



DIGITAL WELLBEING



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Message from our

# PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR



# Welcome to dKin

The future is hurtling towards us at an extraordinary pace – hard to remember it's only seven years since Apple introduced its first app (it was Super Monkey Ball and I believe it's still selling!). Driverless cars, 3D printing, Virtual Reality, wearable computing and DNA nanobots have already moved from science fiction to science fact.

The rate and pace of change is remarkable. Breakthroughs that once took decades to develop can now be developed in months. There are chatbots that can understand more about a customer in a minute than any human could ever uncover. IBM Watson recently diagnosed a rare form of leukaemia, solving a medical mystery that had baffled doctors for months. At Deakin our Deakin Genie platform is using chatbots, AI, voice recognition and a predictive analytics engine to give students 'just in time' information and smart, personalised advice.

We are continually confronted by a bewildering array of new disruptors: the digital economy, the internet of things, the gig economy, big data, blockchain, machine learning. And these are last year's buzzwords. The next big thing is 'singularity': a point in time when all the advances in technology will result in machines that can outsmart human beings. Google's Director of Engineering, Ray Kurzweil, suggests this will happen by 2029, and as a futurist his predictions have an 86 per cent record of accuracy.

The future is already here, although as tech writer William Gibson famously said, it's not evenly distributed. Many parts of the world are yet to benefit from the opportunities of globalisation

and technological change. Only 40 per cent of the globe has access to the internet, and growing economic inequality is one of the wicked problems of our time. Businesses everywhere are also facing the cyber risks of data breaches, denial of service attacks and ransomware and there is growing awareness of the importance of privacy in our data-saturated world.

We are already feeling the impact of the rise of machines on employment, with lower-skilled, routine jobs progressively being replaced by higher-skilled jobs that require dexterity, creativity and digital know-how. In the machine age, brains are more important than brawn and the skills with the longest shelf life are the uniquely human skills of teamwork, cultural empathy, emotional intelligence and critical thinking. These are skills that in the past were often denigrated somewhat pejoratively as soft skills but they are finally getting the attention they deserve. At Deakin they are key to our Graduate Learning Outcomes.

From its very beginning, Deakin has embraced the technologies of the day in research, in teaching and in the support we provide to our students and staff. Today, Deakin research is seeding new innovation

in light weighting and in public health, two world class examples. And in teaching, Deakin is preparing industry-ready graduates for the jobs and skills of the future using a premium approach that combines the personal with the digital.

As Deakin alumni you'll be pleased to note that your University is continuing on its strong trajectory – now ranked 29 in the QS ranking of the world's universities under 50 years and 213 in the prestigious Shanghai rankings.

You'll read more of Deakin's Smart Campus and hear of some of our breakthroughs in health research in this year's dKin, I do hope you will enjoy it and that it will inspire you to keep in touch with us.

**Jane den Hollander AO**  
President and Vice-Chancellor

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**The next big thing is 'singularity': a point in time when all the advances in technology will result in machines that can outsmart human beings.**

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# YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

When Professor Felice Jacka started talking about the link between diet and mental health she was surprised to find that she was a lone voice among the psychiatrists and researchers working in the field.

Professor  
**FELICE  
JACKA**





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## I found a very clear link between the quality of women's diets and their mental health.

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Professor Jacka reasoned that most other medical disciplines had identified diet as an important factor in disease, whether it was heart disease, diabetes or osteoporosis, why would mental health be different?

'I was quite sure that there was a link and our studies over several years have repeatedly supported that idea. The intervention study we have just completed, the SMILES trial, is the first to show that improving diet in people with a major depressive disorder can have a positive impact on their depressive symptoms,' says Professor Jacka, Director of Deakin's Food and Mood Centre.

In this study, Professor Jacka and her team studied 67 people with clinical depression. Half the group received dietary support to switch to a Mediterranean style diet high in fibre – lots of vegetables, fruit and legumes – and the other half received social support, which is already known to help depression.

'We found that people in the dietary support group experienced an improvement in their depressive disorder. In fact, one-third of patients on the diet met the criteria for remission of depression,' she says.

'The SMILES trial was important because it provided evidence that improved diet was, in fact, the cause of improved mental health irrespective of weight, medication, counselling or exercise.'

'Most of the people in our study were on medication or psychotherapy or both. Antidepressants and psychotherapy are very important tools for addressing common mental disorders, but diet supports all of those processes and addresses the underlying biology that feeds into the risk for depression,' says Professor Jacka.

Mental health and substance use disorders are the leading causes of disability worldwide. Almost half of all Australians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime. Meanwhile, Australians are eating more junk food than ever before. About 35 per cent of an adult's average energy intake is derived from processed food and less than 0.5 per cent of children eat the recommended amount of vegetables and legumes. Poor diet is now the leading cause of early death because of its impact on chronic disease. The fact that poor diet and mental health are linked is very important for public health, prevention and treatment, because unlike many other risk factors for mental disorders, diet is highly modifiable.





**The gut is the centre  
of our immune system and drives  
our gene expression, brain plasticity  
and stress response system.**

Professor Jacka first began to investigate the link between diet and mental health during her PhD.

'My PhD research was the first study to look at the quality of diet and its relationship to common clinical mental disorders – depression and anxiety. I found a very clear link between the quality of women's diets and their mental health that was independent of factors including socioeconomic status, education, physical activity and body weight,' says Professor Jacka.

According to her research, there is evidence for an association between diet, and mental and brain health throughout the entirety of person's life cycle. During pre-birth and in childhood, diet may impact mental health. This link continues once the person reaches adolescence, which is the primary age for the onset of mental disorders, and subsequently right through to old age where the quality of people's diets can influence their risk of depression and dementia.

The Food and Mood Centre is unique in the world in its focus on nutrition and mental health. The team at the Food and Mood Centre are working to generate the research evidence that will have an impact on clinical practice, public policy and public

health messages. The Centre is currently developing an online program and mobile application to help people change their diet and assess the effect on their mental health. They are also conducting studies focused on the biology linking diet, and mental and brain health.

'Much of our current research focus is on the microorganisms in the gut and their links with diet and mental health. The gut is the centre of our immune system and drives our gene expression, brain plasticity and stress response system. Diet is the main factor that affects the millions of microorganisms in the gut and we know that we can change these by changing our diet,' she says.

'Conducting big studies and gathering large amounts of data on people's gut microorganisms and mental health may allow us to use statistical techniques to predict the likelihood of depression in people.'

In the not-too-distant future, a visit to the GP for a check-up could include a test of your gut microorganisms to assess your risk of depression and a referral to a dietitian for personalised nutritional recommendations.

Professor  
**Xungai  
Wang**





**Blue  
jeans**  
▼  
**TURN  
GREEN**





Jeans are the most popular clothing item in the world with more than 450 million pairs sold each year. Many people may not realise that they come with a hefty price tag for the planet. The life cycle of one pair of jeans consumes around 3500 litres of water and emits over 30 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. In many developing countries where jeans are manufactured waste water is released into the environment, polluting waterways, killing fish and harming local populations. The problems with denim don't end at the checkout, old denim products are filling up landfill sites around the world.

But Deakin's Professor Xungai Wang and his team have come up with an ingenious new way to dye jeans that addresses all of these problems – using old jeans to colour new ones.

'Our idea is to grind up old jeans into very fine particles that have the original colour of the old denim and use these coloured particles to dye new [white] jeans,' says Professor Wang, who heads the Institute for Frontier Materials and the ARC Research Hub for Future Fibres.

'This process is unique in that it not only recycles the fibres of old jeans, but also the dye. One old pair of jeans could dye 10 new ones, with almost zero water usage.'

