





Credits

Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute
Annual Report 2018

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Prof Lars Coenen delivers the 2018 MSSI Oration. Pictured here answering audience questions with Prof Kate Auty.



From the Director

Our 2018 Annual Report reflects another busy year of engagement and activity from Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute (MSSI), including bringing on board new staff and partners, hosting a range of exciting events, initiating numerous innovative projects, and bidding some farewells also.

In January we welcomed Sangeetha Chandrashekeran and Janine Campbell to the MSSI Executive as Deputy Director and Executive Officer respectively. We also welcomed Stan Krpan, CEO of Sustainability Victoria, and John Bradley, Secretary of the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning, to the MSSI Advisory Board. MSSI was thrilled to have environmental designer, ecological educator and co-ordinator of the permaculture concept David Holmgren join our Associates program in 2018. David helped launch *Degrowth in the Suburbs: a Radical Urban Imaginary*, authored by Samuel Alexander and myself, and MSSI looks forward to exploring opportunities for collaboration with David and our network of partners into the future.

In line with our remit as a portal for sustainability research, MSSI hosted a range of events throughout 2018 that brought together University of Melbourne researchers, and the external communities we serve, in innovative discourses around the future state of things. Among our highlights, in July MSSI hosted the launch of Nature Sustainability, a monthly online journal from the Nature stable publishing the best research on sustainability from the natural and social sciences. In October MSSI hosted an evening with Aote Tong, the former President of Kiribati and one of the world's leading voices for climate justice, who spoke compellingly about climate challenges impacting the Pacific and the concept of migration with dignity. We rounded out the year with the MSSI Oration, wherein Prof Lars

Coenen delivered a thought-provoking message on resilience in the face of the sustainability crisis, and whether 'Innovation is the Problem or the Solution'?

It is with sadness we note the passing of Prof Patrick Troy AC in July 2018. Pat was an esteemed academic, engineer, town planner and passionate advocate for better cities in Australia. He was also an important influence in MSSI's formative years, and the author of MSSI's first Issues Paper *Melbourne Sustainability*, as well as a close personal friend and mentor who is sorely missed.

Prof Brendan Gleeson, Director MSSI



About Us

As one of the University of Melbourne's flagship Interdisciplinary Research Institutes, MSSI's mission is twofold – to build ambition and activity across the University's faculties and disciplines in sustainability-focused research, and to be a portal to the outside world for translating and disseminating sustainability knowledge that builds a platform for addressing the critical issues of our time.

Within the University, MSSI works horizontally across the inevitable silos of an expansive and busy organisation. The Institute brings together highly talented researchers from all corners of the University, from humanities, social sciences, education and the arts, through to the 'harder' sciences and STEM related disciplines, facilitating communication flow and helping build unique and effective collaborations. MSSI is a conduit for focusing the University's collective energies and expertise on the wicked problems confounding our progress toward a sustainable future, and as such is an important component of the University's Grand Challenges strategy around supporting sustainability and resilience.

Alongside fostering internal connectivity among researchers, MSSI plays an important role in activating

the depth of the University's academic strength through brokering external partnerships that share a focus on securing a fair and sustainable future. These relationships are important at all levels, with local community, state, national and global connections each representing a vital component of MSSI's stakeholder profile.

Research translation and science communication are further critical functions of MSSI's engagement efforts. Elevating the work of our collaborators forms an important part of the Institute's engagement remit, as does clear messaging around sustainability issues with communities beyond academia.

As MSSI celebrates our tenth year of operation we are excited to draw on the strength of the MSSI team, our research collaborators, partners, and the communities we serve to face the complex challenges impacting the planet and our ongoing relationship with it. MSSI's well established work in cities and climate is complemented by evolving collaborations in fresh water and sustainable food research, and we look forward to bringing our expertise and energy to these focus areas and others that emerge as we work collectively and collaboratively toward a better future.

Our strategic objectives are to:

- Build institutional research capacity by catalysing, facilitating, promoting, and acting as 'match maker' for research activity and new partnerships in relevant fields
- Provide a portal and high profile point of contact into the relevant fields of research expertise at the University of Melbourne
- Grow the university's reputation as a site of and leader in accessible, important and relevant research through the development of a unified Melbourne Interdisciplinary Research Institute (MIRI) brand
- Actively generate increased external income for research at the University of Melbourne.



MSSI team from left: John Wiseman, Linh Do, Caroline Veldhuizen, Sophie Jackson, Janet Stanley, Laura Schuijers, Tracy Painter, Alexei Trundle, Stephanie Campbell, Seona Candy, Lars Coenen, Sebastian Fastenrath, Brendan Gleeson, Samuel Alexander, Janine Campbell, Don Henry, Sangeetha Chandrashekeran, Simone Robinson and Claire Denby.



Our Team

MSSI’s excellence is built on the foundation of highly dedicated and talented staff, committed to the shared vision of being an international research leader and catalyst for a resilient and sustainable future. The Institute’s researchers, engagement specialists and professional staff bring a diverse set of skills and experience to realising MSSI’s mission and are the organisation’s greatest asset.

MSSI welcomed a number of new members in 2018:

- Sangeetha Chandrashekeran, Deputy Director
- Janine Campbell, Executive Officer
- Caroline Veldhuizen, Research Fellow
- Laura Schuijers, Research Fellow
- Anna Dunn, Communications & Events Assistant

MSSI was also fortunate to host the Foodprint Melbourne project for part of 2018, and to have Jennifer Sheridan, Seona Candy and Kirsten Larsen make a valuable contribution to the team.

Sophie Jackson provided some great support for communications and events, with Anna Dunn taking over this casual role in the second half of the year and making a great contribution continuing into 2019. The Institute acknowledges Stephanie Campbell for her valued contribution as the Climate Transformations Research Cluster Coordinator in 2018. We also extend sincere thanks to John Wiseman for his significant and lasting contribution to MSSI’s development, including in his capacity as Deputy Director from 2013-2017, and are pleased to retain an ongoing formal connection with John Wiseman as an Honorary Professorial Fellow into 2019 and beyond.

MSSI projects and activities were supported by a number of casual Research Assistants and Research Fellows throughout 2018, and the Institute also hosted a number of highly committed student volunteers via The Climate Reality Project. We offer our thanks to these talented and driven individuals for their part in making 2018 a year of great achievement.

