is interdisciplinary, theoretically as well as policy-oriented, spanning sociology, political science, social psychology and economics, and uses qualitative as well as quantitative research methods. Val's central research interests are in the areas of migration, mobility, globalisation and Australian immigration and settlement policies. Her research has focused on notions of ethnicity/race, identity, community and class. She is also interested in social, cultural and political aspects of the Australian housing market and home ownership. Val actively promotes cross-disciplinary, inter-university and international research collaborations, engaging in housing as well as migration research and combining the two themes.

**Professor Tony Dalton***Professor, Urban Studies & Public Policy*

Fel Dip Arch PhD RMIT, Grad Dip PubPol Mel, M SocSci Birmingham (UK)

Tony's areas of research interest are in housing affordability and access, housing and climate change and the housing industry. He returned to research and teaching position in 2011. Prior to this he held senior leadership positions at RMIT. He was Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation in the College of Design and Social Context (2004-2010) and Chair of Academic Board (2009-2010). He represents RMIT on the Board of ProSPER.net an Asia-Pacific grouping of universities committed to working together to integrate sustainable development into postgraduate courses and curricula.

**Dr Hartmut Fünfgeld***Acting Centre Director*

Cert MH Risk Assessment Twente (Netherlands); DipMan RMIT, DipGeogr, PhD Heidelberg (Germany)

Hartmut is interested in social and institutional responses to climate change in urban and regional areas and develops tools and processes that enable organisational learning and change for climate change adaptation. He has keen interest in gaining a better understanding of the social and equity implications of climate change. Hartmut has over a decade of experience in research, consulting and practice on climate change and sustainability with international governmental and non-governmental organisations in Germany and other EU countries, Australia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Zambia, and Ghana.

**Dr Georgia Garrard**

Research Fellow Myer Foundation

BA(Hons)/BSc(Env. Sci.) Melbourne, PhD RMIT

Georgia is a research fellow with the Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group in the Centre for Urban Research. A quantitative ecologist, Georgia has worked on projects related to imperfect detectability and informative Bayesian priors in ecology. Georgia is currently working on a project investigating better planning for biodiversity in the urban fringe, one of four native grassland projects funded by The Myer Foundation. This project aims to address incompatibilities between native grassland conservation and urban development in Melbourne, by improving prospects for grassland conservation within housing developments, and investigating alternative urban development scenarios that mitigate impacts on existing grasslands.

**Professor Robin Goodman**

*Deputy Dean Sustainability and Urban Planning
Director, AHURI RMIT Research Centre*

BA (Hons) Latrobe, M UrbPlan Melbourne, PhD Melbourne

An urban planner, Robin's research interests centre on urban planning and public policy. She led an AHURI project on the effects that various planning policy changes have had on the types of housing constructed, particularly in new growth areas in Victoria in the last 20 years. Robin also led a project on marginal rental housing, and led a team to evaluate the effects of stable community housing on the health of residents. She has also led a number of research projects on aspects of owners' corporations and master planned estates, retail planning and the planning of new suburbs.

**Dr Ascelin Gordon**

Senior Research Fellow

BSc (Hons) Melbourne, PhD Melbourne

A senior research fellow in the Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group Ascelin's research focuses on developing modelling approaches for understanding the impacts of environmental policies on biodiversity values in the landscape. He works as part of the multi-institution Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions (CEED), funded by the Australian Research Council.

**Dr Christopher Ives**

Research Fellow

BEnvSc Macquarie, PhD Macquarie

Chris is part of the Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group. His work revolves around understanding the biodiversity impacts of urbanisation and human-environment interactions in urban landscapes. Chris has a background in river and riparian ecology and the application of science to environmental policy. His current research projects include mapping social values for urban green spaces, exploring impacts of urban development on threatened species and investigating the ethical dimensions of biodiversity offsetting.

**Dr Guy Johnson**

Senior Research Fellow

BA (Hons) Monash, B Bus, (Marketing) Monash, MA Monash, PhD RMIT

Guy is a senior research fellow at the Centre for Urban Research at RMIT University and an Honorary Senior Fellow at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne. He has been involved in the area of homelessness for almost two decades, initially as a practitioner and more recently as a researcher. Guy has extensive knowledge of existing homelessness research, current homelessness policies, and is well acquainted with the homelessness service system.

