EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

EMCRN
connecting researchers at ECU



ECU EMCR SYMPOSIUM 2026

PRESENTERS

Joondalup Campus
Building 32 Lecture Theatre
Tuesday 17 November
9.00am-4.30pm



Time	Program		
9.00 - 9.10am	**Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country** ECU Early and Mid-Career Researcher Network (EMCRN) Symposium Sub-Committee Co-Chair *Associate Professor Lesley Andrew, Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery*		
9.10 - 9.15am	**Outgoing EMCRN Committee Chair Welcome** ECU EMCRN Committee Activities and Achievements *Dr Syed Zulqarnain Gilani, Senior Lecturer, School of Science|*		
9.15 - 10.00am	**Keynote** Artificial Intelligence for Social Good: Bridging Research, Innovation, and Impact. *Professor Faisal Shafait, Associate Dean (Faculty of Computing), National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad Pakistan*		
10.00 - 11.00am	**Session 1**	**Presenter**	**School**
	When AI becomes the face of care: Why efficiency is not enough	Dr Shahid Hussain	Business and Law
	The Tan Lines of Empire: What Two Women Melting on a Beach Know About Paradise in So-Called Australia	Dr Jeremy Neideck	WAAPA
	Rethinking ontology for qualitative research: Going beyond lived experience	Dr Shajimon Peter	Arts and Humanities
	The Architecture of Hope: Designing Systems for People Who Have Experienced Trauma	Dr Jennifer Achari	Education
11.00 - 11.20am	**Morning Tea Break**		
11.20 - 12.20pm	**Session 2**	**Presenter**	**School**
	Smile, You're Checked In? Exploring Public Views on Facial Recognition at Events	Dr Eunjung Kim	Business and Law
	Grandparents, grandchildren and digital media	Dr Shantha Karthigesu	Kurongkurl Katitjin
	Do your genes change how your brain responds to Alzheimer's disease risk factors?	Dr Melissa Eccles	Medical and Health Sciences
	Supporting Midwives to Thrive: A Multi-Phase Study of Work-Life Balance and Workforce Sustainability	Dr Jaqueline Taylor	Nursing and Midwifery
12.20 - 1.00pm	**Lunch and Networking**		
1.00 - 1.10pm	**Presentation by Professor Paulo de Souza, ECU Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)** Vision for ECU Early and Mid-Career Researchers		

Time	Program		
1.10 - 1.40pm	**Panel Discussion: AI use in HDR supervision, article writing and review, and wider research activities** • Professor Chris Abbiss, Dean Graduate Research, ECU • Professor Josh Lewis, Professor of Cardiometabolic Health, Nutrition & Health Innovation Research Institute, ECU • Associate Professor Julia Morris, Associate Professor and Higher Degree by Research Coordinator, School of Education, ECU • Dr Sharon Matthews - Team Leader HDR Communications Advisers Centre for Learning and Teaching, ECU • Ms Michelle Duryea, Associate Director, Research Analytics, Systems and Performance, Research Services, ECU		
1.40 - 2.40pm	**Session 3**	**Presenter**	**School**
	When Major Customers Matter: Customer Concentration and the Speed of Adjustment of Cash Holdings	Dr Tony Nguyen	Business and Law
	Decarbonized Pavements: Synergistic Utilization of Biochar, Waste Plastics, and Mining By-Products for Sustainable Road Infrastructure	Dr Nuha Mashaan	Engineering
	Befriending as a Relational Recruitment Strategy: Engaging People Living with Dementia and Their Caregivers in Social Support Interventions	Dr Hien Thi Nguyen	Arts and Humanities
	Live Lighter Counter Messaging Suppresses Consumption Intentions Below Baseline After Targeted Junk Food Advertising	Dr Ross Hollett	Arts and Humanities
2.40 - 3.00pm	**Break**		
3.00 - 4.00pm	**Session 4**	**Presenter**	**School**
	Teacher Directed Violence (TDV): "I have always loved my job…but I have to leave"	Dr Madeleine Erskine	Education
	Changing the Conversation: The Birth Debriefing Project to Prevent Birth Trauma	Dr Kate Buchanan	Nursing and Midwifery
	Declined, displaced, or just harder to catch? Why marine heatwave management needs new sampling infrastructure, not better catch rate models	Dr Eben Afrifa-Yamoah	Science
	From Pixels to Patients: Digital Innovations in Bone Health	Dr Marion Mundt	Business and Law
4.00 - 4.30pm	**Presenter Awards and Networking** Joondalup Campus Building 32 Foyer		
4.30pm	**Event Close**		



