



**NCSEHE**

National Centre for Student  
Equity in Higher Education



**Curtin University**



# NATIONAL CENTRE FOR STUDENT EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

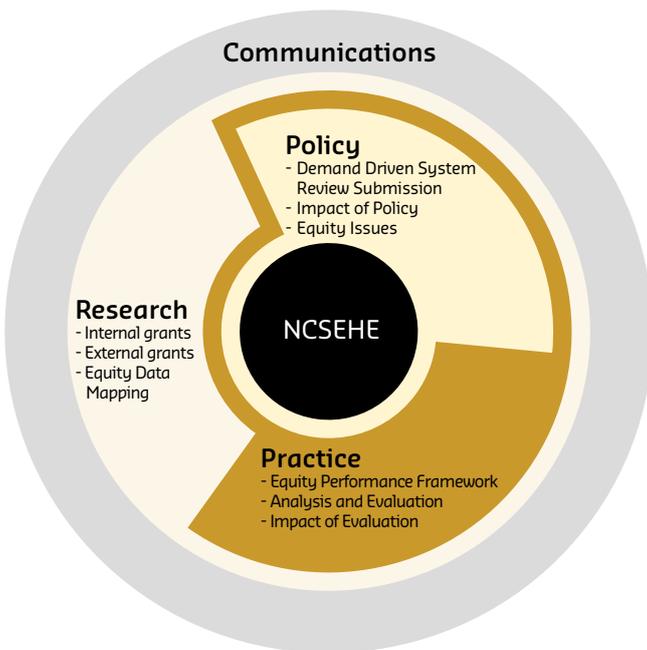
Annual Report 2013 - 2014

Make tomorrow better.

# NCSEHE OBJECTIVES

The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) is a centre for equity policy, research and practice.

The NCSEHE began operation in 2008, hosted by the University of South Australia. In May 2013, Curtin University won the bid to host the centre until December 2015.



## Aim:

Informing public policy design and implementation and institutional practice, to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people

## Objectives:

- to be at the centre of public policy dialogue about equity in higher education
- to 'close the loop' between equity policy, research and practice by:
  - supporting and informing evaluation of current equity practice, with a particular focus on identifying good practice
  - identifying innovative approaches to equity through existing research and the development of a forward research program to fill gaps in knowledge
  - translating this knowledge into practical advice for decision-makers and practitioners alike.

## Closing the loop with interlinked programs of activity:

- Research – sharing knowledge, providing evidence and foundations for policy and practice
- Practice – trialling, implementing and benchmarking research outcomes
- Policy – using research and practice outcomes to evaluate the impact of initiatives and advise on policy.



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# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We continue building the NCSEHE reputation nationally and internationally through our web media and communications strategy.

A number of exciting projects are underway as we move into our second year of operation.

From June 2013 to December 2015, the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) is located at Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia. The NCSEHE originally began operation in 2008, hosted by the University of South Australia for a period of five years. The Federal Government then called for expressions of interest in November 2012 from universities to host the national centre. In May 2013, Curtin University won the bid through a two-stage process (10 expressions of interest were received, and four were shortlisted). Minister Sharon Bird announced that Curtin University had won the bid to host the NCSEHE at the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIICCSRTE, now Australian Government Department of Education) *Equity in Higher Education Policy Forum* on 30 April – 1 May, 2013. Total funding of \$3.25 million was committed, with the contract being signed on 31 May 2013.

The NCSEHE is now building on the outcomes of the previous centre, as well as outcomes from the National HEPPP Evaluation 'Think Tank' held at Deakin University in July 2012, and the Australian Government Department of Education *Equity in Higher Education Policy Forum* held at the University of Sydney, 30 April – 1 May 2013.

The participation of people in higher education from Low Socio-Economic Status (LSES) backgrounds now exceeds 17 per cent for the first time in Australia. The focus on increasing participation in higher education has been driven by the *Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education* (2008) and the Australian Government response, *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System* (2009). It is currently enabled through funding provided by the Federal Government to universities through the Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP). From 1 January 2015 HEPPP will be replaced by the Higher Education Participation Program (HEPP) as part of a comprehensive reform of higher education, supporting the Government's objective of ensuring that Australians from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the ability to study at university get the opportunity to do so and succeed.

The purpose of the NCSEHE is to inform public policy design and implementation, and institutional practice in order to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people. In Australia and internationally, the NCSEHE aims to act as a conduit for discussion and research on issues affecting student equity in higher education policy, practice and analysis. In keeping with its purpose, the NCSEHE attempts to connect student equity policy with the activities of higher education institutions and national equity outcomes, through its input into comparative assessment of institutional strategies, systemic assessments of policy achievements and assessments of national policy-making in view of this evidence. As part of this mission, the NCSEHE strives to 'close the loop' between equity policy, research and practice, conducting activities through three core programs:

- **Equity Policy and Program Evaluation (Evaluation Program)** – providing leadership and support in developing a national approach and resources to evaluate the impact of initiatives to increase participation of people from LSES backgrounds and other equity groups in higher education.
- **Equity Policy and Planning Research (Research Program)** – furthering equity policy and planning in Australia, sharing knowledge and capabilities developed in Australia, and providing evidence on the impact of policy on equity outcomes in the system.
- **Student Equity Data and Analysis (Data and Analysis Program)** – providing a central repository for the analysis and availability of national datasets on student equity in higher education.

Within its first year of operation the NCSEHE has had a number of highlights including the launch of the NCSEHE website and social media channels through a comprehensive communications strategy; the production of the NCSEHE case study publication *Access and Participation in Higher Education: Outreach| Access| Support*; and the Research Roundtable held at the Australian National University (ANU) in November 2013. The case study publication was distributed to all universities, government and industry stakeholders,

and brought together samples of the current practice of the 37 public universities in Australia. The universities' self-selected case studies spanned activities used to reach prospective university students (outreach), helping students progress into university (access) and providing support once students commence, improving the retention and completion rates of those students.

The Research Roundtable held at the ANU brought together 29 equity researchers and practitioners from across Australia and resulted in 12 competitive grants being allocated in 2014 as a part of the NCSEHE research grants program.

A number of exciting projects are underway as we move into our second year of operation. The NCSEHE is involved in a number of evaluation and research projects with partner universities, and is developing and testing the *Equity Performance Framework for Australian Higher Education* for the Australian Government Department of Education. The development of an interactive Australian map linking equity performance data geographically is also underway. It will eventually be linked to the NCSEHE website for general use. The aim is to have the NCSEHE website become the central location for national datasets on student equity in higher education available in intuitive, visual, but interrogable formats.

We continue building the NCSEHE reputation nationally and internationally through our web media and communications strategy. After an invitation from Professor John Storan, a paper was submitted to the 2014 *Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE)* held on 2-4 July 2014 in Manchester, UK. FACE is the major professional network in the UK for those involved in widening participation and access to higher education. While in the UK I also visited the equity centres at the University of East London the 'Continuum Research Centre'; the 'Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change' in Glasgow; and the 'Wales Centre for Equity in Education' in Wales to discuss possible collaborative research opportunities.

I presented a keynote at the *Equity Practitioners in Higher Education (EPHEA) National Conference* in November 2013. I will continue to promote the NCSEHE through two additional national keynote presentations during 2014. The first is for the Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia (SPERA) at their 30th national conference in Armidale NSW in October, talking to regional educators about the participation of our regional students' access to higher education. The second is for the Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability (ATEND) at the *Pathways 12 Conference* in Fremantle Western Australia in December, talking about the latest implications and data for students with disabilities studying higher education. We are also running a number of monitoring and evaluating forums for universities in 2014-2015.

Our first Annual Report is issued at a time of proposed significant higher education reform. Australia's expanding higher education system offers disadvantaged students increasing opportunities to enter university, but shifts in policy will affect higher education access, participation and completions. The centre will continue to offer evidence-based commentary to inform the current debate as higher education becomes more representative of wider socio-economic Australia.

The NCSEHE team look forward to continuing the excellent progress achieved in our first year of operation at Curtin University. Along with a supportive Advisory Board and our many stakeholders, we aim to achieve the key purpose of the NCSEHE: informing public policy design and implementation and institutional practice to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people.

**Professor Sue Trinidad**  
Director  
National Centre for Student Equity  
in Higher Education





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# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

**Student equity in Australian higher education is a continuing issue. The key to success in equity initiatives is a collaborative approach among**

**all stakeholders: government, institutions and practitioners.**

I congratulate the Director and her team for the work undertaken to enable the national centre to be functioning effectively so early within our first year of operation. This included establishing governance, staff positions and a web presence within the first three months of operation.

The government needs evidence that equity initiatives are working, as student equity in Australian higher education is a continuing issue. The key to success in these endeavours is a collaborative approach among all stakeholders: between government, institutions and practitioners. Collaboration will drive coherent change by ensuring that critical voices are heard in order to refine the policy focus and deliver clear-cut results.

Under a strong governance framework, we have been fortunate to recruit a number of high profile and extremely experienced members to our Board, and their commitment and depth of knowledge has already had significant impact. I am very grateful for the time and for the expertise they bring to the Board.

Three Board meetings have been held with the inaugural Board meeting on 11 July 2013, where we approved many of the initial governance documents; the second meeting was held on 25 November 2013 where we completed the governance and review process and approved the strategic direction of the NCSEHE; and the third meeting on 7 March 2014 reviewed progress of some of the key initiatives and approved the first round of competitive research grants.

Since the third meeting and prior to the end of the reporting period the government brought down its budget, which included substantial changes for university funding and administration. It is not yet known whether all the proposed changes requiring legislation will be passed into law but it is clear that any or all of those changes, including enlarged scholarships schemes and higher fees, will have equity implications. It will be part of the role of the centre to examine these changes and to be a trusted source of information about their equity implications.

Already, in addition to establishing the NCSEHE's three programs of Evaluation, Research and Data Analysis, the research team has been active in making comments both through the media and legislative submissions, such as to the *Demand Driven System Review* by the Australian Government on 13 December 2013. This is as it should be, and the centre is focused on providing timely, relevant and accurate material to inform policy debates.

The implementation of the Student Equity in Higher Education Research Grants Program has been a significant achievement in our first year, and I thank the work of our Advisory Committee and the Chair Professor Lesley Parker in reviewing 35 research grant proposals and subsequently recommending 12 to the Advisory Board, which approved them for funding in 2014. This external research program and the other activities of the NCSEHE ensure the national centre acts as a catalyst for wide-ranging discussion and research on issues affecting student equity in higher education policy, practice and analysis.