**Dr Crystal Legacy**

Vice Chancellor's Research Fellow & Australian Research Council Fellow (DECRA)

B Environmental Studies (Hons), Waterloo (Canada), M Environment, PhD, University of Melbourne.

Crystal completed her PhD in strategic planning, examining the metropolitan plan making processes for Perth and Vancouver with a particular focus on the use of deliberative democracy, in 2010. Her DECRA research examines the impact of large-scale economic crises on local democratic planning practices in Australian and Canadian cities. In 2013, Crystal co-edited *Building Inclusive Cities: Women's Safety and the Right to the City* (Routledge). She is working on a second edited book *Instruments of Planning: Tensions and Challenges for more Equitable and Sustainable Cities* to be published by Routledge in early 2015.

**Ms Serena Lim**

Centre Coordinator

Serena is responsible for managing the financial and administrative aspects of the Centre for Urban Research:

- Manages and maintains financial records, including budget preparation and projection, to assist with the development of business plans;
- Manages and maintains the CUR's human resources activities, including supervision and organising of research assistants and casual staff;
- Provides assistance to CUR researchers with preparation of research funding applications, including budgetary information and assessment of project viability;
- Provides assistance in the preparation of formal reports of CUR projects to external funding bodies as required;
- Monitors grant reporting requirements, including research grants, commercial activities to facilitate management and accountability;
- Manages special projects such as conferences, seminars and workshops.



Dr Cecily Maller
Senior Research Fellow

BSc (Hons) Griffith, PhD Deakin

Cecily has worked for various Australian universities and for local, state and federal governments in a variety of research roles. She has interdisciplinary research expertise across environmental studies, health social science and the sociology of consumption. She has a VicHealth Research Practice Fellowship in Community Development and Residential Planning (2012-2015) exploring how best-practice planning affects the health and wellbeing of a master-planned housing estate residents.

As co-leader, Beyond Behaviour Change Research Program, she draws on theories of social practice to understand the health and sustainability outcomes of everyday routines, in particular energy and water consumption, and housing and neighbourhood design.



Dr Ian McShane
Deputy Director

BA (Hons) (Tasmania), MEd (Canberra), PhD (Swinburne)

Ian's research focuses on informal and formal education systems (especially museums, libraries and schools), local infrastructure and community services, and digital technologies. Current research projects are on shared use community infrastructure and service co-ordination, the development of publicly accessible wireless networks in Australia and internationally, and the representational politics of cultural diversity in Australian museums. In 2013 Ian was appointed to UNESCO's Creative Cities Network external evaluation panel.



Ms Sophie Millin
Research Officer

BSc Plymouth UK, MSc Plymouth,UK

Sophie Millin works on various research projects aimed at supporting Victorian local governments with planning for the impacts of climate change. Her professional interests include integrating climate change adaptation into organisational processes, climate modelling and projections, flood risk management, climate adaptation in the built environment and spatial planning, sea level rise and coastal adaptation.



Dr Susie Moloney
Senior Research Fellow

B Plan&Design (Hons), PhD University of Melbourne

Susie's research focuses around urban sustainability and the interconnections between the social, technical and governance changes required to improve our urban environments and social practices. She has worked in both the public and private sectors as an urban planning consultant and Project Manager of Urban Research for the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (Victoria). She is part of an international research network looking at low carbon cities. She teaches in the RMIT Sustainability and Urban Planning Program in strategies for sustainability, and in metropolitan planning and urban policy subjects.

**Dr Trivess Moore***Research Fellow*

BSC Env(Hons) Deakin, PhD RMIT

Trivess has a strong research interest in energy efficiency, renewable energies, the built environment and transitioning to a low carbon future.

In 2013 he received a scholarship to attend the ProSPER.Net leadership program, combining collaboration, expertise and leadership for sustainable development for early career sustainable development academics and professionals from across the Asia-Pacific and USA.