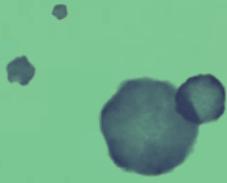
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**The life cycle of one pair of jeans consumes around 3,500 litres of water and emits over 30 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.**

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In 2016, the team entered the 'circular denim' idea into the Global Change Award, an initiative of the H&M Foundation that provides seed funding for projects that promote sustainable fashion. The project was one of five winning ideas out of nearly 3000 entries from 130 countries. The team was awarded €150,000 to take their idea to industry.

The Institute for Frontier Materials aims to develop new materials that have a low cost to society in their manufacture, use and recycling. They work with textiles like wool and cotton, and new materials such as carbon fibre and nanofibre. The Institute has a state-of-the-art fibre powder facility that is dedicated to making very fine powders out of natural fibres such as wool, cotton and silk.



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### **The idea was to skip the traditional dyeing process because it is energy intensive and uses a lot of water.**

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‘We have been working on creating powders from fibres for the past 15 years. It is challenging because fibres are soft, elastic and flexible,’ says Professor Wang.

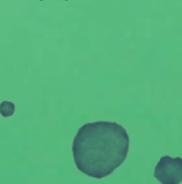
‘We first thought of using fibres as dyes during exploratory work with alpaca fibres, which are naturally dark brown and create a coloured powder. The idea was to skip the traditional dyeing process because it is energy intensive and uses a lot of water.’

The process works in a different way to the normal dyeing technique in that the coloured powder is printed or coated onto the fabric in the same way that t-shirts are screen printed using readily available printing technology.

‘When we saw the H&M Foundation award we thought the work that we had been doing fit the award criteria perfectly so we submitted an application,’ says Professor Wang.

‘Winning this high profile award will allow us to devote more resources to realise the potential of our innovative research. We have developed a successful prototype and are now working to scale up the idea. The challenge is to replicate the look and feel of denim dyed in the traditional way. Advice from denim producers and fashion brands will allow us to determine if the fabric will be accepted by designers and consumers.’

‘If even a small percentage of jeans are dyed using our new technique, the amount of water and energy saved would have a significant impact on the environment.’







PROGRAMMING

**ASSOCIATE  
PROFESSOR  
SEAN MCGEE**

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Associate Professor Sean McGee was looking for a way to burn fat in people who couldn't exercise. What he found was way beyond his expectations.

EXERCISE

'We were looking for a protein that interacted with the genes involved in fat metabolism and we found a drug that has the potential to reverse cardiovascular disease,' says Associate Professor McGee who heads the Metabolic Reprogramming Laboratory in Deakin's School of Medicine.

'During our initial studies, we identified a protein in mice that turns on the genes involved in fat metabolism during exercise. We then genetically altered that protein in the same way that exercise alters it and we saw an exercise-like response. All the fat burning genes in the mice were turned on and their muscles started burning fat. The mice weren't exercising or showing any visible signs of exertion, everything was happening at a molecular level within the muscle.'

'We then looked for a drug that would have the same effect on the protein. Once we found the right drug we delivered it to mice in a one-off dose and we saw changes in fat burning genes that you would see after a one-off bout of exercise.'

Associate Professor McGee found that giving this drug to mice repeatedly over the course of four weeks increased their daily energy expenditure and the amount of fat they burned. The mice did not lose weight because they ate more but

they did become fitter. The drug improved cardiovascular fitness and the ability of muscles to use fat to produce energy.

The mice experienced the health benefits of exercise without actually exercising. Their fasting glucose went down as did their blood lipid levels, which are involved in cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

'When we tested them on the treadmill, the mice that were given the drug were able to run for almost double the time as the mice that were not given the drug. These were mice that hadn't been doing any exercise at all,' says Associate Professor McGee.

'When we tried the drug on obese mice we found that their fat burning levels went up and more surprisingly there was a complete reversal of the heart disease associated with obesity.'

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**Approximately 2.8 million people die each year as a result of being overweight or obese.**

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The drug's effect on heart disease appears to work in two ways – it lowers the bad fats in the body that impact on the heart and it turns on fat burning genes in the heart reducing the fat accumulation that tends to be the cause of heart disease.

The drug works in mice; the race is now on to develop a drug that will work in humans.

Approximately 2.8 million people die each year as a result of being overweight or obese and about 80 per cent of obese people have some level of heart or cardiovascular disease. This drug has the potential to be a new and unique therapeutic tool in the fight against heart disease, diabetes or metabolic disease.

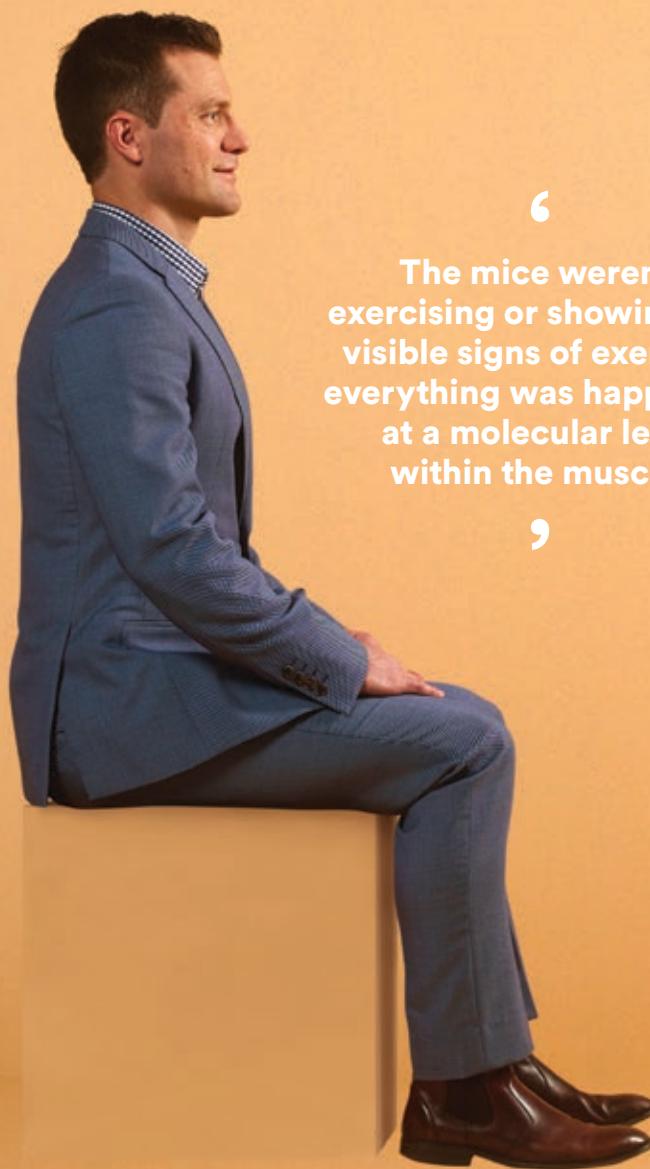
According to Associate Professor McGee, any drug would not be a substitute for a good diet and regular physical exercise, but it could be useful for people with existing heart disease or to prevent heart disease in those who are frail and can't exercise. Many obese patients struggle to exercise as a result of chronic muscle or joint pain and a reduced range of motion. This drug could allow them to start to live a healthier lifestyle.

'Now that we have completed our trials in mice we are redesigning the drug so that it is more specific for humans, ensuring that it only targets the protein we want to manipulate, and then we will begin clinical trials. We hope to have a drug that can be given to humans within two years.'

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**This drug could allow them to start to live a healthier lifestyle.**

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**The mice weren't exercising or showing any visible signs of exertion, everything was happening at a molecular level within the muscle.**

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**Dr Mazher  
Mohammed**

# BODIES

**by**

When Geelong woman Colleen Murray received her 3D printed prosthetic ear last year she cried tears of joy. After losing her left ear in a car accident 55 years earlier, she had struggled with prosthetics that didn't look right or fit properly. To make matters worse, the prosthesis was literally glued in place leaving Colleen constantly concerned that it may fall off at any moment.