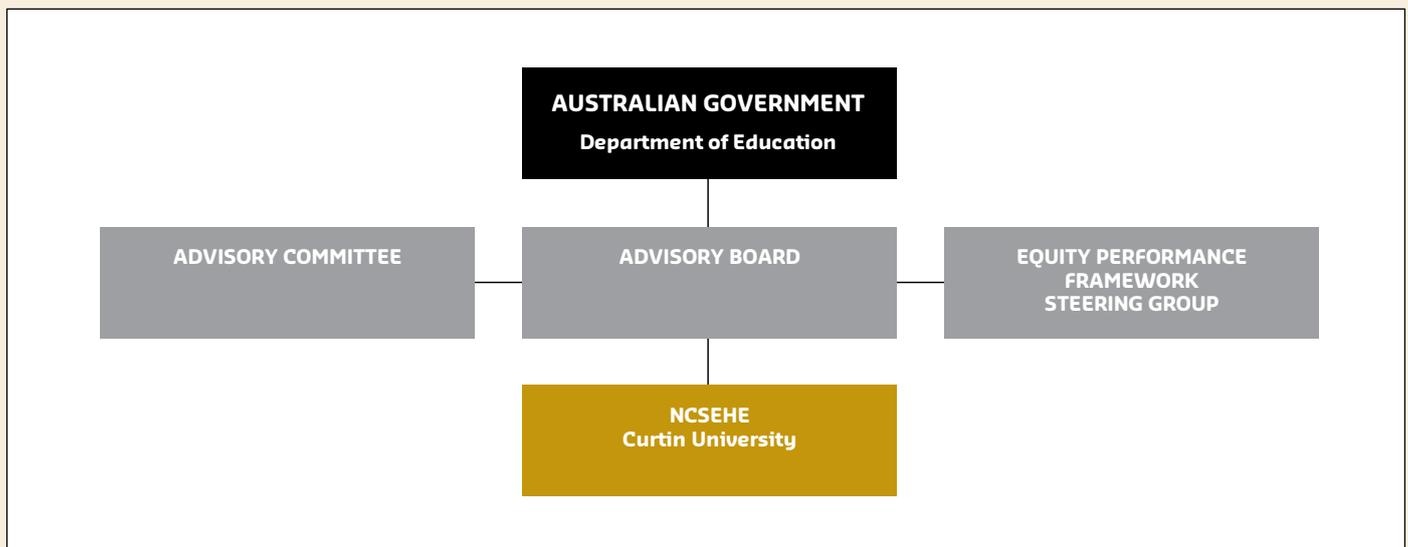
**The Hon. Fred Chaney AO**  
Chairman



# CENTRE STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Advisory Board meets at least three times per year. Membership is comprised of stakeholder nominees from academia, government

and industry, with one Curtin University representative.



The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education sits within the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy (JCIPP) and is aligned with the Curtin Learning Institute. The \$3.25 million contract research program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, and Curtin University is contributing \$876,573 in-kind and \$694,903 cash from 2013 to 2015.

## NCSEHE Advisory Board

The Advisory Board has an important role in the effective governance of the centre and is a source of expert advice. It has no delegated authority from Curtin University to formally control the centre, but wields significant influence through its involvement in the centre's planning and budgeting. The Board:

- assists in centre strategy, risk management and compliance
- assists in identifying research and research income opportunities and expanding the range of stakeholders involved in and aware of the centre
- assists during the preparation of long-term plans, budgets and appropriate performance measures and targets
- formally endorses plans, performance measures and targets, Annual and Financial Reports.

The Advisory Board meets at least three times per year. Membership is comprised of stakeholder nominees from academia, government and industry, with one Curtin University representative. The Chair of the Board is appointed by mutual agreement of Curtin and the

Australian Government Department of Education for a period of 2.5 years. The Advisory Board meetings were held on 11 July 2013, 25 November 2013 and 7 March 2014.

During the term of this reporting period, the EPHEA representative Dr Nadine Zacharias left the board in December 2013, with her position subsequently filled by Ms Milly Fels.

The NCSEHE Board members are:

- The Hon. Fred Chaney, AO (Chair)
- Professor Bruce Chapman, AM, Professor of Economics and Director, Policy Impact, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University
- Winthrop Professor Carmen Lawrence, School of Psychology, University of Western Australia
- Professor Colleen Hayward, AM, Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Education and Research and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous), Edith Cowan University
- Mr Paul Nicholls, Director of Strategic Projects, nominee of Curtin University Deputy Vice Chancellor R&D, Professor Graeme Wright, Curtin University
- Mr Craig Ritchie, Branch Manager of the Access and Participation Branch in the Research and Strategy Group of the Australian Government Department of Education
- Dr Nadine Zacharias, past President, EPHEA
- Ms Milly Fels, EPHEA Nominee, Vice President, EPHEA
- Professor Kerri-Lee Krause, University Australia Nominee, University of Western Sydney.



### NCSEHE Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee that provides advice and input from a wide range of stakeholders supports the Advisory Board. The Advisory Committee is comprised of Board-approved delegates from across Australia, who have been at the forefront of establishing equity and outreach programs.

The Advisory Committee oversees the research and dissemination program, and meets mostly via video- and tele-conference. Sub-committees are formed for specific tasks such as overseeing the grants program, providing directions for the call-for-applications, and recommending the winning bids for approval by the Board.

Current Advisory Committee members are:

- Emeritus Professor Lesley Parker AM FTSE (Chair), Emeritus Professor at Curtin University
- Professor Sarah Paddle, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Deakin University
- Professor Cindy Shannon, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Education), University of Queensland
- Associate Professor John Guenther, Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Remote Economic Participation, Flinders University Northern Territory
- Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, Director and Head of School Centre for Indigenous Studies, Charles Sturt University Dubbo, New South Wales.

Advisory Sub-Committee members are:

- Professor Richard James, Senior Executive, Provost Department, University of Melbourne
- Professor Karen Nelson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students), University of the Sunshine Coast
- Dr Jane Cavanagh, Director of Widening Participation, University of Western Sydney.

### Equity Performance Framework Steering Group

The Equity Performance Framework Steering Group provides oversight of the trial and production of the Equity Performance Framework for Australian Higher Education. Current members are:

- Mr Craig Ritchie, Australian Government Department of Education (Access and Participation Branch) and NCSEHE Advisory Board member
- Dr Fadwa Al-Yaman, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Mr Andrew Taylor, Australian Government Department of Education (Data and Analysis Branch)
- Professor Ian Anderson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council
- Ms Milly Fels, EPHEA representative and NCSEHE Advisory Board member
- Mr Myles Burleigh, Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Ms Sue Fergusson, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
- Mr Nathan Cassidy, Universities Australia representative.

### NCSEHE Adjuncts

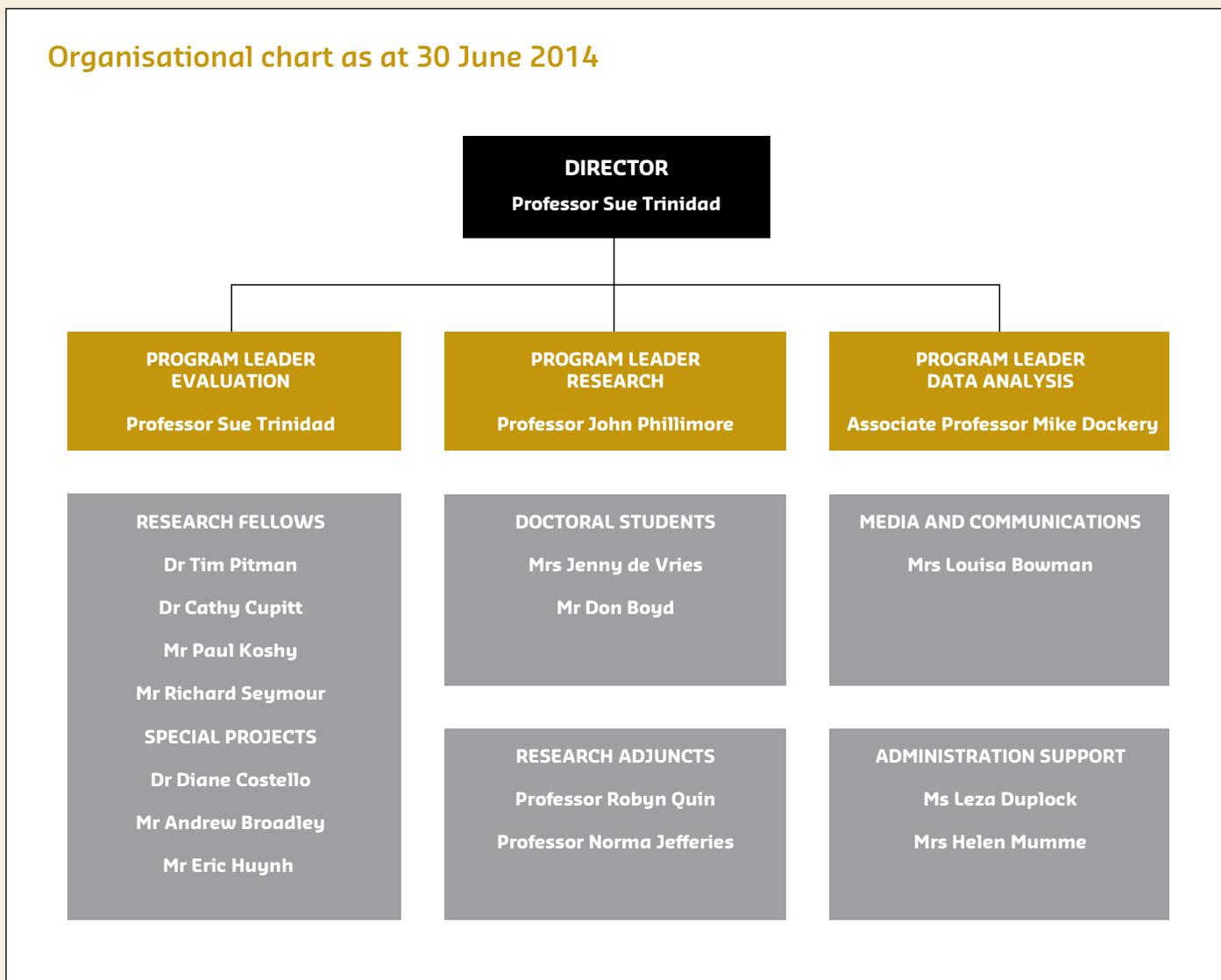
Two Adjunct Professors currently provide advice and conduct scholarly research on request with the NCSEHE:

- Adjunct Professor Robyn Quin, Higher Education Consultant
- Adjunct Professor Norma Jeffery, Higher Education Student Equity Consultant.