**Dr Larissa Nicholls***Research Fellow*

BA / BSc (Hons), Monash, PhD (Medicine), Melbourne

As part of the Beyond Behaviour Change research program, Larissa's research is concerned with the ways we live and how these relate to health, wellbeing, resource consumption and the environment.

Larissa's broad range of experience in medical research, teaching and training, community development and energy efficiency informs her research interests which include the relationship between consumption practices, health, and the environment; peak demand, demand management and energy efficiency; the impact of urban design, housing and technologies on health and sustainability; community in urban and regional life; food practices, food safety, and food security; and social change, household practices, equity and renters issues.

**Dr Cathy Oke***Research Fellow*

BBSch James Cook, BSc (Hons) LaTrobe, PhD (Molecular Science) LaTrobe

Cathy is a research fellow with the Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group. She is currently working on a project titled 'Planning for green open space in urbanising landscapes', focussing on the lower Hunter in NSW. The region has been selected to participate in the sustainable regional development program, which is part of the Australian Government's Sustainable Australia–Sustainable Communities strategy.

**Dr Sharon Parkinson***Postdoctoral Research Fellow*

BHSc (Hons) PhD RMIT

Sharon has a background in public health and the social sciences, with research experience spanning over 15 years in private consultancies, non-government research organisations, and academia. She has led several housing related research projects and consultancies in the areas of homelessness and housing insecurity and has developed particular expertise in longitudinal data analysis including econometric modelling and qualitative biographical methods, as well as service program planning and evaluation. Sharon's areas of research and policy interest include labour and housing market connections, housing insecurity and homelessness, housing wealth and consumption, and the social determinants of health and wellbeing.

**Dr Yolande Strengers***Vice-Chancellors Research Fellow*

BA Monash, MA (Social Science), PhD (Social Science) RMIT

Yolande's research seeks to understand how emerging technologies such as smart grids, smart meters and household technologies are reshaping everyday practices and sustainability agendas. She has worked closely with the energy sector over the past ten years in both academic and community relations roles, and currently co-leads the Beyond Behaviour Change research program with Dr Cecily Maller.

**Ms Alianne Rance***Research Officer*

BSc (Nat Res Mgmt) (Hons), PhD Candidate

Alianne specialises in climate change adaptation. She has worked in this field in both a research and consulting capacity for a number of years. Taking a keen interest in science communication, she has undertaken professional media and communications training through the Climate Council as a Climate Fellow. Alianne's PhD research focuses on considerations of climate risk in property development and has worked in the property sector in varying capacities for over 5 years. She also holds a passion for all things sustainability and the organisational change required to incorporate sustainable practice in the public and private sector.

**Dr Jan Scheurer***Senior Research Associate*

Dipl-Ing Hamburg Academy of Fine Arts, PhD Murdoch

Jan is a senior research fellow/associate at CUR and at Curtin University (Department of Built Environment and Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute). His areas of expertise are urban design, public transport, accessibility planning and sustainability policy. Jan has co-developed the award-winning Spatial Network Analysis for Multimodal Urban Transport Systems (SNAMUTS) tool, and teaches and supervises PhD research at both RMIT and Curtin Universities.

**Ms Anna Strempel***Research Officer*

BSocSc(Env)

Anna works as a Research Officer at the Centre for Urban Research, in the Beyond Behaviour Change research program. Anna works on a range of projects including Carbon Neutral Communities, which looks at the role of behaviour change initiatives and other non-technical interventions in transitioning towards carbon neutrality; targeted research to inform governmental policies relating to sustainability in the built environment; and research into transitions and trends in the home renovation industry. Anna's role also includes tutoring undergraduate students in the Urban Planning and Energy and Energy Policy and Management courses.

**Mr Chris Wilson**

Senior Officer, Research & Indus Develop

DipEd, BA (Hons) (Geography) Melbourne

Chris has been actively engaged in the planning and conduct of social, economic, education and media research for almost 20 years. He is currently on a 12 month secondment to the RMIT Centre for Urban Research (within the College of Design and Social Context) where he undertakes the design and development of local and international research funding proposals. At the Centre for Urban Research, Chris is involved in two research projects: Opportunity Spaces and Municipal Broadband. Chris is also completing a PhD that examines the administrative and political history of Australian youth radio.