Our Honorary Fellows

MSSI benefits from the knowledge, influence and skills of our Honorary Fellows:

- Prof Kate Auty, Honorary Professorial Fellow
- Prof Jim Falk, Honorary Professorial Fellow
- Prof Tim Flannery, Honorary Professorial Fellow
- Prof Boris Frankel, Honorary Principal Fellow
- A/Prof Kes McCormick, Honorary Senior Fellow
- Carl Obst, Honorary Research Fellow
- Prof Chris Ryan, Honorary Professorial Fellow



In 2018, Prof Don Henry was awarded an Order of Australia (AM) in recognition for his significant work protecting Australia’s native wildlife and the environment.

Executive Committee

The MSSI Executive Committee provides advice to the Director and acts as a conduit for communication across the various Faculties of the University

Chair: Prof Brendan Gleeson
MSSI, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning

Dr Jeremy Baskin
Melbourne School of Government

Associate Prof Peter Christoff
School of Geography, Faculty of Science

Prof Richard Eckard
PICCC, Faculty of Veterinary & Agricultural Sciences

Prof Robyn Eckersley
School of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts

Prof Don Henry AM
MSSI, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning

Dr Dominique Hes
Faculty of Architecture, Building & Planning

Associate Prof David Kennedy
Office for Environmental Programs, Faculty of Science

Dr Jeana Kriewaldt
Melbourne Graduate School of Education

Dr Stephanie Lavau
School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, Faculty of Science

Associate Prof Malte Meinshausen
Australian-German Climate and Energy College, School of Earth Sciences, Faculty of Science

Dr Ben Neville
Department of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Business and Economics

Prof Nikos Papastergiadis
Research Unit in Public Cultures, School of Culture & Communication, Faculty of Arts

Prof Chris Ryan
Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab, Faculty of Architecture, Building & Planning

Prof Anne Steinemann
Melbourne School of Engineering, Faculty of Engineering

Prof Stephan Winter
Department of Infrastructure Engineering, Melbourne School of Engineering, Faculty of Engineering

Associate Prof Margaret Young
Centre for Resources, Energy and Environmental Law, Faculty of Law

Prof John Wiseman
MSSI, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning



Stan Krpan is the CEO of Sustainability Victoria, and a valued member of our Advisory Board. He has a track record of transforming organisations and driving change for higher impact in a diversity of sectors including health, safety and environment, regulation and the law.

Prof Patrick Troy AC. It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Prof Patrick Troy in July 2018. MSSI acknowledges his contribution to the Institute through his enduring mentorship, as an Associate, and recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Melbourne.



Our Advisory Board

MSSI enjoys the support of a diverse and vibrant Advisory Board of experts, leaders and champions of sustainability. The Advisory Board provides assistance with strategic planning for the Institute and provides advice on areas in which MSSI can create linkages with external stakeholders in order to grow the research program and attract funding

Chair: Arron Wood

Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne

Dr Imran Ahmad

Director, Future Earth Australia

Rueben Berg

Director, Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria; RJHB Consulting

Rosemary Bissett

Head of Sustainability Governance and Risk, National Australia Bank

John Bradley

Secretary, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Gerard Brown

Group General Manager, Corporate Affairs, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group

Prof Peter Doherty AC

Laureate Prof, University of Melbourne

Adam Fennessy

Partner at EY, Advisory, Government and Public Sector

Megan Flynn

Group Manager, Environment and Carbon Strategy Office, QANTAS Airways

Katerina Gaita

Director, Climate for Change

Rob Gell

Executive Director, ReThink Sustainability

Emily Gerrard

Director, Comhar Group Pty Ltd

Jeremy Hobbs

Hobbs Consulting, former Executive Director, Oxfam International

Victoria McKenzie-McHarg

Climate Campaign Manager, Australian Conservation Foundation

Stan Krpan

Chief Executive Officer, Sustainability Victoria

Graz van Egmond

Chief Executive Officer, Banksia Foundation

Mark Wakeham

Chief Executive Officer, Environment Victoria

Prof Rachel Webster

President Academic Board, University of Melbourne

Our Associates

Complementing MSSI’s role as an internal facilitator of impactful research, the MSSI Associates Program recognises the achievements of innovative champions of sustainability from other universities, government departments and agencies, community groups, non-government organisations and the business community, and provides a mechanism for engaging such expertise outside the parameters of research agreements and formal appointments

Guy Abrahams

Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, CLIMARTE: Arts for a Safe Climate

Prof Kate Auty

Commissioner for Sustainability and Environment, ACT

Associate Prof Grant Blashki

Nossal Institute for Global Health, University of Melbourne

Dr Kathryn Bowen

Senior Research Fellow, National Centre for Epidemiology & Population Health Research, Australian National University

Joyati Das

Senior international development professional, and human rights advocate for equity and justice

Prof Graeme Davison AO

Emeritus Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor, Monash University

Ian Dunlop

Governance and Sustainability Advisor, on climate change, energy and corporate governance

Fergus Green

Researcher and climate policy consultant, London School of Economics & Political Science

Tanya Ha

Environmentalism, broadcaster, writer and science and sustainability engagement specialist

Dr Steven Henderson

Geographer, with research interests in urban and regional development, governance and sustainability

David Holmgren

Australian environmental designer, ecological educator, writer and co-originator of the permaculture concept

Carolyn Ingvarson

Convenor of Lighter Footprints, a community climate change action group

Dr Cathy Oke

Sustainability Knowledge Broker and Consultant, Councillor at the City of Melbourne

Kelly O’Shanassy

Chief Executive Officer, Australian Conservation Foundation

Associate Prof Lauren Rickards

School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University

Hon Tom Roper

Chair of the Fishermans Bend Ministerial Advisory Committee and Lecturer in Urban Governance

Anna Rose

Environmentalism and climate change campaigner

Meredith Sussex AM

Chair of the Fishermans Bend Ministerial Advisory Committee and Lecturer in Urban Governance

Dr Helen Sykes

Founder of Future Leaders and President of the Trust for Young Australians



Dr Rebecca Nelson is a convenor of our Future Cities Research Cluster, and a Senior Lecturer of the Melbourne Law School. Her research focuses on environmental and natural resources law and policy, with an emphasis on empirical research and practical solutions.