# RESEARCH TEAM

The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education is home to a diverse group of researchers, students and professional staff.

## Organisational chart as at 30 June 2014





#### **Professor Sue Trinidad**

Program Leader  
Prior to becoming the centre's Director, Professor Trinidad was Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Humanities at Curtin during 2007–2012. In these roles she provided academic leadership for all educational programs for the

Schools of Education, Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Architecture, Social Sciences and Asian Languages, and Art and Design. Her role included overseeing the academic programs and leading the Higher Education Equity Participation Program for a large faculty which had many LSES, Indigenous and regional students. She is an established scholar in the areas of higher education pedagogy and change management, the use of technology in education, and student learning.



#### **Professor John Phillimore**

Program Leader  
Professor Phillimore is the Executive Director of the JCIPP at Curtin and works on a range of public policy issues including federalism, higher education policy, public sector management, innovation and technology policy, and the Australian welfare state.



#### **Associate Professor Mike Dockery**

Program Leader  
Associate Professor Dockery is Principal Research Fellow with the JCIPP. In this role he manages the Student Equity Data and Analysis program for the NCSEHE and leads the CRC for Remote Economic Participation's project on Indigenous mobility. Associate Professor Dockery is also part of the research team at the

Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, where his research pursuits include the school-to-work transition, the effects of work and other labour market experience on happiness and wellbeing, and Indigenous labour market and social outcomes.



#### **Dr Tim Pitman**

Senior Research Fellow  
Dr Pitman has worked in higher education since the mid-1990s and has extensive experience in research and student administration. His current area of research is in higher education policy with a focus on access and social inclusion in higher education. Dr Pitman also researches in approaches to lifelong

learning, experiential learning and the recognition and credentialing of prior learning. He is a regular contributor to higher education policy debate in print, online and on radio.



#### **Dr Cathy Cupitt**

Research Fellow  
Dr Cupitt has worked in higher education for the last 17 years, most recently as a unit coordinator of large-cohort, multiple-mode units at The University of Western Australia and Curtin University. Currently she is researching student access, retention and success in higher education, with a focus on developing a theory/praxis equity framework for use in the sector.



#### **Mr Paul Koshy**

Research Fellow  
Mr Koshy has published a number of articles and has participated in over 40 contract research projects for state and national government agencies, private sector clients and international agencies, including most recently, a major AusAid-funded project for the Philippine Tariff Commission. He has also worked on a

number of projects undertaking economic impact analysis of publicly-funded initiatives, ranging from public subsidies for universities to major estate developments in Western Australia.



#### **Mr Richard Seymour**

Research Fellow  
Mr Seymour has seven years experience in labour market economics, and has worked on a number of research projects for the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development, the CRC Construction Innovation, the Australian Fair Pay Commission, and the Victorian Department of Innovation,

Industry and Regional Development. He also has over 10 years experience in information technology, with extensive experience in software and database development.



#### **Dr Diane Costello**

Research Officer  
Dr Costello has been involved in higher education research and teaching for over 14 years, encompassing lecturing in psychology, and undertaking applied research with Indigenous and regional and remote communities within a social justice framework. Her current research focus is on student equity in higher education.

# RESEARCH PROGRAM

Through driving public policy dialogue about equity in higher education and 'closing the loop' between equity policy, research and practice,

the centre aims to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people.

The NCSEHE's key purpose is 'to inform public policy design and implementation, and institutional practice, to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people.'

In keeping with its purpose, the NCSEHE is connecting Commonwealth student equity policy with the activities of higher education institutions and national equity outcomes, through its input into comparative assessment of institutional strategies, systemic assessments of policy achievements and assessments of national policy-making in view of this evidence.

The centre's focus is based on three programs of research activity:

- **Equity Policy and Program Evaluation**

The centre is providing leadership and support in developing a national approach and resources to evaluate the impact of initiatives to increase participation of people from LSES backgrounds and other equity groups in higher education.

- **Equity Policy and Planning Research**

The centre is furthering equity policy and planning in Australia, sharing knowledge and capabilities developed in Australia, and providing evidence on the impact of policy on equity outcomes in the system. By enabling national research and engagement on higher education policy and practice, the centre ensures its research includes analysis of all student equity groups, including people from LSES, Indigenous, remote and rural communities, and people with disability.

- **Student Equity Data and Analysis**

The centre is providing a central repository for the analysis and availability of national datasets on student equity in higher education. This encompasses:

- compiling and analysing national equity data and survey data on student transition to higher education
- managing a central online website for presenting data on student equity performance in higher education; in particular, the mapping of higher education participation data in Australia
- providing access to sources for data and data-driven research on equity policy and programs from around Australia and the world.



Professor John Phillimore, Professor Sue Trinidad and Associate Professor Mike Dockery

## PROGRAM 1 – EQUITY POLICY AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

### Program Leader Professor Sue Trinidad

The Evaluation Program is evaluating current sector initiatives identifying best practice, developing a National HEPPP Evaluation Approach, and sharing associated tools and resources across the sector.

Projects completed and under way:

- A current-practice publication was produced for the November 2013 EPHEA conference, documenting equity in higher education practice across Australian universities as a result of HEPPP funding. The NCSEHE case study publication *Access and Participation in Higher Education: Outreach | Access | Support* brings together samples of the current practice of the 37 public universities across Australia. Copies were posted to all 37 public universities' Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors, along with an information package that included a copy of the NCSEHE competitive grants application documents (see Program 2). Additional case study publication copies were posted out on request. Since December 2013 the NCSEHE website ([ncsehe.edu.au](http://ncsehe.edu.au)) has featured a new case study publication on the front page every three days.
- Curtin is supporting a project to evaluate Curtin University HEPPP initiatives, with the view to review and embed equity initiatives to align with the *Transforming Learning @ Curtin Strategic Plan*. From 2014–2017 Curtin is making a prioritised effort on Indigenous Australian students,

external (online) students and regional students, and mature age students. Using Curtin as a case study, Doctoral student Mrs Jennifer de Vries is gathering baseline data during 2014 on the Curtin equity initiatives and then using an evaluation framework to provide recommendations after one year of operation.

- Doctoral student Mr Don Boyd is investigating regional students' transition into higher education in Western Australia and Queensland. He has just finalised his candidacy and is obtaining ethics clearance with the aim to begin data collection in the second half of 2014.
- Good progress has been made on the development and trial of an *Equity Performance Framework for Australian Higher Education*, funded by the Australian Government Department of Education. We prepared a comparative report for Milestone 1 and a project execution plan for Milestone 2. Milestone 3 was the acceptance by the Australian Government Department of Education of the project execution plan and Milestone 4, the implementation of the project execution plan, is now underway. The *Equity Performance Framework* will measure progress at the level of outcomes, systems and broader determinants of participation in higher education. The primary purpose of the *Equity Performance Framework* is to provide a mechanism to identify relevant data and statistics for analysis by which student equity in the higher education system can be monitored. The Equity Performance Framework Steering Group met in Canberra on 2 May 2014, and it is anticipated that this work will be completed by December 2015.
- The NCSEHE was approached by Dr John McDonald, Director of the Learn Experience Access Professions (LEAP) project, to assist in the evaluation of the LEAP project in Victoria ([leap.vic.edu.au/about-leap/leap-program](http://leap.vic.edu.au/about-leap/leap-program)). This work was contracted to the NCSEHE and was undertaken from March 2014, with a final report produced for June 2014. Analyses of over 3,000 student surveys were undertaken, and student case studies from 10 participating schools involved in the LEAP project in Victoria were produced after the March school visits, forming a number of recommendations in the final report.
- The NCSEHE was contracted to provide research assistance in the development of an evaluation framework for the NSW BRIDGES project ([bridges.nsw.edu.au/](http://bridges.nsw.edu.au/)). This meta-analysis is due for completion in August 2014, with the first progress report provided on 30 March 2014.
- Post-Doctoral Fellow Dr Cathy Cupitt joined the centre in January 2014 and is working on the Student Engagement Online and Data Mining project, as more universities move to provide their courses online to off-campus cohorts. This

study involves two parts. The first uses learner analytics and data mining techniques to interrogate large data sets (currently 51,000 students) to investigate how Curtin University might better cater for its equity students. The second part of the project tracks current students who are undertaking study in Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and other types of online study modes to better understand motivation and engagement issues and support needed for these students to succeed. An online survey has been developed and has ethics approval. Collaboration is intended to follow after the Curtin trial, with interested partner universities including international opportunities with UK, Canadian and US researchers.

The NCSEHE has established a profile and reputation over the first year of operation of the Equity Program Evaluation. By providing leadership and support through research and resources we are working towards a national approach to evaluate the impact of initiatives to increase participation of people from LSES backgrounds and other equity groups in higher education. Over the coming year the NCSEHE will continue to undertake leadership and support in this important area, providing assistance with the evaluation of programs, producing the companion publication on partnerships and completing the *Equity Performance Framework for Australian Higher Education*.



**RESEARCHER PROFILE**  
**Mr Andrew Broadley**

I have 20 years experience working in project, operational and management consulting roles in Australia and overseas. I have worked for both public and private organisations, including mining, gas, law enforcement, health and higher education. I am currently part-time with the centre, managing the Equity Performance Framework for Australian Higher Education project, whilst also undertaking a research project with Murdoch University to assess the potential of restocking the Swan River with a native prawn species.

## PROGRAM 2 – EQUITY POLICY AND PROGRAM RESEARCH

### Program Leader Professor John Phillimore

By enabling high-quality national research and engagement on higher education policy and practice, the centre ensures its research includes analysis of all student equity groups including people from LSES, Indigenous, remote and rural communities, and people with disability. It also works on producing and disseminating relevant publications and conducting engagement activities.

Research covers three broad streams of interest:

- national policy-making and target-setting
- access, participation and outcome patterns among the equity groups
- comparative evidence on strategies to meet equity participation and outcome targets.