**Professor Gavin Wood**

Professor, Housing & Urban Research & Research Program Leader Housing and Homelessness

BSc Hons (Econ) Brunel, MSc London, PhD Murdoch

Gavin's main research interests are in public policy and urban studies, housing finance and labour economics. He has published widely and is currently on the International Editorial Advisory Board of Urban Studies and Housing Studies. Gavin has consulted to a number of organisations including the OECD, the New Zealand Department of Labour, the Office of Fair Trading (WA), the Northern Housing Executive and the Australian Commonwealth Government's National Housing Strategy. He leads several AHURI funded research projects. He has forged successful research collaborations with Professor Susan Smith, Cambridge University, UK, Dr Rachel Ong, Curtin University, WA and Marietta Haffner, Delft University, Netherlands.

Members



Professor Jean Hillier

Professor Planning Theory and Contemporary Practice

BSc (Geography) London, PGDip (Access Studies to HE) South Bank, PhD (Geography) London

Jean Hillier is particularly interested in questions of social justice, social exclusion and ethics and citizen participation in government decision-making and in planning theory. She is interested in decision making and in issues of institutional transformation. Her work explores ideas of complex adaptive systems and resilience with regard to both spatial areas and planning systems. Her current research engages with bridging environmental, social and economic aspects of resilience for spatial planning. She has developed a methodology of Strategic Navigation for strategic spatial planning to facilitate resilient planning. Her work has been translated into Danish, Italian and Mandarin.



Professor Ralph Horne

Deputy PVC, Research and Innovation

BSc (Hons), MSc Salford (UK), PhD SHU (UK)

Ralph Horne is the Deputy PVC, Research and Innovation for the College of Design and Social Context at RMIT University. He supports research performance through the development of new and existing research Groups and Centres, mentoring future research leaders, and providing strategic leadership in support of research activity across the College.



Dr Joe Hurley

Lecturer

BEng (Civil) (Hons), University of Melbourne, Grad. Cert. Tertiary Teaching and Learning, RMIT University, PhD, RMIT University

Joe teaches with the Sustainability and Urban Planning program and is currently the Program Manager for the Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning (Honours). Joe's research focuses on urban planning and urban sustainability issues. He is a City West Water Community Liaison Committee Member; Urban Policy Advisor, Institute for Sensible Transport. In 2013, he received the RMIT School of Global, Urban and Social Studies Early Career Research Excellence Award.

Honorary Members



Honorary Associate Professor Julie Lawson

B App Sci (Planning) RMIT, Grad. Dip. (Pub Pol) Melbourne, PhD (Urban Planning) Amsterdam

Julie Lawson was appointed Honorary Associate Professor in October 2013. Her interests include international comparative research, urban development, land and housing policy and social housing finance.

As an urban researcher and international housing policy analyst she has a strong commitment to international and interdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange and policy reform. Julie's specialisations are sustainable and socially inclusive cities, urban planning and infrastructure investment, housing policy and comparative urban development.



Adjunct Professor Duncan MacLennan CBE FRSE FRICS AcSS FRSA RTPI MCIH

M.Phil. in Urban and Regional Economics, Glasgow

M.A Hons. in Political Economy with Systematic Geography, Glasgow

Professor Duncan MacLennan researches the economics of cities, neighbourhoods and housing. From April 2014 he will be Professor of Public Policy at the University of Glasgow and Professor of Management at the University of St Andrews. Previously he held Chairs at the University of Glasgow where he directed the ESRC Centre for Housing Research (1983 -1996), the ESRC Cities program 1996-99, and was Economic Adviser to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (1989 to 2004). He was Professor of Economic Geography at the University of St Andrews from 2008-2014. Duncan has held senior government posts and advisory positions in the UK, Canada and Australia. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, a Fellow of the Academy of Social Scientists for the UK and was awarded the CBE for services to housing research in Britain. He is an Honorary member of TRPI, RICS and CIH.