# DESIGN

'I was there when Colleen was fitted with her new ear. It was an incredible moment. I felt privileged to have helped change her life in such a profound way,' says Dr Mazher Mohammed, a Research Fellow in Advanced Design at Deakin's School of Engineering.

Dr Mohammed, an expert in bioengineering and medical device technology, collaborated with The Royal Melbourne Hospital to create Colleen's new prosthetic ear.

'We used her CT scan to digitally mirror the right ear and 3D printing technology to create a prosthetic that was far superior to the previous one, in terms of the size and fit. We were able to replicate her original ear to within one tenth of a millimetre with a few clicks of a button. The clinicians were shocked when I came back to them with a model a day after receiving the digital scan,' says Dr Mohammed.

According to Dr Mohammed, this project is just a glimpse of the enormous potential of 3D printing in the medical arena. Current prosthetics are extremely time-consuming and expensive to

produce. The quality of the end product is based on the artistic skill of the clinician making the part.

With 3D printing and medical imaging data, it is possible to get an almost perfect fit to a patient's anatomy whether it is facial reconstruction; bone replacement structures – knees and hips; or rehabilitation devices – orthotics, casts and splints. The techniques trialled can deliver superior results in terms of speed of production, quality, cost, and patient outcomes.

The process begins with medical imaging scans; these are used to construct the digital design that is sent to the 3D printer. Devices can be made from different materials such as silicon, polymers or titanium depending on the part being produced and where it is going to be used.

'We have already designed a titanium jaw and dental implant for a patient who had severe trauma to his upper jaw. It was a similar process to the ear but we were looking at the bone structure and building a part around the defect in the bone,' says Dr Mohammed.

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**The process begins with medical imaging scans; these are used to construct the digital design that is sent to the 3D printer.**

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**I always felt that if I could help just one person with the work that I do then my entire academic career would be a success; now that I have hit that mark, I want to multiply it by ten and by ten again.**

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'Our latest project has examined the construction of a whole lower jaw where we worked on fine tuning the amount of material that we needed in order to produce lighter titanium parts, comparable to the weight of a patient's original bone. We did this by using a lattice structure within the part.'

Dr Mohammed is developing intricate lattice structures made out of titanium that are osteo-integrating which means that the bone will grow into the part and fuse onto the patient. This is a long-term project that will involve cellular testing to see if cells can grow and live within the structures before eventually moving on to human trials. The benefits could be enormous to people requiring bone replacement.

Beyond prosthetics, 3D printing can be used to create low-cost models of body parts that medical students can use to study anatomy and surgeons can use to examine a patient's internal structure before an operation.

'We can also help surgeons do their job with greater accuracy by printing surgical cutting guides designed to the exact topography of a patient's bone and around features such as cancers.'

Teamed with custom-made bone implants, this system would increase the precision of surgery, providing time and cost savings as well as improving recovery time,' says Dr Mohammed.

Deakin University is pioneering the 3D printing of medical devices in Australia. The Centre for Advanced Design and Engineering Training has a comprehensive suite of world-class 3D printers and design technology that allow researchers to construct complex designs and print these in a wide variety of materials. The Centre is working with the Faculty of Health and in partnership with several hospitals and industry partners to link patient care with this cutting edge technology.

'We have a network of surgeons who are demanding these types of options as treatment methodologies. I envision getting the technology to a point where it can be placed in a hospital and used to make custom parts as surgeons require them,' says Dr Mohammed.

'I always felt that if I could help just one person with the work that I do then my entire academic career would be a success; now that I have hit that mark, I want to multiply it by ten and by ten again. That is my goal for the future.'

**Professor  
Soren  
Alexandersen**



# THE VIRUS

In the last half of 2015, 17 babies were admitted to the University Hospital Geelong with what looked like sepsis or meningitis. When samples from the babies were sent for testing they were negative for bacteria but positive for a virus called human parechovirus type 3 (HPeV3).

# WHISPERERS

'The severity of the illness made us wonder if we were dealing with something new. We hadn't seen parechovirus detected in such a large number of babies before,' says Professor Peter Vuillermoz, a paediatrician at the University Hospital Geelong. He brought the outbreak to the attention of Professor Soren Alexandersen and his team at the Geelong Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases.

'I thought that if the paediatricians in Geelong hadn't seen this type of infection before we should sequence the entire genome of the virus so that we could work out whether the virus had changed somehow, and also determine the spread of the virus over time and possibly develop prevention or treatment options,' says Professor Alexandersen.

The virus turned out to be a variant of a known HPeV3 that was first identified in Japan in 2004.

'Different strains of the same virus often recombine, mixing their genetic material to form completely new types that can have different effects on infected individuals. When we sequenced the genome we found

that half of the new virus was made up of the previously identified virus seen in Japan and the other half hadn't been seen before,' says Professor Alexandersen.

'Sequencing the genome of the virus means we can track how the virus spreads over the years or in one outbreak. We hope that learning how the virus spreads may inform strategies to prevent infections in young babies. Prevention of infection in that young age group is the first line of defence until a treatment or vaccine is developed.'

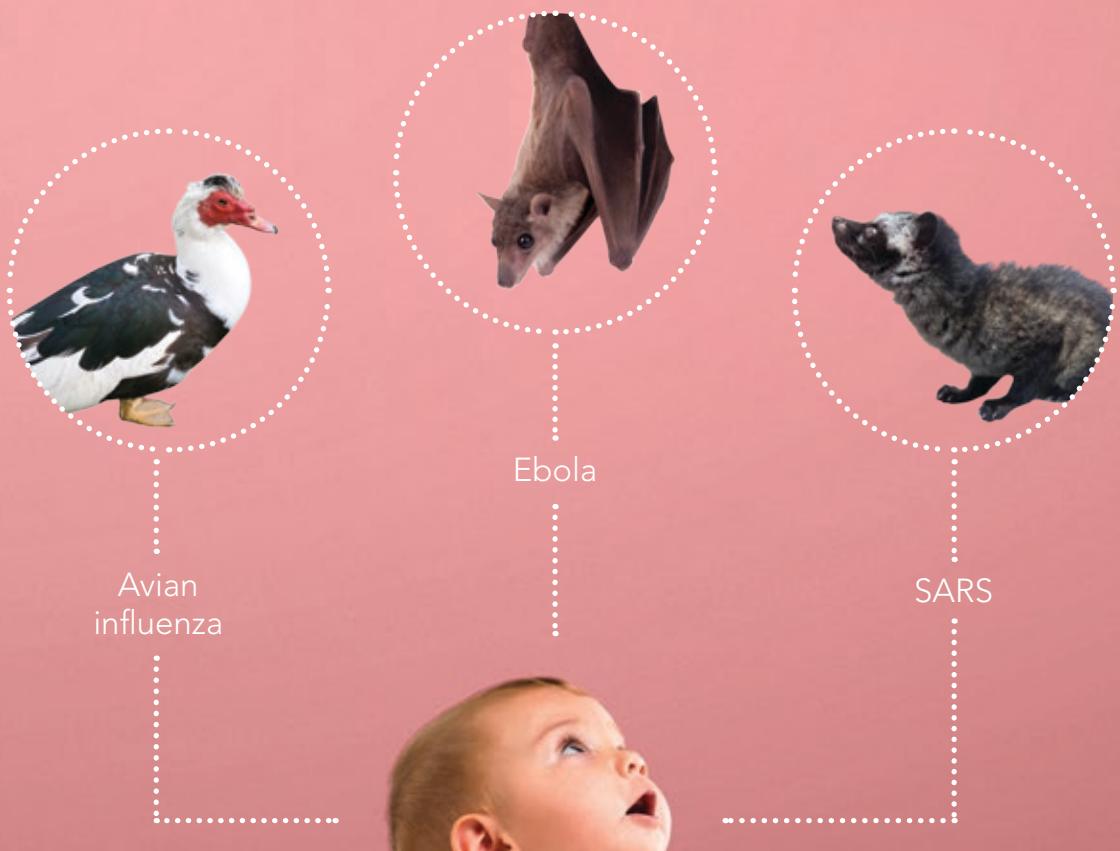
The other advantage of sequencing the complete virus genome is the development of quicker, better or more accurate diagnostics so that doctors don't waste time treating patients for the wrong infection.