The Research Program draws on the resources of the Evaluation Program and the Data and Analysis Program, as well as informing activities in both those areas. It recognises, as a national centre, the need to involve and partner with researchers from around the country to ensure that the centre can tap into relevant research excellence that exists across Australian universities and related research institutions. As a result, the Research Program involves three elements:

- in-house research by centre staff
- a Student Equity in Higher Education Research Grants Program
- specially commissioned research projects.

### In-house Research

Research work at the centre has progressed on the following projects:

- A report detailing policy development and equity outcomes in higher education over the past seven years is in progress. This has involved initial analysis of equity trends, with the release of a briefing note by Mr Paul Koshy, reporting on recent trends in student enrolment in Australian higher education in key equity groups, which was published on the centre website in January 2014 ('Student Equity Performance in Australian Higher Education: 2007 to 2012'; [ncsehe.edu.au/publications/student-equity-performance-australian-he-2007-2012/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/student-equity-performance-australian-he-2007-2012/)).
- A report is in preparation by Professor John Phillimore and Mr Paul Koshy, detailing policy development in LSES equity in higher education over the past decade, with specific attention on the LSES target established in the last five years. Work has commenced using 2012 equity data and recent changes in policy.
- A study by Associate Professor Mike Dockery, Mr Richard Seymour and Mr Paul Koshy is underway using data from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey to examine the definition and measurement of socio-economic status in Australia, with a particular comparison between 'area' measures such as the ABS's Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) and

individual household measures. Analysis of the HILDA data is complete with a paper in draft.

- Data from the HILDA survey is also being used to examine the determinants of LSES student participation in Australian higher education. Analysis of the HILDA data is now complete, and a proposal has been made to use Western Australian data from the Raine Study to study school to university transitions in Western Australia.
- A report on the implications of the 2014 Federal Budget was prepared by Dr Tim Pitman, Professor John Phillimore and Mr Paul Koshy, and was published on the centre website in June 2014.

### Student Equity in Higher Education Research Grants Program

At the July 2013 Advisory Board meeting, the Board suggested the NCSEHE consult with experts to assist in setting research priorities for the first grant round. A Roundtable was held in Canberra at the ANU Crawford School on 4 November 2013, attended by 29 researchers, to discuss the current state of knowledge on higher education equity issues. A list of research priorities was subsequently collated and approved by the Board, along with a research proposal application form and an 'instructions to applicants' kit.

Applications were opened in early December, and closed on 7 February 2014. Information about the grants was distributed to all universities, Roundtable attendees, subscribers to the NCSEHE e-newsletter and followers of our Twitter feed, and posted on the Community of Science grant website.

Thirty five applications with a total value of \$2,164,994 were received, with an average application value of \$61,857. Nineteen different organisations (including two non-university centres) led at least one proposal. In total, 133 investigators from 34 different universities and organisations were nominated.

A 'blind referee' process was used with six NSCSHE staff ranking the applications. The Advisory Committee met on 26 February 2014 to consider the NCSEHE recommended rankings, and reported to the Board in March 2014. The grants awarded are detailed on the following table, to a total of \$741,328.

Discussions have been held with all grant recipients and contracts have been signed. Projects span 6–18 months, with the first research reports expected in October 2014. It is anticipated that a second, smaller, research grants program will be launched late in 2014.

PROJECT TITLE	LEAD UNIVERSITY	CHIEF INVESTIGATOR	URL
University access and achievement of people from out-of-home care backgrounds	La Trobe University	Dr Andrew Harvey	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/university-access-achievement-people-home-care-backgrounds/">ncsehe.edu.au/university-access-achievement-people-home-care-backgrounds/</a>
Equity groups and predictors of academic success in higher education	University of Newcastle	Dr Jill Scevak	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/equity-groups-predictors-academic-success-higher-education/">ncsehe.edu.au/equity-groups-predictors-academic-success-higher-education/</a>
Choosing university: the impact of schools and schooling	University of Newcastle	Professor Jenny Gore	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/choosing-university-impact-schools-schooling">ncsehe.edu.au/choosing-university-impact-schools-schooling</a>
Developing a national framework for supporting rigorous equity program evaluation	University of Melbourne	Dr Ryan Naylor	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/developing-national-framework-supporting-rigorous-equity-program-evaluation/">ncsehe.edu.au/developing-national-framework-supporting-rigorous-equity-program-evaluation/</a>
Are LSES students disadvantaged in the university application process?	La Trobe University	Dr Buly Cardak	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/low-ses-students-disadvantaged-university-application-process/">ncsehe.edu.au/low-ses-students-disadvantaged-university-application-process/</a>
Best practice bridging: facilitating Indigenous participation through regional dual-sector universities	CQUniversity Australia	Professor Bronwyn Fredericks	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/low-ses-students-disadvantaged-university-application-process/">ncsehe.edu.au/low-ses-students-disadvantaged-university-application-process/</a>
Do individual background characteristics influence tertiary completion rates?	NCVER	Mr Patrick Lim	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/individual-background-characteristics-influence-tertiary-completion-rates/">ncsehe.edu.au/individual-background-characteristics-influence-tertiary-completion-rates/</a>
Educational outcomes of young Indigenous Australians	Flinders University	Professor Kostas Mavromaras	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/educational-outcomes-young-indigenous-australians">ncsehe.edu.au/educational-outcomes-young-indigenous-australians</a>
Secondary school graduate preferences for Bachelor degrees and institutions	Deakin University	Professor Trevor Gale	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/secondary-school-graduate-preferences-bachelor-degrees-institutions">ncsehe.edu.au/secondary-school-graduate-preferences-bachelor-degrees-institutions</a>
Exploring the experience of being first in family at university	University of South Australia	Dr Sharron King	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/exploring-experience-first-in-family-university/">ncsehe.edu.au/exploring-experience-first-in-family-university/</a>
Resilience/thriving in post-secondary students with disabilities: an exploratory study	University of Southern Queensland	Dr Rahul Ganguly	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/resilience-thriving-post-secondary-students-with-disabilities-exploratory-study/">ncsehe.edu.au/resilience-thriving-post-secondary-students-with-disabilities-exploratory-study/</a>
Completing university in a growing sector: is equity an issue?	Australian Council for Educational Research	Dr Daniel Edwards	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/completing-university-growing-sector-equity-issue/">ncsehe.edu.au/completing-university-growing-sector-equity-issue/</a>

### Commissioned Research

While the Student Equity in Higher Education Research Grants Program will drive the bulk of the national equity research program for 2014, the Program also commissioned four research projects at the end of 2013 so there would be research results available in 2014 while the grant applications were processed and actioned.

Commissioned research is now underway within Curtin University's School of Education, with Professor Rhonda Oliver investigating the retention of Indigenous students at university. Curtin Business School's Associate Professor Steven Rowley is also preparing a scoping paper on affordable student housing. At Victoria University in Melbourne, Dr George Messinis and Professor Peter Sheehan from the Centre for Strategic Economic Studies are examining the academic performance of students at Victoria University by entry score and socio-economic status. A fourth project is being conducted by the University of Western Australia researcher Dr Ian Li, from the School of Population Health, who is undertaking a study with Curtin University on the socio-economic status of schools and university academic performance.

Reports from these commissioned research projects will be produced later in 2014 and published on the NCSEHE website.

Looking forward, we anticipate regular publication of research results from the range of projects funded by the centre, as well as from research conducted by centre staff. The centre's own research and the next external research grant round will also provide an opportunity to focus on issues and equity groups that may not have received sufficient attention to date. For example, fewer grant applications were received concerning issues facing students with disabilities than might have been expected.

Changing government policy provides an impetus for future research priorities, with the recent shift to allow non-university providers to access Commonwealth funding highlighting the equity performance and strategies of these institutions; while the uncapping and support of sub-degree places is also likely to be of interest.

In addition, the centre is considering an examination of the differences between how the states and territories operate their upper secondary schooling systems – and in particular their tertiary admissions systems – in terms of whether equity considerations are dealt with differently by particular jurisdictions. It is well-known that access and participation rates vary across Australia, but it is less evident whether there are any systematic patterns of difference, or how these might arise.

**PROGRAM 3 – STUDENT EQUITY DATA AND ANALYSIS****Program Leader, Associate Professor Mike Dockery**

The aims of the Program are to:

- collate and analyse national equity statistics and survey data
- analysis of student data from Australian higher education institutions and tertiary applications centres across Australia
- collate and analyse data from third party data collections
- make available research findings on equity policy and programs from Australia and around the world through the NCSEHE website
- provide research and statistical information to a wide range of stakeholders, including ministers, Departments of Education and Training and training authorities, Vocational Education and Training practitioners and providers, educational institutions, researchers, international agencies, industry skills councils, employer- and employee-based associations or organisations, and community organisations
- establish links with international organisations with similar objectives to foster
- enable comparative analysis and collaborations on issues of mutual interest.



**PROJECT ASSISTANT PROFILE**  
**Mr Eric Huynh**

I am currently a final year undergraduate student, and expect to graduate with a degree in Spatial Sciences, majoring in Geographic Information Science. I am involved in the Student Equity

Data Visualisation and Mapping project as a Project Assistant. This involves developing a user-interactive web map, enabling users to visualise and interrogate data based on student equity in the Australian higher education sector by generating reports, graphs and charts for universities in Australia.

The NCSEHE is committed to the dissemination of equity performance data in the Australian higher education system. It is collating and updating existing data sets as a part of the Student Equity Data Visualisation and Mapping project, with data and statistics relating to LSES and other key equity target groups. Collections of data sets covering key aspects of educational outcomes are being compiled, including:

- Official Higher Education Collections: a primary release of data on 2012 equity performance in Australian higher education from the Australian Government Department of Education. It is envisaged that this document will be updated in 2014 with the release of final data for 2013 and provide an ongoing platform for discussion of equity performance issues by the centre. We are also seeking to collect data on Australia-wide higher education admissions from the Australian Government Department of Education.
- National longitudinal surveys with educational components (key educational and socio-economic data bases), enabling researchers to track transitions between school and post-compulsory education:
  - Longitudinal Study of Australian Youth: A longitudinal survey, established in 1995, which tracks school students through secondary and tertiary education and into the workforce until age 25.
  - Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey: The HILDA survey is Australia's key household-based panel survey. Commencing in 2001 with 7,682 households and reporting every year, the survey collects data on the work, life, and educational activities of individual household members.
- Collections relating to educational outcomes prior to university entrance, and the links between entrance pathways and achievement in higher education. These include a proposal to analyse data from The Raine Study, a longitudinal study of child development and health which commenced with data on 2,500 children born at the public King Edward Memorial Hospital between 1989–1991 in Western Australia, following them into adulthood. The Raine data set includes information on education participation and performance and provides a uniquely rich data set for examining transitions in the education system in Western Australia. It also includes socio-economic data such as income, occupation, postcode, potential Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) scores and higher education data (participation), and work force participation now that the participants are in their early twenties. Access to data from the MySchool collection, the National Assessment Program – Numeracy and Literacy tests, TISC results and administrative records on student progress from a number of higher education providers is also being pursued.