Adjunct Professor Geoffrey Meen

MSc (LSE), PhD (LSE)

Geoff Meen was until recently Head of the School of Politics, Economics and International Relations at the University of Reading, and Head of the Economics Department between 2002 and 2005. Committed to inter-disciplinary research, he has also directed large inter-university research projects and worked closely with government. He was awarded an OBE in 2007 and elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in the same year. Much of his research is concerned with the interactions between housing and the economy at different spatial scales. Professor Meen worked at the University of Melbourne in the early 1980s and now contributes to housing and economic developments in Australia through his Adjunct Professorship at RMIT. Urban micro analysis of Melbourne features strongly in his current research programme. The other main element of his research concerns housing market volatility and the role of mortgage debt and risk



Honorary Associate Professor Anitra Nelson

B App Sci (Planning) RMIT, Grad. Dip. (Pub Pol) Melbourne,
PhD (Urban Planning) Amsterdam

Anitra Nelson is an associate researcher in the Centre for Urban Research. Her research interests focus on community-based sustainability, sharing economies, marginal rental housing, mortgage default, housing affordability and environmental sustainability. Anitra teaches and evaluates community-based environmental programs, and is an editor, writer and filmmaker. Anitra has over 100 works in academic, creative writing and journalistic publications.



Honorary Associate Professor Rachel Ong

BA Econ (Hons), DPhil Murdoch

Rachel Ong was appointed Honorary Adjunct Associate Professor in October 2013. She is Deputy Director of the Centre for Research in Applied Economics and Senior Lecturer at the School of Economics and Finance, Curtin University. Rachel has conducted extensive investigations into the links between housing and socioeconomic outcomes and the dynamics of housing affordability in Australia. In recent years, her research focus has been on the use of housing assets in retirement, the housing pathways of older Australians and trends in housing affordability outcomes among population subgroups.



Adjunct Professor Susan J Smith

B.A., M.A. in Geography, St Anne's College, Oxford University

D. Phil., Faculty of Anthropology and Geography,
and Nuffield College, Oxford University

Susan J Smith, Mistress, Girton College, Cambridge University and Honorary Professor of Social and Economic Geography, has a distinguished career both as a human geographer and in the interdisciplinary world of housing studies. Professor Smith's research is centrally concerned with the challenge of inequality, addressing themes as diverse as residential segregation, housing for health and fear of crime. Her current research focusses on inequalities in the housing economy, and particularly on those arising from the uneven integration of housing, mortgage and financial markets. Her work has been funded by research councils, government bodies and charitable trusts. In addition to a program of research spanning more than 20 years, Susan is experienced in research management, research strategy, and research assessment. She has contributed to the work of the ESRC (Research Grants Board, Professorial Fellowships Commissioning Panel, Public Services Programme Commissioning Panel), HEFCE (panel member in the 2001 and 2008 Research Assessment Exercises), and the Philip Leverhulme Prize panel. From 2004 to 2009 she was Professor of Geography and a Director of the Institute of Advanced Study at Durham University; from 1990 to 2004 Susan was Ogilvie Professor of Geography at the University of Edinburgh.

Remembering Associate Professor Paul Mees

In June 2013, the Centre for Urban Research lost one of its most brilliant and independent academics, Associate Professor Paul Mees. Paul was one of Australia's leading experts on urban public transport. His work has been internationally influential, providing, for example, the basis for the European Union's 2005 HiTrans project on improving public transport in medium-sized cities and towns.

Before starting at RMIT in 2008, he taught urban planning at the University of Melbourne for 10 years, and before that was a Research Fellow at the Australian National University's Urban Research Program. He previously practised as a lawyer.

Paul was a valuable and valued member of staff, always willing to share his time and expertise with students, colleagues and the broader community. He was a strong supporter of the evolving Centre for Urban Research and an advocate for the new Centre within RMIT and beyond. He is sorely missed and will always be remembered as a founding member of the Centre.