Dr Sangeetha Chandrashekeran joined MSSl this year as our Deputy Director. She is an economic geographer with a focus on the political economic dimensions of environmental change. Her research is motivated by the challenge of deep decarbonisation and the political-economic complexities involved with changing large socio-technical systems.



Our Research Network

Strengthening Our Communities and Enabling Partners

Building institutional research capacity by catalysing, facilitating, promoting, and acting as a ‘match maker’ for research activity and new partnerships is a core component of MSSl’s remit, and one the Institute executes through a number of mechanisms

The cluster model is a cross-discipline research network and a key feature of MSSl’s approach to convening researchers internally, and connecting them with external partners, funding opportunities and other sustainability focused activities.

Our two research clusters are:

- Future Cities
- Climate Transformations

Future Cities

The Future Cities Research Cluster within MSSl seeks to investigate and generate best-practice, policy-relevant evidence to understand and effectively respond to the challenges facing urban environments. Highlights of activities and achievements in 2018 include:

Informing Public Policy

In partnership with Chancellery the Future Cities Research Cluster coordinated a university-wide submission to the House of Representatives’ Inquiry into the Australian Government’s role in the development of cities. At the request of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities three cluster convenors – Prof Carolyn Whitzman, Prof Stephan Winter, and Prof Lars Coenen – provided expert witness to a committee hearing, alongside Vice-President of Policy and Projects Dr Julie Wells. The Committee’s final report references the University’s submissions and evidence more than 20 times, and advocates

for a number of national policy changes that echo the recommendations and research provided by the University.

International Collaboration

Building on MSSl’s representation at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Cities and Climate Change Science Conference, Future Cities, in partnership with the Climate and Energy College, hosted world-renowned climatologist Dr Cynthia Rosenzweig, Senior Research Scientist at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies. Following an in-depth seminar Dr Rosenzweig led a series of consultations with University researchers, a process that fed into the development of a City of Melbourne Workshop on Actionable Case Studies and City Research (co-hosted by Future Cities Convenor Prof Lars Coenen and MSSl associates Prof Kate Auty and Dr Cathy Oke).

United Nations Representation

MSSl continued building on the University’s engagement with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) at Habitat III by supporting a strong attendance at the 9th World Urban Forum. In partnership with Think City, Action for Children’s Environment, Place Leaders Asia Pacific, and Slum Dwellers International, Future Cities Convenor Dr Derlie Mateo-Babiano and MSSl Associate Joyati Das led an experimental participatory exercise with children and women representing more than 28 countries and 40 grassroots organisations.

Climate Transformations

The Climate Transformations Research Cluster engages researchers from across the University who bring interdisciplinary expertise to understanding and responding to sustainability challenges. It cultivates a network of cross-disciplinary climate change researchers across the University. It is also a point of connection for climate change practitioners, researchers, and the broader public.

Full-Faculty Representation

In 2018, Sangeetha Chandrashekeran stepped into the role of lead convenor and commenced a reboot. As part of this process, the Climate Transformations Research Cluster achieved full faculty representation. This was done through a highly consultative gap analysis to identify areas to focus research collaboration activities. This analysis identified the following areas:

- climate change and health
- climate risk
- land based carbon sequestration
- climate change adaptation in the Asia Pacific region
- indigenous knowledge of climate change.

Seed Funding to Fill Research Gaps

The cluster has developed a targeted seed funding strategy for addressing the research areas identified in the gap analysis. For example, the cluster coordinated a group of scholars working on climate risk and funded a research project associated with this. They also successfully brought together a previously uncoordinated group of climate change and health researchers, who successfully submitted a seed funding proposal in this important area.

Government Briefing

During the year, the cluster developed a briefing paper for Federal and State governments, which made the case for a properly resourced new institutional model on climate change adaptation and social impacts. The briefing identified an opportunity around climate ambition at the sub-national scale and the need for well-informed policy to meet targets and shape the socio-institutional response to climate impacts.

Cluster Convenors

Future Cities

Prof Brendan Gleeson, Alexei Trundle, Prof Michele Acuto, Associate Prof David Bissell, Prof Lars Coenen, Dr Max Holleran, Dr Crystal Legacy, Dr Derlie Mateo-Babiano, Dr Rebecca Nelson, Prof Nikos Papastergiadis, Prof Chris Ryan, Prof Mark Stevenson, Prof Stephan Winter and Prof Alison Young.

Climate Transformations

Dr Sangeetha Chandrashekeran, Pia Treichel, Dr Danny Butt, Stephanie Campbell, Jo Chandler, Associate Prof Peter Christoff, Dr Rachel Diprose, Prof Richard Eckard, Prof Robyn Eckersley, Dr Michael-Shawn Fletcher, Prof Lee Godden, Prof Don Henry, Dr Andrew King, Prof Tom Kompas and Dr Jeana Kriewaldt.



Audience discussion at the 2018 MSSI Oration



MSSI-led Research

MSSI connects researchers with key stakeholders from government, business, NGO's and other sectors to discuss compelling sustainability-related issues, with a view to these discussions having a direct or indirect impact on policy and decision-making

MSSI leads on a number of highly impactful projects, in collaboration with University of Melbourne colleagues and researchers from other institutions, and with partners from the community, three tiers of government, industry and other external organisations.

Gippsland Smart Specialisation Strategy (GS3)

MSSI's Prof Lars Coenen, in collaboration with academic colleagues from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education and RMIT, is the lead investigator on this multi-million dollar project working with the Latrobe Valley Authority to develop a shared vision for Gippsland's future prosperity following the closure of the region's coal power station.

The project, funded via the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, draws on Lars and the team's international expertise in applying the European Union Smart Specialisation Strategy model in the development of a co-designed, sustainable future for the Valley.

The GS3 project is also connecting residents and economic shapers in the Gippsland region with European expertise in focus areas of food and fibre, energy, health, and visitor economy sectors during this critical period of transition.

The project includes 17 partners working collaboratively on knowledge generation to support regional transition and development. These span universities, centres of research excellence, and departments such

as Agriculture Victoria. There are also 19 business and industry groups involved, and 10 social enterprises.