'Our ultimate goal is to develop a treatment or a vaccine. We are currently working on the very first step – trying to infect small rodents with the virus. A suitable animal infection model will allow us to test any potential vaccines or possibly develop a treatment, for example, using antibodies which are produced as part of the body's natural immune response to infection,' says Professor Alexandersen.

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**Clinicians often think exclusively in terms of human health and disease, we have a wider perspective and can connect the dots using knowledge from all aspects of health and disease.**

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**The Centre is developing powerful techniques to quickly detect and characterise viruses in any biological sample.**

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The Geelong Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases is a partnership between Deakin University, Barwon Health and the CSIRO Australian Animal Health Laboratory. The Centre is a unique Australian One Health facility, taking a multidisciplinary approach to managing infectious diseases in animals, humans and the environment.

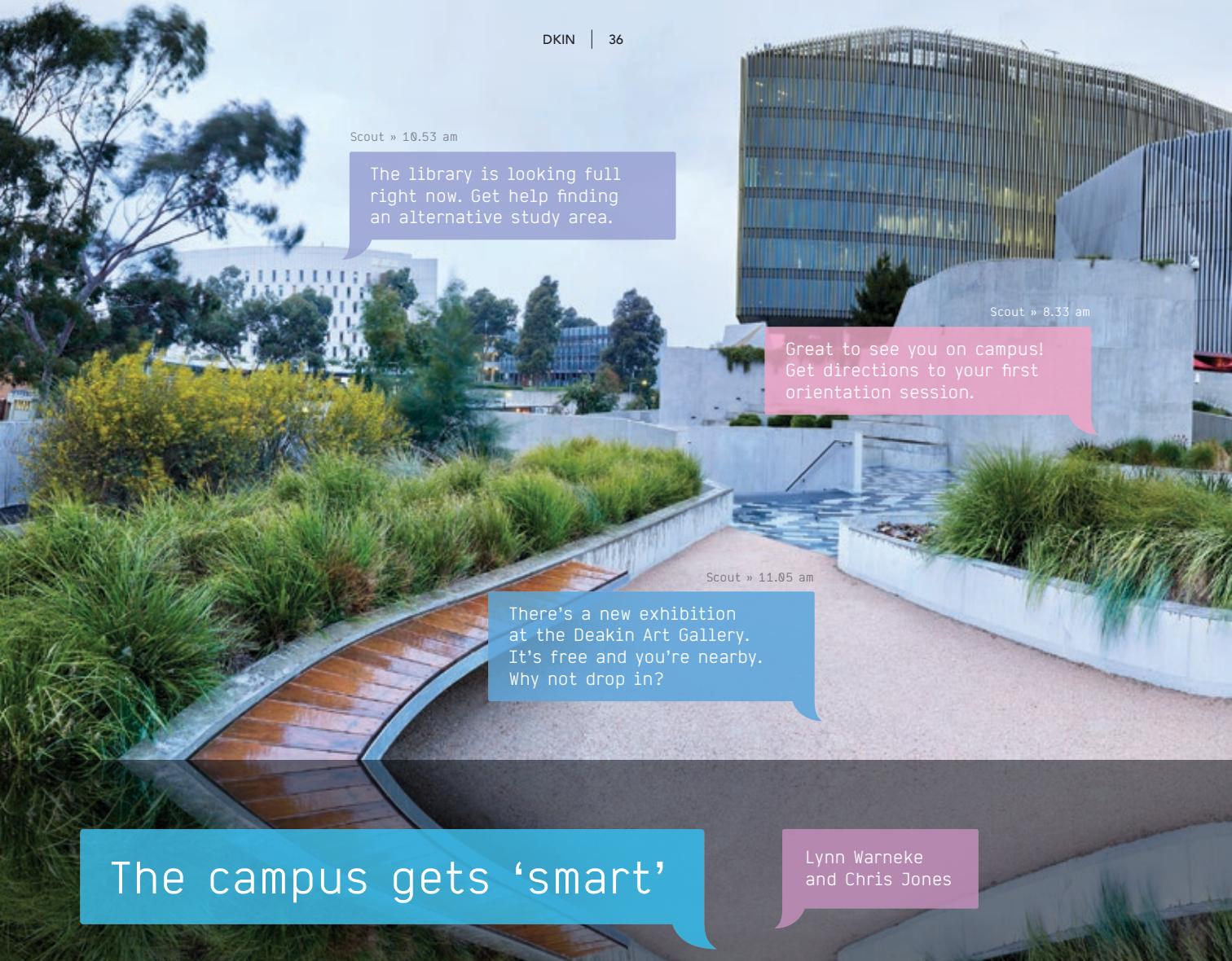
'Having partners who work in human, animal and environmental health means we can work across disciplines and across silos in animal, human or environmental health. Clinicians often think exclusively in terms of human health and disease, we have a wider perspective and can connect the dots using knowledge from all aspects of health and disease.'

Viruses, parasites and bacteria are known to jump between animals and humans sometimes with devastating effects. Avian influenza, Ebola and SARS are just some examples of diseases that may be transferred to humans from animals.

The Centre is developing powerful techniques to quickly detect and characterise viruses in any biological sample.

'Our more basic research will allow us to develop knowledge of viruses present in animals and in the environment. This will make it easier to identify viruses that make the jump to humans and allow us to quickly work on diagnostics. We're contributing to the global collection of virus data and because we are small and nimble we hope that we can interrogate our data more swiftly and with more rigour.'

'One of the advantages of approaching issues like the human parechovirus type 3 virus with the One Health mentality is that our animal studies may provide a clue to the origins of the unknown half of the virus.'



## The campus gets 'smart'

For the past seven years Deakin University has been voted the best university for student satisfaction in Victoria. This is testament to the wonderful work of Deakin's academics and staff who are continually striving to improve every aspect of the university experience. The Smart Campus program is one of Deakin's most ambitious efforts yet to delight its students, alumni and visitors.

The Smart Campus will embed an almost invisible layer of digital smarts into the built environment to make Deakin's campuses more personalised, responsive, efficient and sustainable. Campus visitors, staff and students will find it easier to get around, find a parking space, buy a coffee or meet a friend.

'While Deakin already has a wonderful physical campus environment, the Smart Campus program is about keeping up with digital advances occurring in all aspects of our lives and creating a campus that knows you and can make really useful things

happen for you,' says Lynn Warneke, Executive Director of Channels and Platforms.

Warneke is working with Chris Jones, Executive Director of the Campus Services Division, to realise the digital transformation of Deakin's campuses.

'We already have sensors all over the campus that are undertaking a multitude of tasks such as lighting and heating. The Smart Campus program will link these technologies and develop new ones to transform how people experience a day on campus or their life on campus,' says Jones.

Lynn Warneke  
and Chris Jones

'We have started by focusing on one of the most tangible experiences people have on campus – finding their way around,' says Warneke.

'Deakin's location and occupancy platform uses our extensive WiFi network to determine the position of all connected devices on campus. From there, our Scout mobile app can guide students, staff and visitors around the campus, while delivering relevant content to their device based on their location.'



Through Scout, students can view occupancy 'heat maps' that will help them to identify busy and quiet areas on campus and determine the best place to study. If users choose to opt in to the services available through Scout, the campus environment will be able to react to them with more personalised experiences.

For example, they may be able to see if members of their study group are on campus, or if a friend is in a café. They can receive notifications through Scout about events that are happening nearby or relevant food and drink offers as they pass a café.