Having identified a large number and wide variety of data sources relevant to student equity, the Program 3 staff are currently developing an organising framework which will overlay the Student Data database. The framework provides an audit of existing available datasets, including content and access arrangements, and maps these to key research questions and policy issues within the context of the existing theoretical and empirical literature.

Once developed, updating the framework will be an ongoing function as new datasets are identified or become available, and it is hoped that input from stakeholders will contribute to this process. The focus of work for the Program 3 staff will shift from one of monitoring existing data sources to a more proactive role in driving the research agenda. This will include identifying critical knowledge gaps and providing recommendations on how these can be addressed with existing data; how improvements can be made to existing data collections and access arrangements or what data needs to be collected; and soliciting feedback from stakeholders on their data needs. The analyses of priority topics identified may be addressed internally, or facilitated through external collaboration, such as through the through the Student Equity in Higher Education Research Grants Program.

Work is also underway to establish the Student Equity Data Visualisation and Mapping website, and associated back-end architecture, attached to the NCSEHE website. This project will provide an online hub for the collection and presentation of national student equity data and eventually, other survey data collections on student transition to higher education. It will allow users to examine the geographical nature of higher education enrolment data, in terms of institutions, institutional groupings, and key equity groups.

Discussions commenced in October 2013 on the technical requirements of the site, resulting in a feasibility strategy and commencement plan. The project commenced in February 2014, and employs an undergraduate student from Curtin’s School of Spatial Sciences, Mr Eric Huynh, who has been employed under Curtin’s ‘Earn While You Learn’ program. Ultimately, the key features of the Student Equity Data Visualisation and Mapping site page will include:

- presentation of data on student equity performance in higher education, enabling data-driven policy research on equity policy and programs from around Australia. This will include institutional, institutional grouping and state/territory comparisons of equity performance both in a single year and across time
- a mapping feature which will allow the graphical representation of student enrolment data by geographical location (i.e. location of permanent address in comparison to a campus) as well as key equity measures
- additional graphic representations of data, such as Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census and collections data on state/territory and regional demographic and economic trends in Australia as they relate to higher education and equity policy.

A model of higher educational access based on family-level data from the HILDA survey has been developed as a cross-validation of the postcode-based measures of socio-economic status that currently form the basis for equity quotas, and will form the basis of upcoming assessments under the analysis function.



**DOCTORAL STUDENT PROFILE**  
**Mr Don Boyd**

I have extensive experience in school education with a focus on regional and remote delivery, in particular policy development associated with equity issues, distance education and the use of information and

communications technology to overcome geographic disadvantage. I am interested in research focused on the use of technology as a means of building teacher and school leadership capacity in non-metropolitan locations, attracting and retaining quality teachers to country schools, and access and participation by regional and remote residents in higher education.



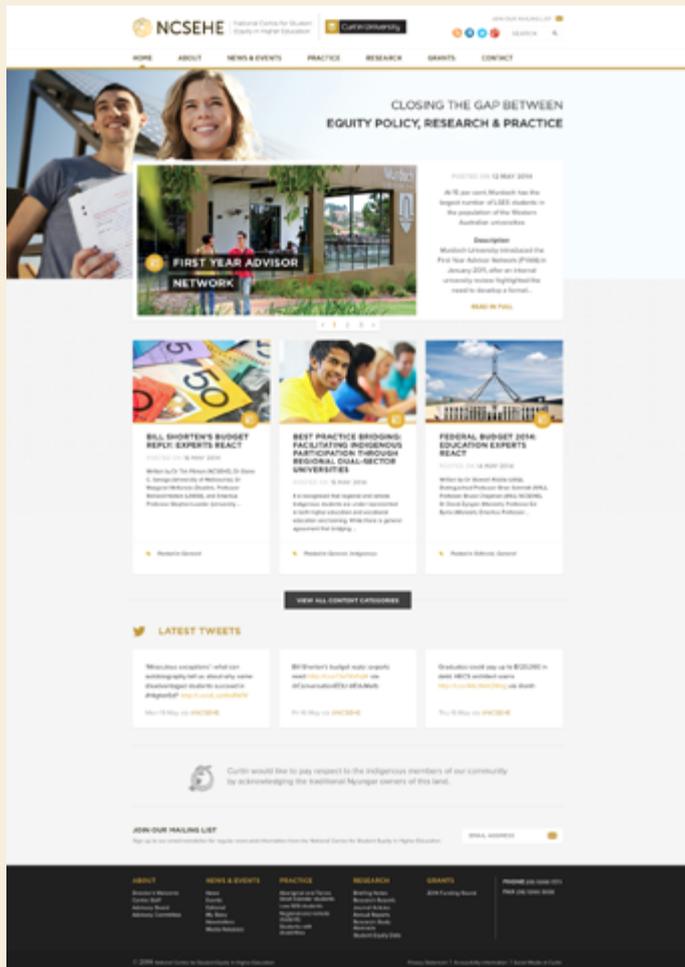
**DOCTORAL STUDENT PROFILE**  
**Mrs Jenny de Vries**

I am currently a full-time doctoral student within the National Centre and my research aims to develop an evaluation framework for equity initiatives conducted within the higher education sector. I am using

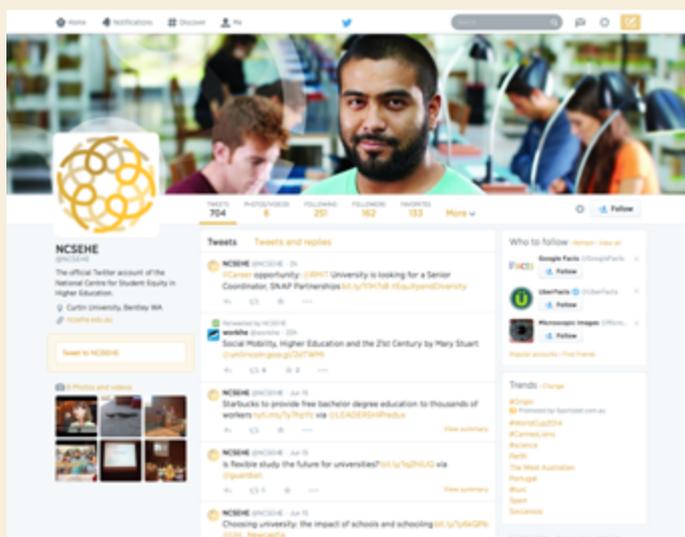
Curtin University as a case study for my research. My previous research was qualitative and situated in the field of education. The research was set within the secondary school sector and examined the relationship between professional learning and the integration of information and communications technology in the classroom. I also have a professional background in primary education and banking and finance.

# OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

A core initiative of the centre is to build a national and international presence. During its first year of operation it generated media attention with an estimated value of \$201,087.



<http://www.ncsehe.edu.au/>



<http://twitter.com/NCSEHE/>

The launch of the centre's new brand and website in September 2013 was one of the core initiatives designed to build our national and international presence.

The centre's new branding and marketing collateral are designed to convey the NCSEHE's ethos of inclusivity and diversity. They also convey that the NCSEHE team is an approachable group of people who certainly welcome feedback on our efforts and always appreciate when people and organisations connect with us.

During its first year of operation, the NCSEHE has generated media attention with an estimated value of \$201,087 (iSentia mediaportal), and been featured in *The Australian*, and on ABC Radio and Television, Triple J and Curtin FM.



## STAFF PROFILE Mrs Louisa Bowman

I have been the centre's Media and Communications Officer since its arrival at Curtin University in 2013. I was the first person in my family to attend university in 2004 and now hold two bachelor degrees, one in marketing and one in accounting and taxation. I have over 12 years professional experience in marketing and communications, business development and tax accounting. In addition to my media and communications responsibilities, I am assisting the centre with the Equity Performance Framework for Australian Higher Education project.

Establish  
Centre Profile

 Generate  
Support

 Provide  
Value

### Media

In the past year we have posted 152 news and events items, and 42 publications to the website. Our online presence has already grown to 30,423 website visits from 17,175 unique visitors, and 295 eNews subscribers. The centre published its first eNews edition on 18 October 2013, and has published 12 eNews editions to date, available online at [ncsehe.edu.au/news-events/newsletters/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/news-events/newsletters/).

The centre's website is featured on a number of third party sites, including:

- University of East London [uel.ac.uk/continuum/partnerships/](http://uel.ac.uk/continuum/partnerships/)
- Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia [ephea.org/#!current-issues/c144f](http://ephea.org/#!current-issues/c144f)

- Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth [aracy.org.au/newsletters/id/343/idString/uzeqb23982](http://aracy.org.au/newsletters/id/343/idString/uzeqb23982)
- VOCEdplus [voiced.edu.au/content/ngv60425](http://voiced.edu.au/content/ngv60425)
- Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training [adcet.edu.au/View.aspx?id=6372](http://adcet.edu.au/View.aspx?id=6372)
- Australian Council for Educational Research [rd.acer.edu.au/article/a-clearer-picture-equity-in-higher-education?](http://rd.acer.edu.au/article/a-clearer-picture-equity-in-higher-education?)

The centre's social media accounts include:

- Twitter: @NCSEHE
- Google+: [plus.google.com/+NcseheEduAu/](https://plus.google.com/+NcseheEduAu/)
- LinkedIn: [group.linkedin.com/groups/National-Centre-Student-Equity-in-5101326](http://group.linkedin.com/groups/National-Centre-Student-Equity-in-5101326)
- LinkedIn: [company page.linkedin.com/company/national-centre-for-student-equity-in-higher-education/](http://company.page.linkedin.com/company/national-centre-for-student-equity-in-higher-education/)
- Slideshare: [slideshare.net/NCSEHE](http://slideshare.net/NCSEHE).