The GS3 Project demonstrates MSSI's recognition among Victoria's policy shapers and makers as a centre of excellence in the sustainability field.

Suburban Futures

Led by Prof Brendan Gleeson and Dr Samuel Alexander, this research project seeks to reimagine suburban landscapes in ways that advance the causes of justice, sustainability, and resilience. In conjunction with MSSI Associate David Holmgren, the work being developed is based on the premise that retrofitting our cities according to a new vision of prosperity can and should begin in the suburbs.

In 2018, Samuel Alexander and Brendan Gleeson provided answers to these questions in their book *Degrowth in the Suburbs: A Radical Urban Imaginary*,

which sits in mutual support with David Holmgren's new book *Retrosuburbia: The Downshifter's Guide to a Resilient Future*.

Urban Resilience in Action

MSSI's Prof Lars Coenen and Research Fellow Dr Sebastian Fastenrath, work closely with the Resilient Melbourne network to advance their strategic priorities around preparing communities for change. Lars and Sebastian's research looks closely at the role of Resilient Melbourne as a change agent and broker in the urban innovation system that incorporates all constituencies of metropolitan Melbourne. A key focus is the project's ability to test, then bring into the mainstream, experimental approaches to building and governing a resilient city. The Resilient Melbourne network includes a myriad of small to medium enterprises, larger organisations, community groups, local governments and peak bodies, with high level partners including 100 Resilient Cities, Municipal Association of Victoria; State Government of Victoria, and the City of Melbourne.

The Chair in Resilient Cities (Prof Lars Coenen) is connecting MSSI and University of Melbourne researchers with collaborative research and potential funding opportunities in resilience through a range of major strategic initiatives, including an ARC Linkage on *Urban Experimentation for Effective and Transformative Innovation Policy*; an ARC Centre of Excellence submission on the *Integrated Science City*; a Future Cities CRC bid *Smart, Sustainable, Resilient, Healthy*; and a Norway Research Council Centre of Excellence on *Research and Innovation Policy and Industrial Transition* bid, led by world pioneer of regional innovation systems and learning regions Prof Bjorn Asheim.

Foodprint Melbourne

This project investigates the importance of Melbourne's city-fringe food bowl for the city's food supply. It explores ways of strengthening food production on the city fringe so that Melbourne's food bowl contributes to a more resilient and sustainable food future for the city. Project partners currently engaged in creating a roadmap for achieving this vision include the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, the City of Melbourne, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Wyndham City, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Whittlesea, the Interface Councils, the Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils and Lead West (pictured above).

Stemming from their Foodprint study, the team have also produced a set of secondary school curriculum resources for the Year 9 Geography subject 'Biomes and food security'. This resource pack has reached over 2000 secondary school teachers since its release.

Building an Integrated System for Australian Bushfire Prevention

MSSI's Associate Prof Janet Stanley is a highly regarded researcher and commentator focusing on the interface between social, environmental and economic issues in climate change and sustainability across policy, system design and at community levels. With colleagues, she was awarded an ARC Linkage to undertake a project working closely with researchers, practitioners, the community and Crime Stoppers Victoria to develop a comprehensive approach to bushfire arson prevention. In 2018, Janet Stanley co-authored the sixth comprehensive report to Crime Stoppers, *Preventing bushfires through community reporting to Crime Stoppers*.



Dr Hayley Henderson was a PhD student working with MSSI for five years, supervised by Brendan Gleeson and Sophie Sturup. In 2018 she completed her PhD on social logics in planning and is now a Postdoctoral Fellow undertaking comparative research on urban governance at ANU.



Alexei Trundle presented his research to the UN Institute for Environment and Human Security at the United Nations University in Germany. He was invited as a Visiting Scientist.

Supporting New Research

PhD Students, Early Career Researchers and Seed Funding

A key MSSI role is to facilitate sustainability research, especially by fostering the development and enhancement of interdisciplinary teams. The Institute has particular carriage of research falling within its cluster areas of expertise, but it also lends its support and capacity to a wide set of other sustainability research and engagement endeavours

Mentorship

Research mentorship is a further research enabling channel MSSI makes significant investment in, incorporating the review of grant applications and other research outputs, one-on-one mentoring of research colleagues and higher degree research students, and contributions to a wide range of networks and activities that build research capacity across the University.

PhD Students

MSSI is supportive of the unique and dynamic environment fostered by the Australian-German Climate and Energy College (Climate College), and channels significant energy into this postgraduate researcher training initiative through mentorship, Advisory Board participation, financial support, co-branded events, student scholarships and supervision, as well as a range of other in-kind contributions.

In addition to providing PhD supervision for seven Climate College students, MSSI researchers supervise postgraduate researchers across a range of University of Melbourne faculties and external institutions, including Lund University, Sweden, Arctic University of Norway, and the University of Marburg, Germany.

MSSI academics are also involved in the supervision of Master of Environment students via the Office for Environmental Programs, the delivery of guest lectures on topics such as Sustainability Governance and Leadership and International Environmental Law, and connection with student-focused initiatives such as the Sustainability Lab at Melbourne (SL@M).

Support for Early Career Researchers

MSSI’s strategy has remained keenly and consistently focused on providing opportunities for early career researchers to connect with networks, projects, mentors and other collaborations that increase their knowledge base and raise their research profile.

In 2018 MSSI joined RMIT’s Centre for Urban Research to support the Victorian division of the Australasian Early Career Urban Research Network. The network connects Early Career Researchers and PhD Researchers in urban research disciplines across the region. In 2018 the Victorian chapter conducted a series of networking sessions, a major symposium and expanded their representation to include members from all Victorian universities. MSSI also continues to lead an urban-theory reading group, which convenes monthly.

Future Cities Research Cluster Coordinator Alexei Trundle travelled to Bonn, Germany as a Visiting Scientist at the United Nations University in October-November, collaborating with colleagues in the UN’s Institute for Environment and Human Security. In addition to presenting on his work in the Pacific to researchers and the Institute’s Masters program, Alexei also developed research papers with Head of Vulnerability Assessment, Risk Management and Adaptive Planning, Dr Matthias Garschagen and identified potential future exchanges for climate impact researchers at the University through the Climate College (pictured above right).