Staff Departures

In 2013, the following CUR researchers left to take up other opportunities:

- Dr Andrew Martel
- Ms Paula Arcari
- Ms Shae Hunter

We thank them for their contribution to the Centre.

PhD Supervision

PhD Student	Supervisors
Paula Arcari	Dr Cecily Maller, Dr Yolande Strengers
	<i>Constructions and practices of 'ethical' and 'sustainable' meat: implications for meat consumption and the treatment of animals.</i>
Kristen Bell	Assoc Prof Robin Goodman, Dr Jan Scheurer
	<i>Elements of public transport service quality.</i>
Roberto Colanzi	Professor Tony Dalton
	<i>How is Vietnam managing its automotive industry alongside carbon minimisation and urban development vulnerabilities and pressures in its major cities?</i>
Jane Daly	Dr Cecily Maller, Yolande Strengers
	<i>Understanding the meatification of diets.</i>
Mathew Hardy	Dr Ascelin Gordon, Dr Sarah Bekessy
	<i>Using decision theoretic approaches to improve private land conservation.</i>
Thomas Kokkinos-Kennedy	Dr Hartmut Fuenfgeld
	<i>Materialities of Ignorance: A systems theoretical structural analysis of the relationships between systemic ignorance and knowledge as praxis in organisational communications on groundwater.</i>
Alexander Kusmanoff	Dr Ascelin Gordon , Dr Sarah Bekessy
	<i>Framing the conservation conversation – Investigations into the effectiveness of framing techniques for environmental advocacy.</i>
Callum Logan	Professor Gavin Wood
	<i>Land hazard disclosure impacts on house prices before and after an earthquake: evidence from Christchurch.</i>
Bronwyn Meyrick (completed)	Professor Mike Berry
	<i>Improving environmental performance in the Australian private rental housing sector: What are the barriers and how may these be overcome.</i>
Laura Mumaw	Dr Cecily Maller, Dr Sarah Bekessy
	<i>Yes in my backyard! Gardening for native biodiversity conservation in the city.</i>

PhD Student	Supervisors
Jessie Pomeroy	Professor Tony Dalton
<i>Where have all the people gone? Social infrastructure and workers in the productivity debate.</i>	
Bagas Putra	Professor Ralph Horne, Dr Joe Hurley
<i>Community participation in shaping green environments in urban kampung.</i>	
Alianne Rance	Assoc Prof Robin Goodman, Dr Hartmut Fuenfgeld
<i>A framework for effective adaptation to climate change for coastal urban community development in Australia.</i>	
Fatemeh Poodat (completed)	Dr Ascelin Gordon (assoc)
<i>Assessment of ecological connectivity for urban environments: a multispecies approach.</i>	
Martha Lucia Suarez Carvajal	Assoc Prof Robin Goodman, Dr Georgia Garrard
<i>From policy to action: exploring the effectiveness of strategic planning approaches for biodiversity conservation in urban growth areas.</i>	
Alice Stoakes	Prof Gavin Wood
<i>Relationship dissolution and pathways of adjustment in housing and employment for single female and single male-headed households.</i>	
Nooshin Torabi	Dr Ascelin Gordon , Dr Sarah Bekessy
<i>Integrated ecological and socio-economic modelling of biodiverse plantings for carbon sequestration.</i>	
Kim Hong Tran	Assoc Prof Ian Thomas
<i>Community based adaptation for the urban poor under climate change context case study: urban flood in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.</i>	

Organisation

Leadership and Management

Director (Acting): Dr Hartmut Fünfgeld

Deputy Director: Dr Ian McShane

Research Program Leaders

Beyond Behaviour Change: Dr Cecily Maller & Dr Yolande Strengers

Climate Change Adaptation: Dr Hartmut Fünfgeld

Community Infrastructure: Dr Ian McShane

Homelessness Research: Dr Guy Johnson

Housing Research: Professor Gavin Wood

Interdisciplinary Conservation Science: Associate Professor Sarah Bekessy

Peri-urban Research: Professor Michael Buxton

Transport and Urban Development: Assoc Prof Paul Mees, Dr Jan Scheurer

Administration

Centre Coordination: Ms Serena Lim

Centre Admin Officer: Ms Yani Iskandar

Governance

Research Strategy Committee

Advisory Committee The Hon Bronwyn Pike (Chair)