'We're also testing the ability of Scout to connect to the digital smart screens we have around campus in order to deliver timely, personalised information as individuals approach,' says Warneke.

With Smart Campus, Deakin will be able to connect with students in ways that make a large, complex campus feel intimate. In the future

it may be possible to track the wellbeing of students via their patterns of attendance and movement around the campus. Depending on student preferences this might trigger a staff member to check in with the student.

'The ability of the campus to sense and respond to users' interactions will also improve efficiency and sustainability. For example, smart heating and lighting will adjust to individual preferences,' says Jones.

'The enormous amounts of data generated from user activity and sensors will mean that campus management decisions will be based on real data, whether it's the optimal use of teaching spaces, traffic control, scheduling security patrols or waste management.'

The technology layer is just one aspect of the program. It can only be fully effective if there is strong involvement from Deakin staff and students. All activities are overseen by the Smart Campus Steering

Committee which has representation from all areas of the Deakin community including the Deakin University Student Association.

Every initiative undergoes extensive functionality, usability and desirability testing before it is deployed. Feedback from students has stressed the need to be transparent and provide clear options to opt in or out of any service. Privacy and security of data are of paramount importance to Deakin, and inform all aspects of the program.

Deakin's Smart Campus strategy and program has already been recognised for its complexity, scale, impact and innovation, having been included in the prestigious 2017 Digital Edge 50. Deakin is the only Australian university named in this year's list, which recognises just 50 organisations worldwide that are excelling in digital transformation.

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*It's like having  
Siri, but a Siri that  
organises your life.*

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# Dreaming Genie



Starting university can be a daunting experience. Many students feel overwhelmed and intimidated by the size of the campus and new expectations. Imagine having a personal assistant talking you through where you need to be, tracking your workload and providing motivation just when you need it. In 2018 Deakin students will have just that – Genie, a voice-activated digital assistant, will help them get the most out of university life.

The brainchild of William Confalonieri, Deakin's Chief Digital Officer, Genie was brought to life by a talented team led by Raymond Cooke, Manager of Personalised and Cognitive Platforms at eSolutions.

'We had very ambitious dreams and there was no one who could provide what we were dreaming of so we decided to create it ourselves,' says Confalonieri.

'The philosophy behind Genie was to develop a tool that makes university life easier and more productive in a way that is unique to each student. We wanted to create a personal assistant that not only helps with administration tasks such as getting a student card and enrolling on time but also helps students to succeed,' says Confalonieri.

Genie is a mobile application with voice control capabilities. It incorporates a number of technologies – chatbots, artificial



*Raymond  
Cooke*

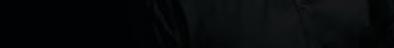


intelligence and a predictive analytics 'intelligent' engine – that allow it to learn about and interact with its user. It acts as the front door to Deakin's network of study support services and systems and the wider web, pulling out information specific to the user and eliminating the need for searching and navigation.

'Genie understands natural language either spoken or typed and learns from what people are asking to become smarter and more accurate every day,' says Cooke. 'It can respond to questions, run actions, retrieve information and provide advice.'



*William  
Confalonieri*



Ask Genie 'What's on for today?' and a list of items from the student's calendar and Deakin's learning management system pop up on the screen.

Genie can deliver learning materials from the Cloud, show assignment due dates and borrow books from the library, all by voice command. It also lets Deakin send important updates to students. There will be no more waiting outside an empty room wondering whether a lecture has been moved or cancelled.

Genie gets to know the student's progress and goals and provides personalised encouragement and motivation. Genie gets proactive with conversations such as, 'How are

you going with that assignment?', ensuring that students get the support they need before it's too late. It also gets personal with messages such as, 'A new lecture recording is available for viewing' or 'Your Deakin Card balance is low do you want to top it up now?'

'We have followed user-centred design principles in developing Genie to make sure that it will solve real problems that matter to our students,' says Cooke.

The feedback from a group of Business and Law students who have been trialling Genie this year has been extremely positive.

'It's given me information that I didn't even know about, so it's really useful.'

'Genie is an example of how Deakin is pushing the digital frontier to provide something unique and useful to its students now and also preparing them for a future in which they will encounter this type of technology in their workplaces,' says Confalonieri.

'There are technology companies developing generic digital assistants but there is nothing that is focused on the specifics of an organisation in the way that Genie is. Genie is unique on the global stage because it develops a deep connection between Deakin and its students.'

'As we enter an era of lifelong learning Genie has the potential to maintain an ongoing relationship between Deakin graduates and their University.'

After extensive user testing and piloting Genie will be made available to new students when they enrol through VTAC in 2017 and to all Deakin students at the beginning of 2018.

Dean Landy is a partner at the architectural practice ClarkeHopkinsClarke where he specialises in urban design. He is also the founder of the One Heart Foundation a not-for-profit that is transforming the lives of orphans in Kenya. Dean is passionate about creating vibrant communities and is the driving force behind a movement to deliver socially, environmentally and economically sustainable urban developments. Here Dean talks about having a purpose driven career, understanding your 'why' and the defining moment of his life.



### **Can you tell us about your time at Deakin? Is there anything you especially remember?**

I loved my time at Deakin. In my second year the School of Architecture moved from the Waurn Ponds Campus to Waterfront Campus. We were the first group in the new building and it changed the way we worked, we had new facilities and more space. The most memorable part of my experience at Deakin was a six-month international exchange to Nottingham University during my third year. The Head of the School at the time, Professor Nick Beattie, agreed to set up the program for me. We pioneered something that was then offered to other students.

### **What do you believe Deakin University has shown you or given you as a person?**

In my final year, Professor Beattie allowed me to choose my own project. I studied the 1960s housing commission tower in Williamstown. I interviewed the residents about their needs and worked with the council to identify parcels of land to develop family focused social

housing in the area. I also created a plan to convert the existing building into a mixed use facility including a hotel component, social housing and retail. It was a great experience and shows the flexibility of Deakin. This has become the focus of my career – working to achieve a commercially viable outcome that also has a good social outcome.

### **What has been your journey since finishing your course?**

I took a year out during my degree to work at ClarkeHopkinsClarke (CHC). Once I went back to Deakin I maintained a part-time position at CHC which allowed me to take my last two years of study to another level. After graduation I was offered a full-time job at CHC and became a partner within five years. I have strived to have what I define as a purpose-driven career. Over the years as the practice has grown, I have specialised in urban design focusing on creating town centres that encourage connections.

During my exchange in the UK, I volunteered for a charity that undertakes building projects in developing countries. It opened my eyes to the opportunities of architecture – I realised that I could use that professional skill base to work in different environments. That led to the founding of the One Heart Foundation. We work in Kenya to develop schools, homes and eco farms that house and care for orphaned and abandoned children.

### **Have you always wanted to pursue the kind of career you have embarked on? If so, when and how did you realise?**

I grew up creating Lego cities and by the time I reached year 10, I realised I wanted to work in construction.

Architecture stood out because of the design component. My interest has evolved from being focused on designing individual buildings to urban design – creating human centered design on an urban scale.

### **What has been the highlight of your career?**

One of the highlights of my career has been writing Creating Vibrant Communities. My goal is to improve the quality of people's lives by creating stronger communities and the book is helping me achieve this by laying the foundation to open up further discussion.

Founding One Heart is another highlight. Seeing the change in the lives of the children helped by the foundation has been a defining moment in my life.

### **What advice would you give graduates wanting to pursue a similar profession?**

The key to success is to find your motivation – your 'why'. Discover what motivates you to do what you are doing and what you want to do next. Recognition and money are great but you need to think about the impact of your work on the community. How will you have a positive influence on the lives of those around you? Consider the legacy you are leaving today and tomorrow.