Seed funding

Seed funding is a key research enabling activity which MSSI directs significant time and financial resource toward, with 17 projects funded in 2018 across the Future Cities and Climate Transformations Clusters, and via the broader Institute.

Future Proofing Urban Infrastructure Systems

Cross-disciplines: Infrastructure Engineering, Architecture, Building and Planning.

In the literature, effective stakeholder engagement has been recognised as key to achieving more sustainable buildings. As aging urban infrastructure systems degrade, and populations increase, these systems must be upgraded and adapted for the future. This project will use University buildings as living laboratories, allowing investigation into building efficiency, and will also showcase these living laboratories as new technologies to industry.

Maximizing Communication Accessibility in Public Transport Services

Cross-disciplines: Urban Geography, Transport Planning, Disability Inclusion.

This project aims to create a new research program by examining existing approaches and future directions in communication accessibility in public transport. Communication of information about transport services is essential to the creation of an accessible public transport system. The project is focused on accessibility for people with diverse cognitive and communicative abilities, and specifically people with intellectual disability. It will build collaborative relationships within the University and with industry, government and disability advocacy groups to build an interdisciplinary research and practice program.

Mapping the Evidence of Climate and Health Research in Australia

Cross-disciplines: Population and Global Mental Health, Epidemiology, Urban Transport and Planning, Behavioural and Health Sciences, Health Equity, Geography, Earth Sciences.

There is a growing body of research regarding climate change impacts in Australia and globally, however there has been no systematic review of the academic literature on health impacts of climate change in Australia. This project will connect climate and health researchers across the University, review the current research evidence in this area, and coordinate a systematic approach to working collaboratively with external partners.

Legal Dimensions of Climate Risk

Cross-disciplines: Law, Social and Political Sciences.

This project aims to develop an analysis around climate risk as a critical concept in interdisciplinary research that is relevant to transformations in climate change law, regulation and policy in the international and national spheres. Within Australia, there is a current policy and legal vacuum around climate risk; notwithstanding Australia’s commitments under the Paris Agreement. The climate risk analysis will form the basis for subsequent research that examines transformations in de-regulatory, and potentially, alternative regulatory contexts, including state governments and local municipalities as innovative centres of climate risk governance.



Former president of Kiribati Anote Tong, in discussion with Dr Celia McMichael from the School of Geography.

MSSI's Prof Don Henry plays a senior advisory role to Mr Gore, and is a conduit for propelling MSSI and University of Melbourne expertise into climate discussion at the highest level.



Engagement International and National Reach

MSSI regards engagement on sustainability issues as central to our value in sharing knowledge. Extending our engagement with communities beyond the University is fundamental to increasing our impact and influence

MSSI has established an international reputation for facilitating high level change-making discussions, and fostering connections with a diverse range of experts around issues of sustainability.

The Climate Reality Project

MSSI is pleased to host The Climate Reality Project (TCRP), whose mission is to catalyse a global solution to the climate crisis. Through undertaking a program of science communication and translation activities, TCRP works to enable citizens at every level of society to become leaders of change. Founded and chaired by former Vice President Al Gore, TCRP has been a pioneer in building a diverse set of voices on climate change. Internationally, over 10,000 individuals have been trained to better communicate and engage on this pressing issue.

2018 saw TCRP's reach extend beyond the University of Melbourne to places such as Byron Bay, Kiribati and Wyndham.

With an issue as pervasive as climate change, the TCRP team worked in partnership with others to bring new audiences into the conversation. They hosted a number of public lectures covering everything from what a states-based approach to net-zero emissions policy looks like to how local knowledge can be included in climate adaptation responses. Highlights include:

- Partnering with Singularity University to showcase technological solutions to the climate crisis

- Working with media influencers in breaking down climate change stereotypes at Splendour in the Grass
- Hosting Anote Tong, the former president of Kiribati, with Oxfam and the Pacific Calling Partnership, to highlight the issues present in the Pacific.

In addition to public events, TCRP also worked in tandem with the Wyndham City Council in delivering climate change workshops to English-as-an-additional language students. This work was supported by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.



In May 2018 MSSI's Linh Do received a Rising Star Award for Young Alumni from the University of Melbourne. Linh's award acknowledged her outstanding leadership in The Climate Reality Project.

Climate Policy Action by Australian States

MSSI's Prof Don Henry is leading a strategic engagement program geared toward advancing the outcomes of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, through strengthening public discussion and applied research translation within the context of international climate negotiations.

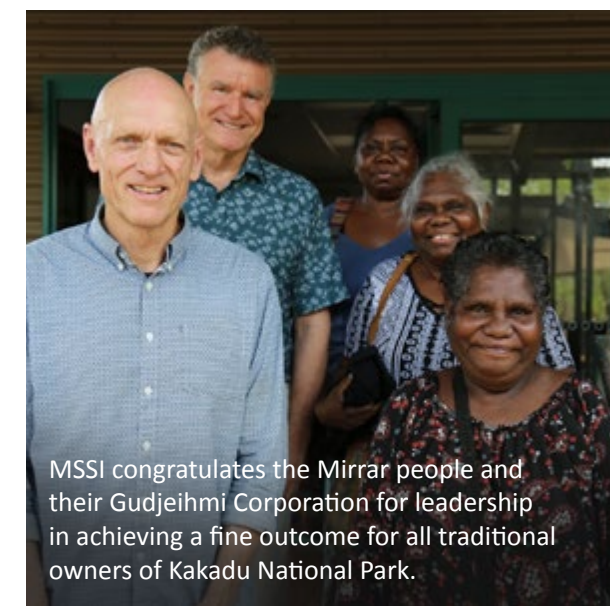
A key focus of this program is to share climate success and learnings from the State Government level in Australia, and connect with learnings from around the world, to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The project team have created a suite of evidence-based briefing papers for countries critical to reversing climate trends. Thanks to our partnership with Al Gore and The Climate Reality Project, these briefing papers are used globally to communicate with heads of state and agencies such as the UN.

A key component of this engagement is the convening of roundtables with governments (particularly state governments), civil society and businesses, to enhance state-based capability and speed in implementing Paris Agreement targets.