### Top 10 downloads from NCSEHE website

	TITLE	AUTHOR/S	URL
1	Widening Participation in Australian Higher Education	Professor Trevor Gale and Dr Stephen Parker	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/widening-participation-australian-higher-education/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/widening-participation-australian-higher-education/</a>
2	Student Equity in Higher Education Research Grants Program 2014 Funding Round: Instructions for Applicants and Proposal Template	NCSEHE	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/grants/2014-funding-round/">ncsehe.edu.au/grants/2014-funding-round/</a>
3	Overcoming Adversity Among LSES Students: A Study of Strategies for Retention	Ms Ameera Karimshah, Dr Marianne Wyder, Associate Professor Paul Henman, Mr Dwight Tay, Ms Elizabeth Capelin and Dr Patricia Short	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/overcoming-adversity-among-low-ses/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/overcoming-adversity-among-low-ses/</a>
4	Access and Participation in Higher Education: Outreach   Access   Support	NCSEHE	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/access-participation-higher-education/">ncsehe.edu.au/access-participation-higher-education/</a>
5	The Effect of the 2014-15 Federal Budget's Higher Education Proposals on Students	Mr Paul Koshy, Dr Tim Pitman and Professor John Phillimore	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/effect-2014-15-budgets-higher-education-proposals-students">ncsehe.edu.au/effect-2014-15-budgets-higher-education-proposals-students</a>
6	Measuring and Improving the Effectiveness and Responsiveness of Deakin University's Inclusive Support Programs	Professor Karen Starr and Ms Jackie Ingleby	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/measuring-improving-effectiveness-inclusive-support/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/measuring-improving-effectiveness-inclusive-support/</a>
7	Crossing Cultural Borders - A Journey Towards Understanding and Celebration in Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Australian Contexts (PhD Thesis)	Dr Marianne McLaughlin	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/crossing-cultural-borders/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/crossing-cultural-borders/</a>
8	Targets for LSES Participation in Australian Higher Education: Geographical Measures and State Boundaries	Mr Paul Koshy	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/chapter-13-traditional-culture-identity-promote-wellbeing-indigenous-australians/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/chapter-13-traditional-culture-identity-promote-wellbeing-indigenous-australians/</a>
9	Do Traditional Culture and Identity Promote the Wellbeing of Indigenous Australians? Evidence from the 2008 NATSISS (book chapter)	Associate Professor Mike Dockery	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/chapter-13-traditional-culture-identity-promote-wellbeing-indigenous-australians/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/chapter-13-traditional-culture-identity-promote-wellbeing-indigenous-australians/</a>
10	Recognising Lifelong and Life-Wide Learning to Achieve Bradley's Participation and Equity Targets for Australian Higher Education	Dr Tim Pitman and Winthrop Professor Lesley Vidovich	<a href="http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/recognising-lifelong-and-life-wide-learning/">ncsehe.edu.au/publications/recognising-lifelong-and-life-wide-learning/</a>

**People**

Our roundtable on ‘Research on Student Equity in Higher Education’, held at the ANU in Canberra on 4 November 2013, provided insight from some of Australia’s leading student equity experts, and was instrumental in defining our research priorities. Connecting researchers and practitioners continues to be invaluable as we progress our work. The 2013 EPHEA Conference enabled us to meet many of Australia’s higher education equity practitioners and to hear about the results being achieved in their universities. It was at this conference that we launched our case study publication, *Access and Participation in Higher Education: Outreach | Access | Support*, a document showcasing the outstanding work of many of these equity practitioners. We have received positive feedback on the publication from equity practitioners and members of our various stakeholder groups. We are looking forward to beginning work on our follow up publication later this year, which will focus on successful intra- and inter-institution partnerships.

International connections have also been pursued, with the NCSEHE connecting with the Continuum Research Centre at the University of East London; the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change based in Glasgow; the Wales Centre for Equity in Education based at the University of Wales; and the Equity Alliance based in the US.

Collaborations and meetings during our first year of operation have included:

- Associate Professor David Gibson (Director Learning Engagement, Curtin University), 31 July 2013, on international trends and comparisons with equity centres in the US
- Dr Carla Houkamau (Senior Researcher and Lecturer, University of Auckland), 6 November 2013
- Mr Michael Luckman (Senior Data Analyst, Access and Achievement Research Unit, La Trobe University), 12 November 2013
- Ms Sarah Butrymowicz (Staff Writer, Herchinger Report, New York), 10 February 2014, NCSEHE. This resulted in two articles:
  - [time.com/90399/how-australia-beats-the-u-s-for-graduating-low-income-college-students/](http://time.com/90399/how-australia-beats-the-u-s-for-graduating-low-income-college-students/)
  - [hechingerreport.org/content/australia-beating-u-s-graduating-first-generation-low-income-college-students\\_15832/](http://hechingerreport.org/content/australia-beating-u-s-graduating-first-generation-low-income-college-students_15832/)
- Workshop: ‘Understanding the gaps between first year students’ expectations and experiences may help you bridge them’, Murdoch University, 17 February 2014
- Professor Anita Lee Hong (Director, Oodgeroo Unit, Queensland University of Technology) and Mr Lone Pearce (Project Officer, Oodgeroo Unit, Queensland University of Technology), 20 March 2014, regarding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Social Marketing Strategy and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Portal Project
- Workshops: ‘Effective teaching and support of students from low socio-economic backgrounds: Resources for Australian higher education’ and ‘Good practice for safeguarding student learning engagement in higher education institutions’ The University of Western Australia, 26 March 2014
- Discussion Group: ‘Working with remote on-line students’, 27 May 2014.

Looking forward, we will continue to focus on providing value for our stakeholders, further developing strategic links, and, of course, work to close the gap between equity policy, research and practice.



**PUBLICATIONS**

1. Cupitt, C. & Trinidad, S. (under review), "Assessing Online Engagement of First Year Students in Humanities," *The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education*.
2. Curtin University (2014), "A New Home for National Centre," *CITE*, 22, 3.
3. Curtin University (2014), "Equity Rules in Higher Education," *R&D NOW*, Summer 2013/2014, 10.
4. Dockery, A.M. (2014), "Australian Indigenous Peoples" in Michalos, A.C. (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*, Springer, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, pp 309-314 (ISBN 978-94-007-0752-8).
5. Dockery, A.M. (2013), "Cultural Dimensions of Indigenous Participation in Education and Training: New Perspectives," Research Report, National Vocational Education and Training Research Program, *National Centre for Vocational Education Research*, Adelaide.
6. Koshy, P. (2014), "Student Equity Performance in Australian Higher Education: 2007 to 2012," *National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education*, Perth. [ncsehe.edu.au/publications/student-equity-performance-australian-he-2007-2012/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/publications/student-equity-performance-australian-he-2007-2012/).
7. NCSEHE (2013), "Access and Participation in Higher Education: Outreach | Access | Support". Distributed at *EPHEA Conference*, November 2013, available in hardcopy upon request via the NCSEHE website, and in soft copy (PDF) via the NCSEHE website.
8. NCSEHE (December, 2013), "Demand Driven System Review Submission," Australian Government Demand Driven System Review website. [submissions.deewr.gov.au/forms/demand-driven-funding-system/pages/item?SubmissionID=DFS1400024](http://submissions.deewr.gov.au/forms/demand-driven-funding-system/pages/item?SubmissionID=DFS1400024).
9. Phillimore, J. & Koshy, P. (2013), "Commonwealth Infrastructure Funding for Australian Universities: 2004 - 2011," *Australian Universities' Review*, 55(2), pp. 99-104.
10. Pitman, T. (under review), "Understanding 'Fairness' in Student Selection: Are There Differences and Does it Make a Difference Anyway?," *Studies in Higher Education*.
11. Pitman, T. (under review), "Unlocking the Gates to the Peasants: Will Policies of 'Fairness' or 'Inclusion' do More for Equity in Higher Education?," *Cambridge Journal of Education*.
12. Pitman, T. (under review), "Conceptualising Mass Education as a Threat to Higher Education Quality: The Australian Experience and its Implications for Global Higher Education Policy," *Quality in Higher Education*.
13. Pitman, T., Koshy, P. & Phillimore, J. (accepted), "Does Accelerating Access to Higher Education Lower its Quality? The Australian Experience," *Higher Education Research and Development*.
14. Pitman, T. & Vidovich, L. (under review). "Australian Universities' RPL Policies and Practices: Strategic 'Morphing' of Quality and Equity Discourses," in Childs, M., Keppell M. & Reushle S. (Eds) *Open Learning and Formal Credentialing in Higher Education: Curriculum Models and Institutional Policies*, Advances in Educational Marketing, Administration, and Leadership (AEMAL) Book Series.
15. Trinidad, S., Sharplin, E., Ledger, S. & Broadley, T. (2014), "Connecting for Innovation: Four Universities Collaboratively Preparing Pre-service Teachers to Teach in Rural and Remote Western Australia," *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 29(2), 1-13.

**Published Research and Opinion Pieces**

[theconversation.com/profiles/tim-pitman-10035/articles](http://theconversation.com/profiles/tim-pitman-10035/articles):

1. Pitman, T. "Can Aptitude Tests Pick the 'Right' Students for University?," 15 June 2013.
2. Pitman, T. "Capping Uni Funding Would be a Lose-Lose for Everyone," 9 November 2013.
3. Pitman, T. "Taking Over Universities: Will the Commonwealth be a Better Master than the States?," 17 December 2013.
4. Pitman, T. "Is Student Activism Dying in Australia's Universities?," 9 January 2014.
5. Pitman, T. "Our Expanded Higher Education Sector is Delivering, but Who Should Pay for it?," 6 February 2014.
6. Pitman, T. & Forsyth, H. "Should we Follow the German Way of Free Higher Education?," 18 March 2014.
7. Pitman, T. & Koshy, P. "Divided we Fall: Federal Government Pits Universities Against Students," 5 May 2014.
8. Riddle, S., Schmidt, B., Chapman, B., Zyngier, D., Byrne, E., Turner, G. & Pitman, T. "Federal Budget 2014: Education Experts React," 13 May 2014.
9. Pitman, T., Savage, G.C., McKenzie, M., Holden, R. & Leeder, S. "Bill Shorten's Budget Reply: Experts React," 15 May 2014.
10. Pitman, T., Phillimore, J. & Koshy, P. "Modelling Shows More Students Face Lifetime Debt Under Deregulated Fees," 29 May 2014.
11. Koshy, P., Phillimore, J. & Pitman, T. "Retraction and Corrected Modelling on Student Fees and Debts," 29 May 2014.



# ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

OUTREACH | ACCESS | SUPPORT

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## RESEARCHER PROFILE Dr Tim Pitman

I have worked in higher education since 1996, and in 2012 I completed my PhD in Education at The University of Western Australia. My PhD looked at the ways in which universities recognised non-traditional types of learning (such as work and life experience) for the purposes of credit and admission requirements, and whether or not this made them more accessible for non-traditional students. Post PhD, my research focus has remained on ways in which universities can become more accessible and equitable to disadvantaged students. Influencing public policy remains a critical goal for my research.

## Online Editorials

1. Henry, M. & Gopalkrishnan, C. (2013), "Building Quality Graduates from ALL Backgrounds" [ncsehe.edu.au/building-quality-graduates-backgrounds/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/building-quality-graduates-backgrounds/) 18 October 2013.
2. Kelly, M. (2014), "Will the Real Commonwealth Scholarships Please Stand Up?" [ncsehe.edu.au/will-real-commonwealth-scholarships-please-stand-up/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/will-real-commonwealth-scholarships-please-stand-up/) 29 May 2014.
3. Pitman, T. (2013), "From Faith to Fact: Measuring Student Equity Initiatives" [ncsehe.edu.au/faith-fact-measuring-student-equity-initiatives/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/faith-fact-measuring-student-equity-initiatives/) 28 October 2013.
4. Pitman, T. (2014), "Universities Would be Better Quality – if Only we Could Get Rid of the Students" [ncsehe.edu.au/universities-would-be-better-quality-if-only-we-could-get-rid-of-the-students/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/universities-would-be-better-quality-if-only-we-could-get-rid-of-the-students/) 21 January 2014.
5. Pitman, T. (2014), "How Fair are Australian Universities?" [ncsehe.edu.au/fair-australian-universities/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/fair-australian-universities/) 24 March 2014.
6. Trinidad, S. & Henry, M. (2014), "Demand Driven System Review: Lower-ATAR Students can Achieve" [ncsehe.edu.au/demand-driven-system-review-lower-atar-students-can-achieve/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/demand-driven-system-review-lower-atar-students-can-achieve/) 17 April 2014.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

1. Dockery, A.M. (2013), "Reconceptualising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mobility," *13th International Conference on Diversity in Organizations, Communities and Nations*, 26–28 June, Charles Darwin University, Darwin.
2. Dockery, A.M. (2014), "From School to Work to Culture to Happiness," Invited presentation to *Realising our Potential: Widening Participation Through Education and Training*, Research Forum, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 3 April, Melbourne Exhibition Centre.
3. Fletcher, S., Boyd, D. & Trinidad, S. (in preparation), "Regional Secondary School Students Study Choices: Planning Future Directions," *30th National SPERA Rural Education Conference, 3 Decades on: Reflections Upon Rural Education - Achievements, Challenges and Future Directions*, 1–3 October 2014, University of New England, Armidale.
4. Houkamau, C. & Dockery, A.M. (2014), "Cultural Identity and Wellbeing for Maori and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians," *Breaking Barriers in Indigenous Research and Teaching 50 Years On, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies National Indigenous Studies Conference*, 26–28 March, Canberra.
5. Koshy, P. & Boyd, D. (2013), "Rethinking Regional and Remote Participation in Higher Education: Challenges in WA and Curtin's Response," Break-out Session presentation *EPHEA Conference 2013*, 27 November 2013, University of Western Australia.
6. Phillimore, J. (2014), "Higher Education Policy Under the Rudd–Gillard Governments," *Public Policy Network Conference*, 31 January 2014, University of Canberra.
7. Trinidad, S. (2013), "Closing the Gap Between Equity Policy, Research and Practice," Keynote presentation *EPHEA Conference 2013*, 27 November 2013, University of Western Australia.
8. Trinidad, S. & Pitman, T. (2013), "Connecting with Practitioners," Break-out Session presentation *EPHEA Conference 2013*, 27 November 2013, University of Western Australia.
9. de Vries, J. (2013), "Understanding the Effectiveness of ICT Professional Learning Through the TPACK Conceptual Framework: A Case Study," *AACE EdMedia World Conference on Educational Media and Technology*, 24–28 June 2013, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.



Associate Professor Mike Dockery at the 2014 NCVER Realising Our Potential Research Forum

## Invited Speakers and NCSEHE Presentations

1. Boyd, D. (2014), "Knowledge and Knowledge Construction of Higher Education by Regional Secondary Students: Making Sense of University," PhD Candidacy Presentation, 5 May 2014, Curtin Executive Briefing Centre.
2. Büchler, S. (University of Bamberg) (2013), "Adult Education in Australia: Predictors and Outcomes," 1 August 2013, Curtin University.
3. Dockery, M. (2013), "Reconceptualising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mobility," 6 September 2013, Curtin Executive Briefing Centre.
4. Kelly, M. (Queensland University of Technology) (2014), "Social Justice and Universities: Policy, Partnerships and Politics," 14 March 2014, Curtin Executive Briefing Centre, [ncsehe.edu.au/mary-kelly-presents-social-justice-universities-policy-partnerships-politics/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/mary-kelly-presents-social-justice-universities-policy-partnerships-politics/).
5. Naylor, R. (Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne) (2014), "Developing a Critical Interventions Framework," 5 February 2014, Curtin Executive Briefing Centre. [ncsehe.edu.au/developing-critical-interventions-framework-presentation/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/developing-critical-interventions-framework-presentation/).
6. Pitman, T. (2014), "The Promises of Technology for Student-Centred Learning at University," Panel Session participation *Practice-Based Education Summit 2014*, 9 April 2014, The Education For Practice Institute, Sydney.
7. Thomas, D. (VEQ Pty Ltd) (2014), "The Q Test: Language-Free, Culture-Fair Assessment," 19 March 2014, Curtin Executive Briefing Centre, [ncsehe.edu.au/q-test-language-free-culture-fair-assessment/](http://ncsehe.edu.au/q-test-language-free-culture-fair-assessment/).



# VISITING FELLOWS

The NCSEHE appoints two visiting fellows each year. These recognised student equity and higher education experts spend two one-week incursions

at the centre working with research staff to progress specific projects.



**Dr Ryan Naylor** from the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE), University of Melbourne, was the NCSEHE's first visiting fellow. Dr Naylor is a graduate of the CSHE's Graduate Certificate of University Teaching. He also holds Bachelor degrees in Arts and Science, majoring in Philosophy, Linguistics and Biochemistry, an Honours degree in Biochemistry and a PhD in Pathology from the University of Melbourne. He is currently subject coordinator for Effective University Teaching, and teaches in the Project on Teaching and Learning and within the Masters of Tertiary Education Management.

Dr Naylor's research interests include developing a framework for the professionalisation of teaching at universities, and factors affecting the experience of off-campus PhD students at the University of Melbourne. He has recently completed a major project developing a critical interventions framework for equity in higher education.

Dr Naylor spent a week in February 2014 with staff in Perth, working with Doctoral student Mrs Jennifer de Vries comparing data sets between three university case studies. He will return to Perth for a second week visit in August/September 2014. The aim is to produce a project-level evaluation guide for equity practitioners to guide evaluation of university initiatives.



**Ms Mary Kelly** is the Equity Director at Queensland University of Technology. Her educational, public policy and advocacy expertise, developed initially through school teaching and leadership within the Teachers' Union, has been put to good use for the last 17 years in the higher education sector. Her focus has been on educational equity and inclusive curriculum, and on making student poverty, gender equity and anti-racism core issues for universities. She is a recognised leader for inter-university cooperation and collaboration.

Ms Kelly visited the centre in March 2014 to scope a new Partnerships in Higher Education project to be undertaken later in the year. This initiative will collect and describe current partnerships being undertaken by universities, focusing particularly on those aimed at widening participation, and which are sustained predominantly by HEPPP funding. It will result in the publication of a collection of case studies, and serve as a basis to examine a selected number of partnerships across Australia in more detail to elucidate the key factors that lead to successful partnerships and best practice working models.

# ADJUNCT PROFESSORS

Professor Robyn Quin and Professor Norma Jeffery were appointed as the centre's Adjunct Professors for 2014–2015. Adjunct Professors contribute their specific expertise to the NCSEHE through

consulting with staff and stakeholders as required, and advising on and contributing to particular activities in their areas of interest.



**Professor Robyn Quin** was Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) at Curtin University from May 2007 until July 2012. Her major responsibilities included teaching and learning, student administrative services, support services, equity and social justice, distance and e-learning, Indigenous studies, library services and the Curtin Vocational Education and Training Centre. She was previously Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) at Edith Cowan University (ECU) and was responsible for community engagement, public relations, corporate communications, marketing, student recruitment, alumni relations, graduations and philanthropy. Prior to that appointment she was Executive Dean, Faculty of Education and Arts, ECU, responsible for teaching, research and outreach for the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, School of Education, School of Humanities, School of Communications and Multimedia, and School of Contemporary Arts. She is currently a consultant in higher education.

While at ECU she secured an equity grant from the then Department of Employment Education and Training to raise awareness in LSES students in the ECU catchment area of university courses, study and life. During this period she addressed the Federation of Ethnic Councils of Australia on equity issues related to students with English as a second or other language.

At Curtin University she prepared the institution's successful submissions for HEPPP funding and led the equity initiatives from 2010–2012.

In 2014 in conjunction with the NCSEHE she managed the evaluation of the combined Victorian universities HEPPP-funded equity initiative LEAP (see details in Research Program 1).

**Adjunct Professor Norma Jeffery** was seconded to Curtin University in 2009 from the Western Australian Department of Education, to undertake research projects of mutual benefit and interest to the Western Australian Department of Education and Curtin University. The central theme of these has been equity and social inclusion issues for all years of schooling, with a particular focus on the impact of disadvantage on the transition from school to further education. The negative impact on achievement in schools with high concentrations of students from LSES backgrounds has underpinned research papers examining the factors that influence student access to university, strategies for improving eligibility for university entrance of students from LSES communities and equity issues and alternatives for university selection criteria.

Prior to that, Adjunct Professor Jeffery has had 40 years experience as an educator, including as the Chief Executive Officer of the Curriculum Council in Western Australia, leading the review of post-compulsory education and the development of the curriculum framework, and as acting Chief Executive Officer of the Western Australian Department of Education Services. She later had a senior executive position with the Western Australian Department of Education with responsibility for policy, planning and accountability for government schools.

We congratulate our Chair, the Hon. Fred Chaney, AO for having the honour of Senior Australian of the Year 2014 bestowed upon him on 26 January

2014, for his commitment to reconciliation and human rights.