### **What is something that amazes you?**

What amazes me is the untapped potential hidden inside people if we can only help them unlock it. I see it in the children at One Heart. Children given care, love and an education go from facing a bleak future and possibly an early death to being a positive influence on the lives of others.

# DEAN LANDY

Bachelor of Arts  
(Architecture) 1998



Bachelor of Architecture  
(Honours) 2001

2017 Young Alumnus of the Year

**Dr James Fitzsimons** is Director of Conservation (Australia Program) at the world's largest conservation NGO, The Nature Conservancy. During a more than 20 year career in conservation, he has helped protect some of Australia's most important landscapes and ecosystems. Here he talks about his long history with Deakin, growing oysters in Port Phillip Bay and how private citizens can protect nature.

**Can you tell us about your time at Deakin? Is there anything you especially remember?**

I've had a long association with Deakin starting with my undergraduate degree in 1995, then Honours and PhD, and now as an Adjunct Professor in the School of Life and Environmental Sciences. During this time there have been many memorable events. O-week was always good and the 90s was a great time for Australian bands, many of which visited Deakin.

**Was there anyone you met at Deakin who has had an impact on you?**

Associate Professor Geoff Wescott was my supervisor during my Honours and PhD and after 22 years we continue to collaborate and write together, including editing a couple of books. Geoff and I have a mutual interest in conservation and protected area policy, as well as private land conservation. Private land conservation involves private landowners protecting and managing the habitat on their own property.

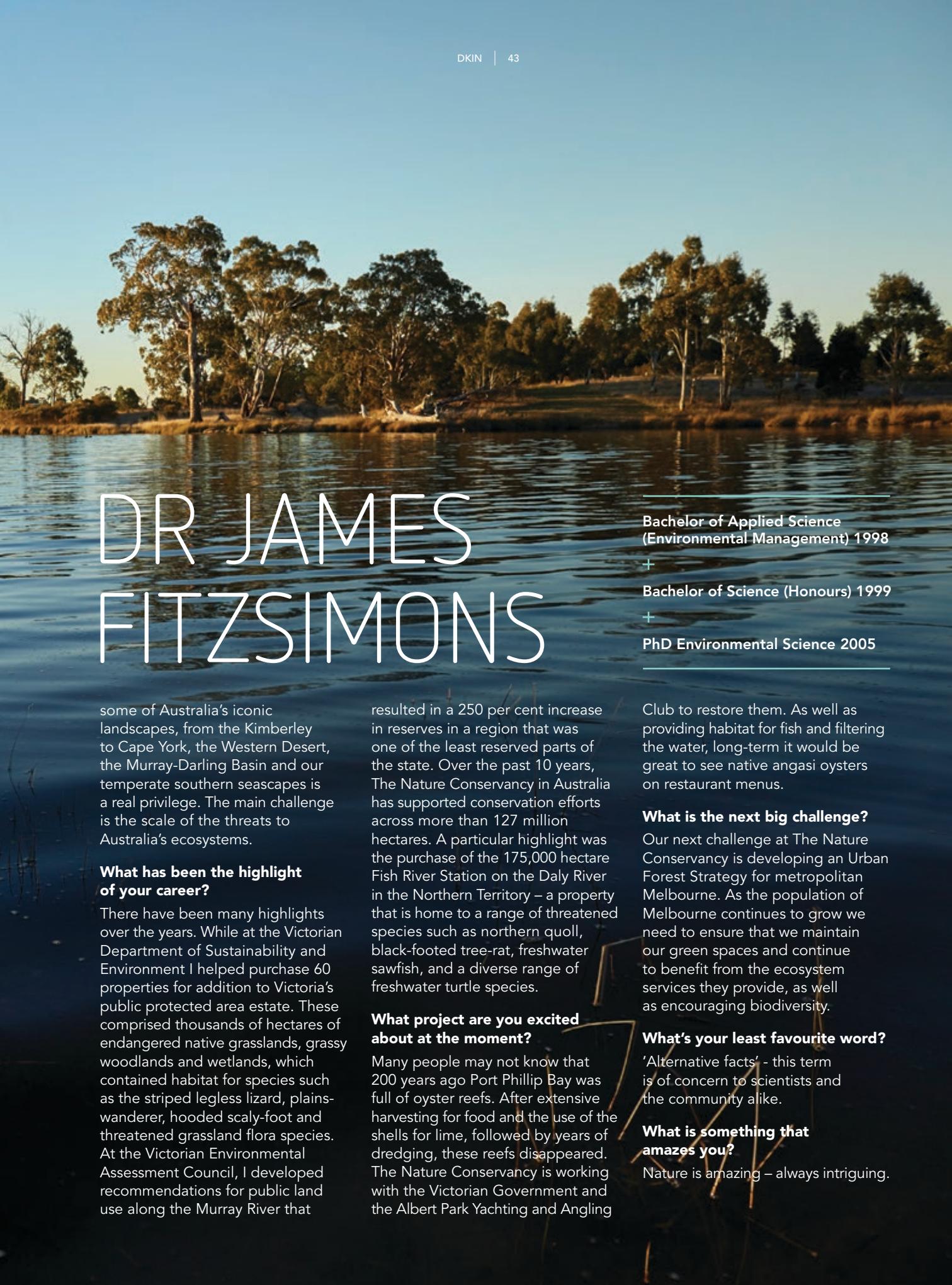
**What has been your journey since finishing your course?**

While completing my Honours and PhD, I worked for the Victorian Department of Sustainability campuses. My most vivid memory is the first day of lectures when Associate Professor Geoff Wescott was talking about national parks and conservation policy. It was at that moment that I knew I'd made the right choice with the course.

and Environment in protected area establishment and policy. I then went to the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council undertaking public land use investigations for the controversial East Gippsland Forests and the River Red Gum floodplains of northern Victoria. Following short secondments with the Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability and Bush Heritage Australia, I took on my current role as Director of Conservation for the Australia Program of The Nature Conservancy.

**What is your favourite aspect of your current role and what are the challenges?**

I enjoy working with the super smart and dedicated people at The Nature Conservancy. I also enjoy dealing with a diverse range of people – politicians, traditional land owners, scientists, fishermen, corporate leaders – in our efforts to conserve and sustainably manage Australia's landscapes and ecosystems. Working in



# DR JAMES FITZSIMONS

some of Australia's iconic landscapes, from the Kimberley to Cape York, the Western Desert, the Murray-Darling Basin and our temperate southern seascapes is a real privilege. The main challenge is the scale of the threats to Australia's ecosystems.

**What has been the highlight of your career?**

There have been many highlights over the years. While at the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment I helped purchase 60 properties for addition to Victoria's public protected area estate. These comprised thousands of hectares of endangered native grasslands, grassy woodlands and wetlands, which contained habitat for species such as the striped legless lizard, plains-wanderer, hooded scaly-foot and threatened grassland flora species. At the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, I developed recommendations for public land use along the Murray River that

resulted in a 250 per cent increase in reserves in a region that was one of the least reserved parts of the state. Over the past 10 years, The Nature Conservancy in Australia has supported conservation efforts across more than 127 million hectares. A particular highlight was the purchase of the 175,000 hectare Fish River Station on the Daly River in the Northern Territory – a property that is home to a range of threatened species such as northern quoll, black-footed tree-rat, freshwater sawfish, and a diverse range of freshwater turtle species.

**What project are you excited about at the moment?**

Many people may not know that 200 years ago Port Phillip Bay was full of oyster reefs. After extensive harvesting for food and the use of the shells for lime, followed by years of dredging, these reefs disappeared. The Nature Conservancy is working with the Victorian Government and the Albert Park Yachting and Angling

**Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Management) 1998**

**Bachelor of Science (Honours) 1999**

**PhD Environmental Science 2005**

Club to restore them. As well as providing habitat for fish and filtering the water, long-term it would be great to see native angasi oysters on restaurant menus.