A further highlight of MSSI's work has been the Institute's collaboration with Al Gore, through his Climate Reality Project and his work on Paris Agreement implementation. Specifically, Don Henry regularly joins Al Gore in high-level policy meetings with political leaders internationally. In 2018 these activities focused on Mexico, Germany, California and the COP 24 in Poland. As part of these engagement efforts, Don Henry also sits on the Board of Al Gore's international Climate Reality Project.

Indigenous Land and Culture

Return of the lands to indigenous traditional owners, with their consent and leadership, is an important part of protecting Australia's cultural values and environmental heritage. Don Henry has been working jointly with indigenous groups to analyse and make recommendations for the future of their regions. In 2018, Don and Peter Garrett, at the request of the Mirrar people, assisted with advice and planning for a proposal to transform the Jabiru township in the centre of Kakadu to a focus on traditional ownership and the world heritage indigenous cultural and natural values of Kakadu (pictured below). The planning also looked at how to strengthen protection and interpretation of these values across the park. Subsequently both the Australian Prime Minister and opposition leader announced packages of support in line with the proposal, each over \$200 million dollars.



MSSI congratulates the Mirrar people and their Gudjehmi Corporation for leadership in achieving a fine outcome for all traditional owners of Kakadu National Park.



Events

MSSI hosts, co-hosts and supports a significant number of events, as we see these as a priority vehicle for research translation, engagement and impact. In addition to supporting, promoting, co-branding, emceeing and introducing events for our University of Melbourne colleagues, MSSI organises a significant number of our own events

Annual MSSI Oration

Resilience in the Face of Sustainability Crises

The 2018 MSSI Oration was delivered by Prof Lars Coenen, the inaugural City of Melbourne Chair in Resilient Cities. Lars posed the question of whether innovation is the problem or the solution to the sustainability crises. Drawing on examples from Melbourne and across the world, Lars argued for and illustrates a more capacious understanding of innovation that lifts the gaze beyond high-tech start-ups.

Roundtables

MSSI's convening power is a core strength, and hosting and participating in high level roundtables is one mechanism through which the Institute fulfils our remit to harness the University's capacity to work on complex societal problems.

Sharan Burrow Research Roundtable

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, brought together over thirty key stakeholders in the climate policy and 'just transitions' agenda. Participants included representatives from government, business and industry, unions, the finance sector, universities and civil society organisations. The focus was on providing insights from different perspectives to inform and deepen the ongoing conversation, policy development and research around climate and energy transitions.

"The University of Melbourne is to be highly commended with it's efforts, through MSSI, to make cross-disciplinary knowledge accessible to all sectors of society on the great sustainability issues of our times"

- Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

Sustainable Healthcare the NHS way

Dr David Pencheon founded the Sustainable Development Unit in the UK, and visited the University of Melbourne to share his insights. MSSI organised a joint research roundtable with the School of Population Health that brought together researchers from varied disciplines with a shared interest in climate and health. The roundtable helped forge a new grouping of climate change and health researchers and practitioners, which have subsequently received seed funding from MSSI on this important topic.

Expert Panel Discussions

Nature Sustainability Panel

MSSI hosted the Australian launch of the *Nature Sustainability* journal, where Chief Editor Monica Contestabile and a panel of sustainability experts discussed the crucial interface of sustainability policy and research. Monica introduced the new online journal from *Springer Nature*, an organisation which currently publishes some of the world's most influential journals and research. This was followed by an open discussion with the audience and the expert panel (pictured above left).

Transit Life: How Commuting is Transforming our Cities

MSSI hosted this panel discussion to launch a book by one of our Future Cities Research Cluster convenors, David Bissell. Associate Prof David Bissell's research looks into how commuting subtly transforms us and how we transform the places through which we pass. David joined a panel of cross-disciplinary experts from the fields of transportation and cities to explore and develop ideas that are raised in his new book.

Public Lectures

MSSI's lecture and seminar program is prolific, and broad in scope, and serves an important function in making the University's research accessible to an expansive audience, including members of the general public.

Public events in 2018 with wide appeal include:

An Evening with Anote Tong

Anote Tong, the former President of Kiribati, is one of

the world's leading voices for climate justice. His public lecture brought together people from all disciplines of the University, along with community groups and non-government organisations, to listen to the challenges facing Kiribati and share his vision for creating a more just and sustainable future.

Basiana's Pig: A Tale of Wildlife Conservation, Murder and Redemption from the Solomon Islands

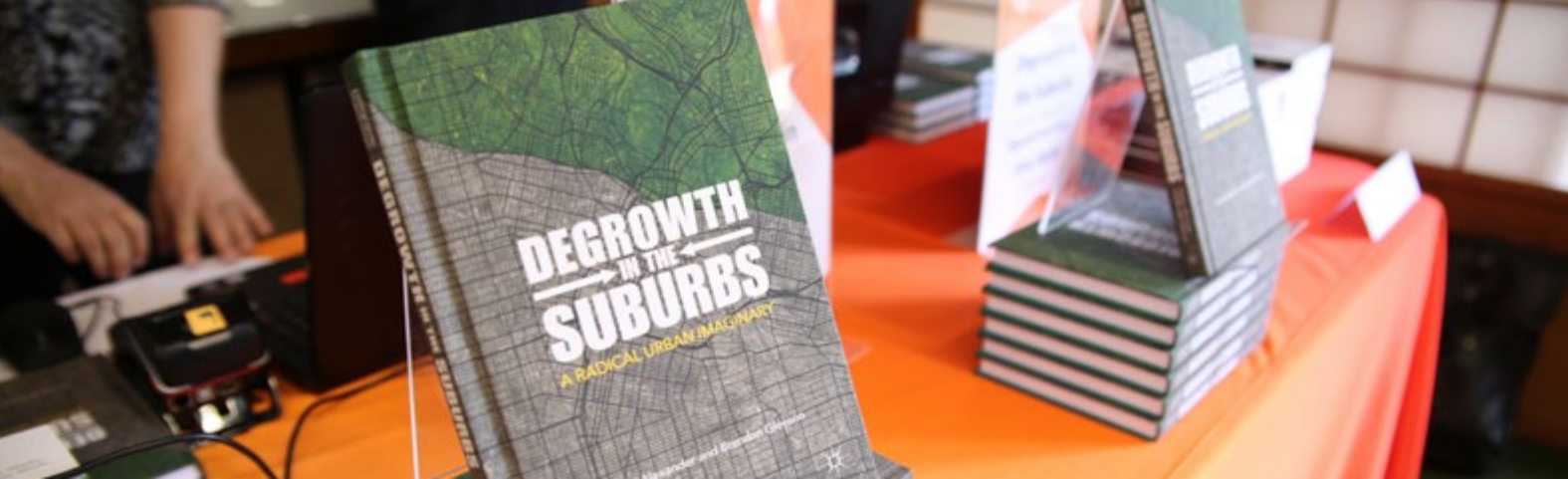
Prof Tim Flannery (MSSI Honorary Fellow) presented this public lecture on his 30 years of work with the community of Kwaio in the Solomon Islands. Tim brought a personal perspective to Australia's complex relationship with our Pacific neighbours, and the lessons we can learn from their resilience and sustainable environmental management practices.