AI Use in HDR supervision, article writing and review, and wider research activities

Panel Members

- **Professor Chris Abbiss,** Dean Graduate Research, ECU
- **Professor Josh Lewis,** Professor of Cardiometabolic Health, Nutrition & Health Innovation Research Institute, ECU
- **Associate Professor Julia Morris,** Associate Professor and Higher Degree by Research Coordinator, School of Education, ECU
- **Dr Sharon Matthews,** Team Leader HDR Communications Advisers Centre for Learning and Teaching, ECU
- **Ms Michelle Duryea,** Associate Director, Research Analytics, Systems and Performance, Research Services, ECU

Biographies



Professor Chris Abbiss

Chris Abbiss is Dean of Graduate Research at Edith Cowan University (ECU), where he leads the planning, governance and delivery of the University's Higher Degree by Research programs. He is also Professor of Exercise Physiology in ECU's School of Medical and Health Sciences. His research focuses on applied human physiology and exercise performance, including fatigue, thermoregulation, pacing, training and recovery. He has published more than 140 scientific journal articles and has attracted more than $9 million in competitive research funding. His research has involved collaborations with organisations including the Australian Institute of Sport and Western Australian Institute of Sport.



Professor Josh Lewis

Josh Lewis is Professor of Cardiometabolic Health and Research Program Lead with ECU's Nutrition & Health Innovation Research Institute. His research focuses on the relationship between bone and vascular health, particularly vascular calcification and its role in cardiovascular disease. A National Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellow, he leads research aimed at identifying disease before clinical symptoms develop so that nutrition and lifestyle interventions can help prevent heart attacks and strokes. His work encompasses epidemiology, clinical trials, chronic disease testing, healthy ageing and postgraduate research supervision and has attracted more than $17 million in competitive funding.



Associate Professor Julia Morris

Julia Morris is an Associate Professor and Higher Degree by Research Coordinator in ECU's School of Education and an Honorary Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Her research focuses on applied evaluation and the use of evidence to inform educational practice, with particular interests in learning environments, student engagement and applied research evaluation. She is also Director of the ECU Hub of the Learning Environments Applied Research Network (LEaRN), which investigates relationships between physical learning spaces, teachers and learners. She completed her PhD at ECU and has received recognition including the WA Institute for Educational Research Early Career Award.



Dr Sharon Matthews

Sharon Matthews is Team Leader, HDR Communication Adviser within ECU's Centre for Learning and Teaching. She works within the University's HDR communication adviser team, which provides specialised support for Higher Degree by Research candidates, with her portfolio including the School of Arts and Humanities and School of Business and Law. Her work is centred on supporting research students in communicating their research effectively and developing the academic communication skills required during candidature. She has also contributed to scholarship examining student learning support, including approaches to online self-access support in higher education.



Michelle Duryea

Michelle Duryea, MAICD, Fellow of ARMS, is Associate Director, Research Analytics, Systems and Performance within ECU's Research Services. She leads work supporting the University's research performance through quality data, analytics and research administration systems, including research performance reporting and major institutional research submissions. She has more than 19 years' experience in research management and has contributed extensively to the Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS) and the wider research management profession. In 2024, she received the ARMS Janet Dibb-Leigh Award for Distinguished Service to Research Management, the Society's highest honour, recognising her exceptional contribution to the profession.