Mike Hill

Robert Larocca

Austin Ley

Dr Marcus Spiller

Collaborations

Visiting Scholars 2013

- Associate Professor, Rachel Ong, School of Economics and Finance, Deputy Director Centre for Research in Applied Economics (CRAE), Curtin University, WA (March-May 2013)
- Dr Marietta Haffner, Senior Researcher, Housing Studies, Delft University of Technology, Netherlands (September - October 2013)
- Rachel Macrorie, Research Student, School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, United Kingdom (October-December 2013)

National and International Activities

In 2013, CUR researchers participated in the following events and activities of national or international significance:

- European Climate Change Adaptation Conference *Integrating Climate into Action*. Hamburg, Germany, 18-20 March 2013.
- National Urban Policy Conference, *Economic Productivity and the City*. Sydney, 16-17 May 2013.
- European Network for Housing Research (ENHR) *Beyond Globalisation: Remaking Housing Policy in a Complex World*. Edinburgh, Scotland, 1-4 July 2013.
- ICCB 2013 (the 26th biennial International Congress for Conservation Biology). *Diversifying Conservation Science and Management*. Baltimore, USA. 21-25 July 2013.
- SB2013 Sustainable Building Conference, *Realising Sustainability in the Tropics*. Singapore, 9-10 September 2013.
- National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) *Climate Adaptation 2013: Knowledge and partnerships*. Sydney, 25-27 June 2013.
- 8th AHURI National Housing Conference, *A New Way Home* Adelaide, 30 October - 1 November 2013.
- United Nations University Institute of Advanced Study ProSPER.Net leadership program, East-West Centre Hawai'i, 15-17 November 2013.
- EcoTas13 (the 5th joint conference of the Ecological Society of Australia and the New Zealand Ecological Society). Auckland, New Zealand, 24-29 November 2013.
- 6th National State of Australian Cities (SOAC) National Conference, Sydney, 26-29 November 2013.
- The Australian Sociological Association Conference, *Reflections, Intersections and Aspirations: 50 years of Australian Sociology*. Monash University, Melbourne, 25-28 November 2013.

Financial Report for 2013

	2012	2013
Income	\$	\$
Research Grants Income		
Australian Research Council	69,605	375,724
ACGR Non-Commonwealth Govt Scheme	490,252	232,499
Non-ACGR Public Sector Rsch Income	187,842	469,759
Industry	118,649	184,740
International	-	-
Institutional Grants Scheme	7,639	-
Research Infrastructure Block Grant	56,062	75,151
Student Related Income	1,700	32,698
Other – RPIS R Goodman	10,000	-
School Contribution	-	28,170
Total Research Grants Income	941,750	1,398,741
Expenditure		
Salaries and on-costs	1,043,823	1,645,188
<i>offset by School funding contribution</i>	- 453,421	- 544,703
<i>offset by College funding contribution</i>	- 26,802	- 165,000
Net Salaries and on-costs	563,600	935,485
Other Operating Expenses		
Consumable materials	5,029	9,167
Minor equipment, repairs and hire/lease	14,047	13,422
Communication costs	9,116	8,891
Administration costs	1,506	1,534
Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations (3)	20,339	85,954
Travel & Motor Vehicle Expenses	40,952	109,728
Staff Administrative Costs (4)	70,196	125,817
Finance, legal and other	1,529	- 22,542
Facility expenses	3,123	890
Grants to Other Institutions	115,983	110,287
Staff & Student Related Expenses	21,208	18,933
Total Expenses (excl. School & College Contribution)	866,628	1,397,566
Operating Result	75,122	1,175

The background of the image features a large, modern architectural structure with a complex steel lattice framework. The perspective is from a low angle, looking upwards through the intricate network of beams. The lighting creates strong highlights on the metallic surfaces, emphasizing the geometric patterns of the trusses.

www.rmit.edu.au/research/urban