Targeting Fossil Fuels: The Political and Economic Case

Dr Richard Denniss from The Australia Institute and Fergus Green (MSSI Associate) from the London School of Economics & Political Science, presented this popular lecture which explained the political and economic logics behind the new wave of global moral norms against fossil fuels.

The History and Future of Climate Change in Australia

Award-winning climate scientist and writer Dr Joëlle Gergis shared her fascinating journey through Australia to unearth our climate history, in this public lecture and launch of her latest book *Sunburnt Country*. Co-hosted by MSSI with the Faculty of Science and Melbourne University Press.



David Holmgren is renowned as the co-ordinator of the permaculture concept. He joined MSSl's Associate program in 2018. His work on retrofitting the suburbs culminated in 2018 with the publication of *Retrosuburbia*: the downshifter's guide to a resilient future, which was launched by MSSl in March.

Publications

MSSl researchers strive to report their work through high impact publications, both scholarly and those intended to inform and influence public debate

Degrowth in the Suburbs

Authored by Prof Brendan Gleeson and Dr Samuel Alexander. In this book the authors address a central dilemma of the urban age: how to make suburban landscapes sustainable in the face of planetary ecological crisis. They argue that degrowth, a planned contraction of overgrown economies, is the most coherent paradigm for suburban renewal. MSSl held a book launch in 2018 in which David Holmgren (MSSl Associate) provided the opening address.

This book has received many reviews on national and international platforms, including *Resilience*, *Permaculture Research Institute*, *The Fifth Estate* and the UK website *Make Wealth History*.

Degrowth in the Suburbs “is a brilliant, invigorating book, poetically written and full of exciting ideas. A marvellous achievement”

- Jason Hickel, author of *The Divide: A Brief Guide to Global Inequality and its Solutions*

Fictions of Sustainability

This book by Prof Boris Frankel (MSSl Honorary Fellow) discusses the growing political contest between conservative and reform-orientated defenders of capitalist societies on the one side, and the policies and imagined futures advanced by green and socialist critics on the other.

The book was commended by leading Academic John Quiggin as “one of the best things I’ve read on the chasm between social democratic responses to the failure of capitalism and the need for a sustainable economy”.

Retrosuburbia: Action, Resilience and Alternative Solutions

MSSl Associate David Holmgren, co-ordinator of the permaculture concept, published this book on how permaculture perspectives and practices can be used to retrofit the suburbs for a resilient future. The book was launched by MSSl in March 2018 at the University of Melbourne.

Transit Life: How Commuting is Transforming our Cities

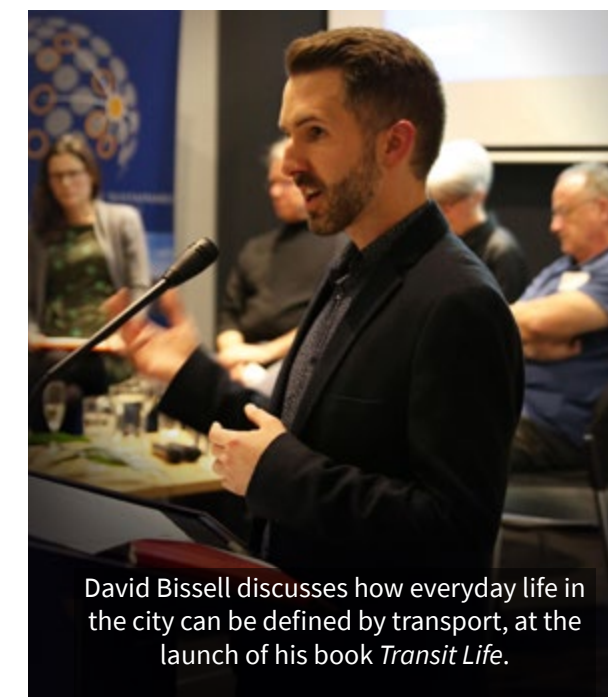
Associate Prof David Bissell (MSSl Future Cities Convenor) published this book in 2018 with a launch hosted by MSSl (pictured right). The book explored the ways that everyday life in the city is defined by commuting. It has received a number of reviews, including one in the *Journal of Urban Studies*. David has also written for *The Conversation* on this research.

Innovation Policy for System-wide Transformation

Prof Lars Coenen co-authored this research which was published in a special issue of the high impact journal *Research Policy*. It looks at the role of science, technology and innovation policy for transformative change, whilst addressing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Climate Change and Mental Health: Risks, Impacts and Priority Actions

Prof John Wiseman, Associate Prof Grant Blashki, Katie Hayes et al, published a research paper in the international *Journal of Mental Health Systems*, providing an overview of current and projected climate change risk and impacts to mental health. The research found that the evidence connecting climate change and mental health decline is strong and provided recommendations for priority actions.



David Bissell discusses how everyday life in the city can be defined by transport, at the launch of his book *Transit Life*.

Prof Lars Coenen’s publication on *The Geography of Sustainability Transitions* was the most cited paper in 2018 in the highly ranked Journal of Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions

Sustainability Transition Pathways in the Building Sector

Dr Sebastian Fastenrath co-authored a paper published in *Science Direct*, which has since had approximately 4500 downloads. The paper demonstrates how important a detailed tracing of co-evolutionary processes is to understanding urban sustainability transitions.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme in an Urban Context

Prof Brendan Gleeson co-authored a research paper with Dr Ilan Wiesel, Prof Carolyn Whitzman and Prof Christine Bigby in the journal *Urban Policy and Research*. This review paper examines the urban policy and practice context for the NDIS, focusing specifically on housing, employment, governance, mainstream services (particularly health and education) and multiculturalism.