**What is the next big challenge?**

Our next challenge at The Nature Conservancy is developing an Urban Forest Strategy for metropolitan Melbourne. As the population of Melbourne continues to grow we need to ensure that we maintain our green spaces and continue to benefit from the ecosystem services they provide, as well as encouraging biodiversity.

**What's your least favourite word?**

'Alternative facts' - this term is of concern to scientists and the community alike.

**What is something that amazes you?**

Nature is amazing – always intriguing.

# Dr Jim Cousins AO

**Deakin Honorary  
Doctorate 2004**



Dr Jim Cousins AO has not followed a conventional career path. Earlier in his career he ran a successful textile company, then over many decades has been a property developer and dealt in art and antiques, but it is his work as a voluntary arts administrator and philanthropist that has been the most fulfilling. Over the past 30 years, Jim has quietly supported and redeveloped some of our most valued cultural institutions. His work will have a lasting impact on the Victorian community and Deakin University. Here he talks about his eclectic career, the importance of volunteering, and his involvement in the development of Deakin's Waterfront Campus.

**You have had such a diverse career. Could you tell us what motivated you to make the career choices you made?**

My unusual background has given me a different slant on life. I was a casualty of WWII, who was adopted by a family in Melbourne. I always felt lucky to have been placed in excellent hands and to have survived those early years and then to receive a private school education. I was part way through a law degree at Melbourne University when I lost my adoptive parents. I needed to support myself so I started working at a textile company. Over a period of 12 years I worked my way up to running the business. At the age of 32 I felt I had achieved everything I could in that role so I became

self-employed. At the time my wife and I were buying and selling a property or two, and after a trip to Europe we became involved in antique dealing.

**After you moved to Geelong you became involved in public life. How did this come about?**

The antique business took us to Geelong and it was there that I first became involved in public life. I was asked to join the board of the Geelong Art Gallery. We started to raise money and began the first renovations of the Gallery building. My success with the Gallery led me to become involved in other community organisations, and then to establish the Committee for Geelong.



### **What has been a highlight of your career/life?**

My involvement in public life has been a highlight of my life. Through the Committee for Geelong, I helped secure funding for the Geelong Ring Road and the redevelopment of the football stadium. I am also proud of my role in the redevelopment of the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), the NGV on Federation Square and The Australian Ballet. A particular high point was my work to establish the Melbourne Recital Centre. That was a big project and a major achievement.

### **What do you love about Geelong?**

Geelong is a great place with amazing potential. Unfortunately, its history of boom and bust has

resulted in an underdog mentality that is difficult to overcome. Deakin has done a lot to change this concept, and I feel that I have also played a role through my work with the Committee for Geelong.

### **Why is it important to support the arts?**

Arts organisations bring people together and make the community stronger. Melbourne would be a poorer place without the NGV, the Melbourne Museum, the Melbourne Recital Centre, all its theatres and The Australian Ballet.

### **Why do you feel it is important for people to support universities?**

The slowing of the resource boom has forced Australians to understand the importance of universities and

how they can add value to the community, particularly in areas of new industry and research. Deakin's work in carbon fibre is a great example of how universities can support industry.

### **What insights or encouragement would you like to pass on to others about giving their time, expertise or financial support to help others?**

There is a lot of satisfaction in supporting community organisations. So many areas of our community are reliant on voluntary bodies – the health sector, schools, local sports clubs. It's important to reflect on the value you are adding to the community, the reason for 'being in your skin', and what you will leave behind.

# Luke Longo

Bachelor of Commerce  
1996

Luke Longo is Chief Executive Officer of Aquila, a leading retailer of men's footwear and fashion in Australia. Established in 1958 by Luke's grandfather Tony Longo, Aquila has evolved from its humble beginnings in a small factory in Melbourne to a national operation that employs hundreds of people across Australia. Here Luke discusses adjusting to the expectations of university, the importance of working on the shop floor, and the need for a competitive advantage.



### **Can you tell us about your time at Deakin?**

I began my studies at Deakin in 1993. It was a big change from high school because the onus to study and attend lectures was on the student – the lecturers weren't there to hold your hand. I really enjoyed that aspect of university because it was a taste of what it would be like in the real world.

### **Is there anything you especially remember?**

I particularly remember Jerry Soldatos who was head of marketing at the time. He had some insights that I still remember today such as the importance of having a competitive advantage. Coincidentally, Jerry had also taught my father many years earlier.

### **Why did you decide to study at Deakin?**

Deakin was known for having a strong practical application to courses – it wasn't just theory and textbook learning. That practical aspect was a big deciding factor for me. I distinctly remember having to create a marketing plan for a pharmaceutical company and presenting that plan to the company executives. This was challenging for an 18-year-old but a very valuable experience.

### **How has it assisted you in your career?**

Deakin provided me with skills that I have used throughout my career – an understanding of financial information, the ability to analyse and problem solve, and presentation skills. My degree has also given me a broad understanding of the business world and allowed me to contribute to conversations about finance, marketing, accounting and economics.

### **What has been your journey since finishing your course? Briefly outline your career path prior to your current role.**

I initially worked on the shop floor at Aquila and gradually made my way through different roles and then to

CEO. Since becoming CEO 10 years ago, I have expanded the business operations by introducing new product categories and expanding the store network to more than 50 stores nationally (up from 18 when I first took over). The company now employs more than 300 staff.

### **Have you always wanted to pursue the kind of career you have embarked on?**

I always wanted to work in a business environment but I didn't have a passion for retail until I worked on the shop floor. I found that I enjoyed dealing with customers and the challenge/opportunity for Aquila to be a leading brand in Australian retail.



### **What is your favourite aspect of your current role? What are the challenges?**

The changing nature of retail is my favourite and also the most challenging part of the role. Retail has changed dramatically since I first started in the mid 90s. Back then we didn't even trade on Sundays! Thanks to the internet, we now compete with the best retailers from around the world 24/7. This means we need to focus on what makes us distinctive – our Italian heritage, style and quality. You can't create that overnight – it's our competitive advantage!

### **What has been the highlight of your career?**

One of the highlights has been steering the business into a position where we were able to attract outside investment to enable further growth.

### **What has been the biggest influence on your career?**

My father has been a great role model. He's a great businessman and mentor. He managed to successfully steer the business through the early 90s when the country was going through an economic recession.

### **What advice would you give graduates wanting to pursue a similar profession?**

You need to be passionate if you want to succeed. Everything you learn at school and university is critically important and will help you in your career but you have to be passionate – you must love it.

### **What do you believe Deakin University has shown you/given you as a person?**

Deakin has enabled me to realise my dreams. It has given me a strong foundation of knowledge that I have used to develop the business.

### **You support a charity called Wear for Success. What drew you to this group?**

My friend Paul Salmon (former AFL player) is an ambassador for Wear for Success and asked me to help them out. What I like about Wear for Success is that they have a direct impact on people's lives. They help the long-term unemployed, migrants and those with mental health issues get into the workforce by providing them with professional clothing to wear to their job interviews. The shoes and clothes we donate to Wear for Success go directly to the person in need.

### **Is there any advice you would give to a person who is starting out in your career?**

To truly understand how a business operates it's important to ensure you experience all facets of that business.

# ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

Deakin alumni have taken many varied paths, and it is important that this diversity and depth is celebrated. It is these personal stories that inspire us, make us reflect and even change our perspectives and directions.



## Jessica Holsman

Graduate Diploma of Psychology 2014

Jessica thought she would pursue a career in psychology, but she soon found her passions for entrepreneurship and running her own business taking over. Along with being the Managing Director at Educationery and the author of *The High School Survival Guide*, Jessica is the YouTube content creator for *Study With Jess*. Started as a study skills channel, *Study With Jess* has been immensely popular with 350,000 subscribers and over 14 million views.