Our Presenters



Shahid Hussain

I am a lecturer at Edith Cowan University with more than 15 years of academic and industry experience. My research examines how AI-mediated interactions reshape consumer-brand relationships, ethical decision-making, consumer vulnerability, and wellbeing. My broader interests include responsible and conversational AI, marketing analytics, sustainability, and consumer responses to product controversies. My work has appeared in journals including Technovation, the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, and the Journal of Product & Brand Management. I have secured internal research funding and led ethics-approved projects involving international collaborators.



Jeremy Neideck

Jeremy Neideck is a performance maker and academic who has worked between Australia and Korea for over two decades, investigating the interweaving of cultures in performance, the intersection of queer identities and theory, and the modelling of new and inclusive social realities. He is Course Coordinator of the Bachelor of Performing Arts at WAAPA and holds a PhD from QUT. His theatre works, including 지하 Underground, Deluge, and 심청 Shimchong, have toured Australia and Korea. He is currently undertaking a book project about queer artists in so-called Australia who build, and sometimes deliberately wreck, their own paradises.



Shajimon Peter

Dr Shajimon Peter is senior lecturer of Social Work whose research focuses on critical realism, qualitative research methods, climate justice, transnational social work, and leadership. His work explores complex social issues through theoretically informed and practice-oriented research, with a particular interest in advancing methodological rigour and social justice in social work research and practice. Shajimon's recent work (2026) on critical realism informed emancipatory social research has received 5 recommendations on Research Gate, 3501 reads, and 9 citations. Shajimon and his colleagues received $892362 funding from DFES and $362071 from Lottery West for their current research on climate justice.



Jennifer Achari

Dr Jennifer Achari researches how education systems respond to complex trauma. Her national research spans multi-tiered systems of support, trauma-transformative initial teacher education, student wellbeing in Western Australia's Curriculum and Re-engagement in Education (CaRE) schools, and why so many people with lived experience of trauma are drawn to work in education. Twenty years as a teacher, deputy principal and head of school ground these questions. Because adversity is so widespread, her wider ambition is to embed hope in the design of any system that holds people who have lived through it.



Eunjung Kim

Dr Eunjung Kim is a Senior Lecturer in Event Management at Edith Cowan University, Australia. Her research focuses on event management, volunteering, business events, and the ethical adoption of emerging technologies, particularly facial recognition technology (FRT) in events. She has published journal articles in top-ranked international journals, secured approximately AUD $62,000 in competitive research funding, and received the 2023 CAUTHE Fellows Award for significant contributions to Hospitality, Tourism and Events Education. Her FRT research has resulted in two journal publications and has been presented internationally in Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, and Australia, contributing to global discussions on innovation, ethics, and sustainable event management.



Shantha Karthigesu

Dr Shantha Karthigesu is a Senior Lecturer at Kurongkurl Katitjin, Edith Cowan University, whose interdisciplinary research examines how intergenerational relationships shape child health, wellbeing, and development. Drawing on human evolutionary ecology, anthropology, psychology, and public health, she uses mixed-methods approaches to investigate the influence of parents, grandparents, and broader family networks on children's outcomes. Her research interests include Indigenous health, infant nutrition, breastfeeding, family caregiving, and digital childhoods. As an Associate Investigator with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child, she contributes to research exploring children's digital technology use across diverse caregiving environments.



Melissa Eccles

Dr Melissa Eccles is a postdoctoral research fellow with the Collaborative Genomics and Translation Group in the Centre for Precision Health. She joined ECU in early 2026. Melissa completed her PhD at Curtin University in 2023, before postdoctoral work at University of Edinburgh. Her work focuses on brain cell responses in Alzheimer's disease. At ECU, she uses human brain cells to test how a person's genes shape their response to lifestyle risk factors, laying the groundwork for personalised dementia prevention. Melisa also supports this work with a dementia advocacy group who aids in decision framework co-design to guide her research.