NCSEHE one year anniversary event, June 2014

We congratulate our Chair, the **Hon. Fred Chaney, AO** for having the honour of Senior Australian of the Year 2014 bestowed upon him on 26 January 2014, for his commitment to reconciliation and human rights.

Mr Chaney's hard work in support of often-marginalised people has never faltered. As founding co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia and an early advocate for Aboriginal voting rights, his contribution includes establishing the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia and his national role as Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

For many years, Mr Chaney was Deputy President of the National Native Title Tribunal and, more recently, is Chair of Desert Knowledge Australia and chaired the Board of Central Desert Native Title Services. He was instrumental in establishing the Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation, which supports Indigenous young people to reach their potential.

This prestigious award generated significant interest through the centre with many requests for media interviews and messages of congratulations, which were forwarded to the Chair.

**Professor Sue Trinidad** has accepted the Curtin nomination for a Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning for the Australian Government's 2014 Office for Learning and Teaching Australian Awards for University Teaching.

Citations recognise and reward the diverse contributions made by individuals and teams to the quality of student learning. They are awarded to those who have made a significant contribution to the quality of student learning in a specific area of responsibility over a sustained period.

**Professor John Phillimore** was nominated in Curtin University's 2013 Research Awards. The Paul G Dunn Research Development Award aims to identify and recognise staff committed to excellence, leadership and innovation in support of Curtin's research activities. Professor Phillimore was subsequently a finalist, as a result of his efforts in successfully bringing two major research centres, the NCSEHE and the Bankwest Curtin Economic Centre, to Curtin University.

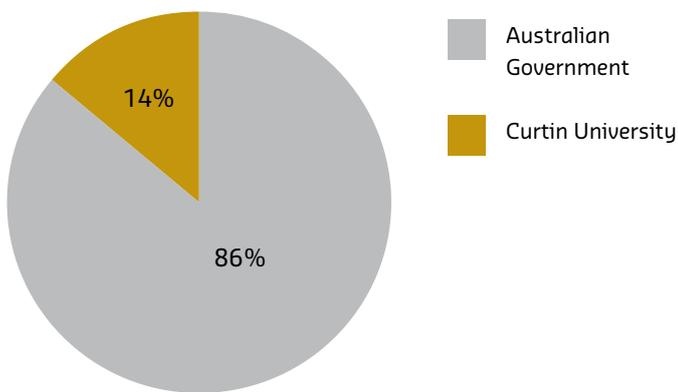
**Associate Professor Mike Dockery** has been nominated as an assessor for the Australian Research Council, proposals for Discovery Projects 2015.

# ADMINISTRATION

The NCSEHE receives its funding from the Australian Government Department of Education in stages. This funding is contingent on the successful attainment and completion of various

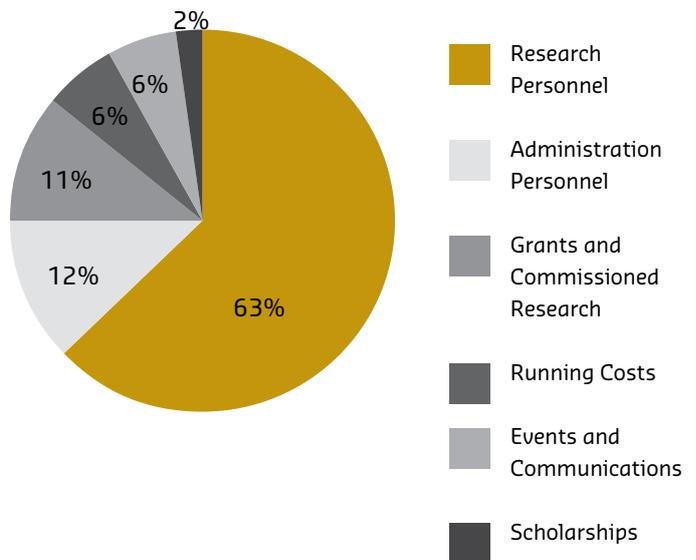
key performance indicators and milestones, detailed in reports prepared by NCSEHE Director Professor Sue Trinidad with the assistance of the Curtin University finance staff.

## INCOME



Income received by the centre in calendar years 2013 and 2014 amounted to \$2,460,733, including a \$694,903 cash contribution from Curtin University.

## EXPENDITURE



After one year of operation (to 2 June 2014) the centre has expended \$1,116,782, made up of wages, the first instalment payments for grants and commissioned research, with the next instalment following in the coming quarter, Doctoral scholarships, events and communication, and operational costs.

The NCSEHE operates with the equivalent of 3.7 full-time researcher employees, 1.0 full-time media and communications employee, and the equivalent of 0.2 full-time employees in administrative assistance.

Curtin University funds the centre's two Doctoral students and one Post-Doctoral research fellow.

On Curtin University's Bentley campus, the NCSEHE is located within Building 100 (Vice-Chancellor's Office) and has the use of a dedicated set of offices and meeting space.



Curtin University, Building 100

# MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The NCSEHE Advisory Board has an important role in the effective governance of the centre and is a source of expert advice. Membership is comprised

of stakeholder nominees from academia, government and industry, with one Curtin University representative.



**The Hon. Fred Chaney, AO (Chair)** served in the Senate until 1990 and was leader of the Opposition in the Senate from 1983–1990. He was Deputy President of the National Native Title Tribunal from 2000–2007, and served as Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia Ltd from 2000–2005. Mr Chaney was appointed as Officer of the Order of Australia in 1997 “for service to the Parliament of Australia and to the Aboriginal community through his contribution to the establishment of the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia and mediating with the National Native Title Tribunal”.



**Mr Craig Ritchie** is currently the Branch Manager of the Access and Participation Branch in the Research and Strategy Group of the Australian Government Department of Education. He has also held positions at the Awakabal Newcastle Aboriginal Co-operative, and served on the Boards of the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW and the National Aboriginal Community

Controlled Health Organisation. From 1999–2002 he was the Chief Executive Officer of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.



**Mr Paul Nicholls**, Director of Strategic Projects, nominee of Curtin University Deputy Vice-Chancellor R&D, Professor Graeme Wright, Curtin University. Mr Nicholls has a strong interest in developing outcomes-focused working relationships between education stakeholders and also in the development of evidence-based policy and programs that support all Australian students to

achieve their full potential. In his previous role as Director Science Partnerships at Scitech, Mr Nicholls established equity-related science education programs in LSES and remote and regional communities. In his current role, he has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate governance arrangements are in place for Curtin University research institutes and centres. Mr Nicholls is a Fellow, Leadership Western Australia and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Professor Colleen Hayward, AM** Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Education and Research and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous), Edith Cowan University. Professor Hayward’s policy and program activities always reflect the needs of minority groups at community, state and national levels. She received the Premier’s Multicultural Ambassador’s Award in 2006, and the

National NAIDOC Aboriginal Person of the Year Award in 2008. In 2012 she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for “service to tertiary education through administrative and research roles, to the advancement of the rights of Indigenous people, particularly in the areas of social welfare, law and justice and children’s health”.



**Winthrop Professor Carmen Lawrence**, School of Psychology, University of Western Australia. Dr Lawrence served in both State and Federal politics over a period of 21 years, including as the Western Australian Minister for Education and Aboriginal Affairs, and as the first woman Premier and Treasurer of a state government. At the federal level she was Minister for Health and Human Services,

and Minister assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women. She was elected national President of the Labor Party in 2004. She is now Director of the Centre for the Study of Social Change at The University of Western Australia, and Chair of the Australian Heritage Council.



**Professor Bruce Chapman, AM** Professor of Economics and Director, Policy Impact, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University. Professor Chapman is a renowned labour and education economist. His policy experience includes designing the Higher Education Contribution Scheme in 1988, as a senior economic adviser to Prime Minister Paul Keating from 1994–1996,

and as a consultant to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank. In 2001 Professor Chapman was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for “contributions to the development of economics, labour market and social policy”.



**Professor Kerri-Lee Krause**, University Australia Nominee, University of Western Sydney. Professor Krause's responsibilities focus on enhancing the quality of learning, teaching and academic quality across the University of Western Sydney. She is internationally recognised for her research on the contemporary undergraduate student experience and implications for quality and standards.



**Ms Milly Fels**, Vice-President, EPHEA, is Manager of Student Equity and Diversity, Students Group, at RMIT University. She is responsible for the university's *Equity and Social Inclusion Plan*, the embedding of inclusive strategies and systems supporting access and participation across RMIT, and the development of scaled and systemic social inclusion partnerships and impact analysis.



**Dr Nadine Zacharias**, past President, EPHEA, is an equity practitioner at Deakin University and her current work focuses on staff equity and diversity in the context of higher education. Her research interests include systemic inequities in employment in the higher education sector, the effectiveness of equity policy and program interventions on career progression, and work/life balance issues across the lifecycle.

# ACRONYM LIST

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ANU	Australian National University
ATEND	Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CSHE	Centre for the Study of Higher Education
DIICCSRTE	Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education
ECU	Edith Cowan University
EPHEA	Equity Practitioners in Higher Education
FACE	Forum for Access and Continuing Education
FTSE	Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences
HEPP	Higher Education Participation Program
HEPPP	Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program
HILDA	Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia
JCIPP	John Curtin Institute of Public Policy
LEAP	Learn, Experience, Access Professions
LSES	Low Socio-Economic Status
MOOC	Massively Open Online Course
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
NCSEHE	National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
R&D	Research and Development
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SPERA	Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia
TISC	Tertiary Institutions Service Centre

## Acknowledgements

This Annual Report could not be completed without the efforts of a dedicated team of people and the support of the Australian Government Department of Education and Curtin University.

Sincere thanks go to Mrs Louisa Bowman, the centre's Media and Communications Officer for coordinating the publication, to Dr Kitty Drok of Transmogrify for editing services and to Mr Ken Bowman of Lodestone Pty Ltd for graphic design.

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### **About Curtin**

Curtin University is widely recognised for practical research that is firmly focused on solving real-world problems. Underpinning Curtin's research endeavours are strong partnerships with industry, business and government, which result in outcomes that greatly benefit the broader community locally, nationally and globally. Curtin University has been listed in the prestigious Academic Ranking of World Universities 2013 (or Shanghai Jiao Tong) for the fifth year in a row. Maintaining this ranking over a number of years confirms the university's standing among the top 500 universities in the world.

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