## Eva Kasim

Graduate Diploma of Disability Studies 1999  
Master of Disability Studies 2000  
2015 Community Service Award

Studying in Australia as an international student gave Eva an insight into how important it is to respect and support one another. Eva's passion has seen her advocate for disability policy reform and as well as encouraging young people with disabilities to be confident and to attend school. Eva's career has been closely intertwined with her personal beliefs, and she currently works as a Senior Policy Analyst at the Ministry of Social Affairs in the Republic of Indonesia. Previously, Eva was the Head of the Social Rehabilitation Centre for People with Hearing and Speech Impairment, and the Deputy Director for Social Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities.

## Mukund Narayananamurti

Bachelor of Commerce 2001  
Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) 2003  
2011 Alumni of the Year

Mukund is the CEO of Asialink Business and he had always wanted to be at the forefront of Australia's engagement with Asia. Mukund's previous roles have been with KPMG and Deakin University and he received his MBA from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a Sloan Fellow in Innovation and Global Leadership. He credits his Deakin Honours degree with preparing him effectively for the workforce by developing his skills in critical analysis, lateral thinking and influencing, and instilling the value of professional perseverance. Mukund was also a founding member of the Deakin Commerce Alumni Chapter.



FROM LEFT

**Jessica  
Holsman****Mukund  
Narayananamurti**

Read more inspirational  
alumni stories at  
[deakin.edu.au/alumni/  
where-are-they-now](http://deakin.edu.au/alumni/where-are-they-now)



The Deakin Alumni Relations  
Office invites you to share  
your story – please email  
[deakinalumni@deakin.edu.au](mailto:deakinalumni@deakin.edu.au)

### Message from our

# VICE-PRESIDENT AND CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER



## Rebecca Peel

Graduate Diploma  
of Education 2009

Pursuing a Graduate Diploma in Education, Rebecca was fascinated by learning and wanted a career that involved investing in people. She is currently the Associate Director, Talent and People Management at the Rockefeller Foundation. Describing herself as energetic and authentic, Rebecca feels privileged to hold a position that allows her to follow her passions. Prior to the Rockefeller Foundation, Rebecca was one of the first digital media recruiters at Lululemon Athletica, spent time in Ghana developing a curriculum for the Ministry of Food and Agriculture's colleges, and led recruitment and hiring for Engineers Without Borders.

Advances in technology provoke us to think differently and to seek new solutions to complex problems. This dKin edition provides insight into some of the solutions tackling technological, logistical, global health and environmental challenges. It is a mere snapshot of what our inspirational alumni and our researchers are achieving. The world is changing at a rapid pace but it is those with creative minds and philanthropic hearts who are changing it for the better.

Deakin alumni will always be a significant part of the University lifecycle. Deakin is still a young University, but the accomplishments of our alumni are phenomenal.

With students now being educated across five campuses, including our Cloud Campus, the Deakin University landscape is changing and so too are the needs of our students and our graduates. Deakin will continue to invest in graduate employability, the prosperity of our alumni and the growth of our Alumni Community.

We are extremely proud of the changes that Deakin alumni and Deakin researchers are making in the world. Deakin is at the forefront of the innovation and creativity boom, and we hope that these insights inspire you to keep in contact with each other and with your University.

**Ron Fairchild**  
Vice-President and  
Chief Advancement Officer

# STAY CONNECTED

## with your Alumni Community

Photo credit: Donna Squire

Your connection with Deakin University does not end when you graduate. Students automatically transition to alumnus upon graduation and can enjoy the many benefits that the Deakin Alumni Community has to offer. Our alumni program is designed to offer you meaningful lifelong engagement, no matter what stage of life you are in or where you are across the globe.

As an alumnus you have access to a range of exclusive benefits – from networking and career development opportunities designed around your disciplines and interests, to online resources and publications. Annually, over 100 events are delivered domestically and internationally, along with webinars spanning a diverse range of topics.

With more than 230,000 alumni across the world in over 110 countries, Deakin's alumni network and program is vibrant and diverse. Our program has been designed for you, so we encourage you to stay connected and to keep your contact details up to date at [engage.deakin.edu.au](http://engage.deakin.edu.au)

### About us

Learn more about the alumni program by visiting [deakin.edu.au/alumni](http://deakin.edu.au/alumni) or contact the Alumni Relations Office (ARO). The ARO is established to co-ordinate alumni activities and communications for the many graduates, networks and interest groups that form part of the global community. Our team is looking forward to hearing from you.

### Contact us

**Deakin Alumni Relations Office**  
Melbourne Burwood Campus  
Burwood Victoria 3125 Australia  
+61 3 5227 1019  
[deakinalumni@deakin.edu.au](mailto:deakinalumni@deakin.edu.au)

### Social media

You can follow Deakin Alumni on Facebook and connect via LinkedIn to stay in touch.

- [!\[\]\(6c348663511051f89cecad85b4c961aa\_img.jpg\) facebook.com/deakinalumni](https://facebook.com/deakinalumni)
- [!\[\]\(2d9c785093d24d9bd68f5d98e3c26cf4\_img.jpg\) linkedin.com/company/deakinalumni](https://linkedin.com/company/deakinalumni)

### Chapters and networks

Our chapters and networks have been formed around common interests, fields of study (faculty/school) and geographical locations both nationally and internationally. Alumni networks and chapters provide you with opportunities to connect through networking and social events, reunions, and tailored professional development. We encourage you to participate and contribute to the chapters' continued management and development. New networks are being established all the time. See [deakin.edu.au/alumni](http://deakin.edu.au/alumni) for more information.

### Monthly enewsletters

Ensure your contact details are up to date to receive our monthly alumni enewsletter, dKin Times. In each edition we share alumni news, events, new benefits, competitions and volunteer opportunities.

### Deakin Alumni Awards

Each year, Deakin's Alumni Awards recognise outstanding alumni around the world who have significantly contributed to their professions and their communities. Please consider submitting a nomination.

### Library membership

You can access a range of library and information resources through the Deakin University Library. Membership is free to access selected digital resources and borrow books from campus libraries. Alumni can sign up [deakin.edu.au/library/join/alumni](http://deakin.edu.au/library/join/alumni)



# GIVING TO DEAKIN

Photo credit: Simon Fox



Giving is a very personal act. It is why, in most cases, those that give feel they have gained just as much from the experience as those directly impacted by their gift.

Deakin continues to receive generous support from friends and alumni worldwide. This has helped the University to augment funding provided by the Federal Government and maintain the quality of its educational programs and

learning environments as well as deliver research that impacts on the communities we serve.

In the future, your University will be increasingly reliant on support to continue to fund new programs and initiatives, scholarships and facilities.

Through leadership in giving we inspire others – it is not how much you give, it is that you give and believe you can make a difference in the world. There are a number of ways you can support Deakin, they include:

## **Student scholarships**

Deakin is committed to offering educational experiences that widen participation and support students from diverse backgrounds. Help students access, participate and achieve through higher education by giving to student scholarships.

## **Grants and donations**

Your donation may be in the form of a monetary grant or a gift of a significant item; for example the giving of a historic book collection to the library, an artwork to the collection or materials for use in education and research programs. You can also direct your gift to a particular program, initiative, faculty or research centre.

## **Major gifts**

The gift of learning and pioneering research is changing lives now and into the future, as well as making a difference to communities here and around the world. A dedicated team works closely with individuals, trusts and foundations, and the corporate sector to match areas of personal giving interest with Deakin funding priorities. This team is highly motivated to ensure your gift has a lasting impact.

## **Planned giving**

An estate gift is much more than a financial decision. It is a personal statement about who you are and what you care about. You can give to Deakin through bequests, wills and trust distributions leaving a lasting legacy to assist students and research to transform the lives of future generations.



For more information on giving to Deakin, visit [deakin.edu.au/giving](http://deakin.edu.au/giving) or email [giving@deakin.edu.au](mailto:giving@deakin.edu.au)



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