Jacqueline Taylor

I am a Lecturer in Midwifery at Edith Cowan University (ECU) and a Registered Nurse, Midwife, and Child Health Nurse with extensive clinical and academic experience. I am currently undertaking a PhD, with research focused on workforce retention, midwifery mentorship, and planetary health. My work explores strategies to strengthen workforce sustainability, support professional development, and promote environmentally responsible healthcare. I am passionate about evidence-based education, mentoring, and research, and committed to advancing midwifery practice and improving outcomes for health professionals, women, infants, and families.



Tony Nguyen

Tony is a Lecturer in Finance at ECU's School of Business and Law. He completed his PhD in 2020 and, before joining ECU, worked as a lecturer at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, for more than three years. His research focuses on corporate finance, cash holdings, capital structure, supply-chain relationships and financial policy. He has published in Accounting & Finance, Emerging Markets Review, Global Finance Journal and Research in International Business and Finance, among others. Tony chaired a session at NZFC 2022, helped organise NZFC 2019 and VSBF 2026, and reviews for international journals.



Nuha S. Mashaan

My research centers on circular economy solutions for transportation infrastructure—specifically developing eco-friendly asphalt binders through the upcycling of waste plastics, biochar, and mining industry by-products. My work explores rheological behavior, structural performance, and environmental sustainability to advance low-carbon, durable pavement technologies. Decarbonizing road infrastructure using mining waste, biochar, and waste plastics involves substituting high-emission virgin materials with circular byproducts. This approach locks carbon into pavements, reduces landfill volumes, and cuts manufacturing temperatures.



Ross Hollett

Dr Ross Hollett is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology and Course Coordinator at Edith Cowan University, with research expertise in health communication, advertising effects, and consumer behaviour. His work focuses on how targeted media environments shape health related attitudes and behaviours, with a particular emphasis on junk food advertising, body image, and public health counter messaging. Dr Hollett uses experimental research designs to evaluate real world health promotion campaigns and generate evidence to inform policy, funding, and large scale implementation. He has a strong interest in translating behavioural science into practical public health solutions and readily collaborates with health agencies and educators.



Madeleine Erskine

Madeleine Erskine is a lecturer at Edith Cowan University working in the School of Education. Her background is in psychology and education. She has been teaching for over 25 years and after completing her PhD last year, she is beginning her journey as an early career researcher interested in teacher directed violence, teacher well-being and school climate



Kate Buchanan

My research focus is Midwifery ethics, role and scope, and perinatal mental health. Resulting from my research (PhD awarded 2023, a co-designed project), I have led policy development at the tertiary hospital level and internationally; the update of International Code of Ethics for midwives. I am supervising seven HDR students with one completion. My Scopus h-index is 8, citations 200 and Field Weighted citation Impact is 1.85. Performance indicators: Outputs in top 10% (14.3) 100 % Publications in top 10% journal. As a CI I have recently been awarded a MRFF of 2.5 million.



Eben Afrifa-Yamoah

Dr. Eben Afrifa-Yamoah is a Senior Lecturer and the convenor for the Mathematical Applications and Data Analytics Research Group in the School of Science. Eben is a statistical data scientist who provides broad consultation on multidisciplinary research projects. He develops innovative statistical methods for analysing complex, high-dimensional data sets, particularly in medical and environmental sciences. His research integrates advanced techniques in high-dimensional data analysis, machine learning, causal inference, spatiotemporal modeling, and psychometrics to address societal challenges.



Marion Mundt

Dr Marion Mundt is a Research Fellow at the Nutrition and Health Innovation Research Institute at Edith Cowan University and the computer science lead within the Fall Free Future program. She completed her PhD in Biomechanics at the German Sport University Cologne and RWTH Aachen University. Her research combines artificial intelligence with large-scale health and imaging data to develop tools that predict physical function and identify people at risk of mobility decline and falls. In 2025, she was awarded a Raine Priming Grant to develop machine learning models that predict trajectories of physical function during ageing.

ECU EARLY AND MID-CAREER RESEARCHER NETWORK
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