MSSI's Prof Tim Flannery.



In 2018 Samuel Alexander co-produced a short film titled *Degrowth in the Suburbs*, to communicate his research. The film has reached over 125 000 views on YouTube.

Media and Communications

MSSI has devoted resources and expertise to the production and dissemination of research for a diverse public and professional audience. Our contribution to public policy and debate on matters of national priority now span both the traditional and digital landscapes

MSSI researchers are regular media commentators on a range of sustainability-related issues. Our inter-disciplinary team are often called on to inform print, radio and television news stories and interest pieces across a range of environmental and resilience topics.

In 2018 MSSI academics were regularly featured in the media. Our experts authored or were interviewed in over 30 news stories online and in print both nationally and internationally. MSSI experts gave over 10 radio interviews, and were interviewed for two podcasts and two TV appearances.

Our Sustainability MiSSive newsletter was sent out fortnightly covering news, events, and other important information about MSSI's activities. We maintained our exceptionally high newsletter open rate of 38% which is well above the industry average.

“The thing that MSSI does really well is communicate through their MiSSive newsletter. I use MiSSive content regularly and circulate it widely”

- Kate Auty, ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment

Top stories

Home Biogas: turning food waste into renewable energy. Dr Samuel Alexander's article published in *The Conversation* received exceptionally high readership and was extensively shared on social media platforms. His article on home biogas has had 70 000 global readers so far and was republished on ABC and SBS online news. His other article, *The Suburbs are the Spiritual Home of Overconsumption*, co-authored with Prof Brendan Gleeson, has been shared on Facebook almost 9000 times .

Food for Thought was a report written by the Foodprint Melbourne team that focused on three key policy issues: protecting farmland, strengthening the viability of farming and increasing water access. The report generated extensive media attention and was broadcast nationally on ABC News, TV and radio, in *The Age* and the *Weekly Times*. This was on top of the significant media coverage that the Foodprint Melbourne team received in 2018.



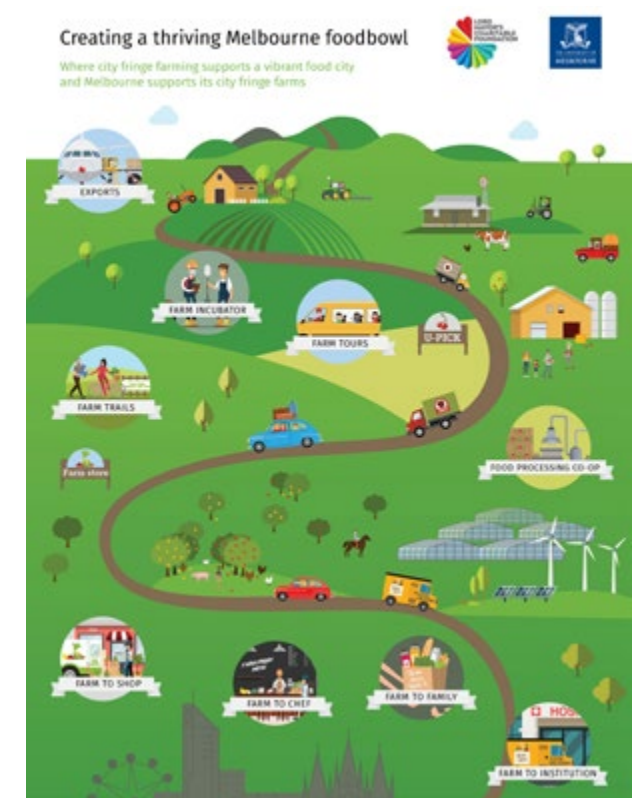
Bushfire and arson prevention. Leading expert on bushfire and arson, Associate Prof Janet Stanley was regularly interviewed on radio stations across the nation, including 2SER and ABC radio.

Energy smart meter usability. Dr Sangeetha Chandrashekeran wrote an article for *The Conversation* which was republished in ABC news. She discussed how smart meters could be rolled out more effectively to allow households to make better use of their energy efficiency information. From this, Sangeetha was called upon for an interview about smart meters for the City Road Podcast series, aired in August 2018.

Murray Darling fish kill – Academy of Science expert panel. Tim Flannery (MSSI Honorary Fellow) along with other University of Melbourne academics such as Lee Godden and Lesley Head, were selected for the Academy of Science expert panel to investigate the fish kills in the Murray-Darling River system. MSSI Convenor Rob Vertessy was selected as an expert reviewer on the report. This report was commissioned by the Leader of the Federal Opposition and was widely reported in the media.



Brendan Gleeson is frequently invited to comment on urban sustainability issues in the media. Pictured here on the ABC 7:30 Report, 2018.



Sustainability of our urban food bowl

In addition to the coverage of their Food for Thought report, Jen Sheridan, Rachel Carey and Kirsten Larsen have been regularly called on as media experts around the sustainability of Melbourne's food bowl (a term coined by this project, now widely used). Their story in *The Conversation* on *Feeding cities in the 21st century*, discussed how we need to support farming on Melbourne's urban fringe in order to improve access to locally grown food and help prevent disruptions to supply chains caused by climate change. The Foodprint project recognises the value of infographics as an effective communication tool for their research (pictured above).



Financial Statement

Internal Income

Core funding from Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

DVC(R) Annual MRI Core Funding	\$1,094,000
DVC(R) Annual MRI Space Charge Subsidy	\$30,000
Other Income, Internal	\$42,052
Total Internal Income	\$1,166,052

Expenditure

Core staff salaries	\$540,489
Admin and operating	\$33,827
Research project salaries	\$316,747
Seed funding and partnership development	\$50,841
Higher degree by research enabling	\$55,893
Research enabling - Other	\$49,238
Host Faculty space charge	\$30,000
Total Expenditure	\$1,077,037
Balance	\$89,014

Additional seed funding allocation from 2018 budget	\$72,721
Revised Balance	\$16,293



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