

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2023



MACQUARIE
University
SYDNEY · AUSTRALIA

**SMART GREEN CITIES
RESEARCH CENTRE**



NEWSLETTER

Executive Update

Inaugural Advisory Panel

28 September was the first meeting of the Centre's Advisory Board. You can see from the list of members (attached), the Advisory Board is an amazing group of people, with diverse and deep experience across the sector. We are lucky to have their advice and support and look forward to working with them over the next few years!

Strategic Plan

Inspired by our early workshops, the Executive Group has continued with the Centre's strategic planning process and look forward to sharing this with members and receiving feedback after our final planning meeting in late November.

Activities

We have had good crowds for recent events, including the Nature Positive Economy and Food Symposium - we hope you enjoyed them, and remember to put next month's Thought Leadership series on Batteries and Storage in your diaries. Finally, please encourage your undergraduate and postgraduate students to apply for our Summer Scholarship Program and the chance to work on a range of Smart Green Cities projects.

Diary Dates – Upcoming SGC activities

Thursday 9 November 2023, 12pm-1pm 18WW 1.85

Lunchtime Thought Leadership - Batteries & Storage: Associate Professor Peter Davies & Dr Sara Deilami

Do existing government initiatives for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) adequately support the shift towards renewable energy? What are the primary obstacles impeding this transition? Are Electric Vehicles a viable replacement for traditional vehicles in achieving zero net emissions in road transport by 2050?

Join us for an engaging discussion on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and the significance of their role in the transition towards renewable energy. We will talk about the technology behind BESS, its applications in decarbonizing the electricity sector, and its impact on grid stability. We will explore Vehicle-

to-Grid (V2G) aspects, new government recommendations and policies, and wholesale electricity prices and consider the viability of batteries and Electric Vehicles (EVs) as an investment and their potential to replace traditional vehicles in the near future. BYO Lunch. Tea, coffee and snacks provided. [Information & Tickets](#)

Wednesday 22 November 2023, 9am-1pm 25WW 1.20 – TBC

Drone Technology & Applications – An Industry Workshop: Professors Richard Han & Michael Sheng

Macquarie University staff & Industry representatives will discuss Drone technology and applications. The [MQDroneLab](#) are showcasing the University's unique research capabilities with live drone demonstrations and a poster session. A light lunch will be served. As an industry event, numbers are limited [RSVP Required](#). Please Note: all MQ staff/student seat allocations will need to be reconfirmed closer to the event.

Tuesday 5 December 2023, 3pm-5pm 16WW 1.27

Offshore Energy: Professor Melanie Bishop & End-of-Year Networking Session

The ocean holds tremendous potential to provide clean energy. We will unpack some of the opportunities and the challenges associated with offshore wind. Followed by pizza & drinks. [Information & Tickets](#)

Mid-February 2024, 10.30am-1pm 16WW 1.27

2024 Workshop 1 – 2024 Brainstorming

Members and would-be-members come together in our annual workshop looking to the year ahead. Bring your cross disciplinary project and event ideas to share. Discuss suggested priorities for workshops and funding with the view of aligning activities to our Draft Strategic Plan. Morning tea & lunch provided.

Mid-March 2024, 9am-1pm TBC

AI & Data Security – An Industry Workshop – Professor Michael Sheng

Macquarie University & Industry Staff will talk about AI technology and applications, highlighting the University's unique research capabilities and highlighting the pros and cons of AI. A light lunch will be served. As an industry event, numbers are limited. Further information & tickets available early next year.

Other Activities:

Wednesday 23 October 10-12pm

RONIN is the Macquarie University cloud-based infrastructure for research computing.

This [workshop](#) provides an overview high-level information and demonstration and teach you all the basics.

Wednesday 25 October 5.30pm City Campus, 123 Pitt Street, Level 24

Regulation of hydrogen and energy laws related to the Energy sector

The Transforming Energy Markets (TEM) Research Centre and Centre for Energy and Natural Resources Innovation and Transformation (CENRIT) host an evening seminar with hydrogen regulation expert Dr Ruven Fleming, University of Groningen. [Information & Tickets](#) register by 20 October.

Wednesday 22 November 2023 9am-5pm RMIT City Campus, Melbourne

Circular Economy Research Network of the Asia-Pacific (CERN-APac) inaugural conference

Featuring well-known sustainability experts including former Deputy Victorian Premier Prof John Thwaites. The conference follows the 20-21 November [Circularity 2023 conference](#) being hosted by Planet Ark & the Australian Circular Economy Hub. [Information & Registration](#)

Member News:



Professor Cathy Sherry (left) hosted the very successful *Macquarie Food Symposium: A day of thought for food* on 15 September. Organised with Centre for Environmental Law members Dr Madeline Taylor and Associate Professor Andrew McGregor, the Symposium brought together over 70 researchers and teachers working in disparate disciplines from across Macquarie and other universities, experts from industry and community activists, to discuss problems in modern food systems and the research needed to solve them. Problems related to human and animal health, and above all else, the environment.

Gabrielle Chan, Rural and Regional Editor of the Guardian Australia and author of groundbreaking book *Why You Should Give a F*ck About Farming: Because you eat* (Vintage 2021) was the invited Keynote Speaker. Gabrielle's address covered the environment, trade, food security, nutrition, corporations, community, and the impact of all on Australian farmers.



Presenters then made 6-minute 'pitches' on the big problems they had identified in their work relating to sustainability, culture, and nutrition. Topics included novel proteins, the future of dairy, ethical and sustainable meat, the potential of Gondwanan Australian flora to augment food security, urban agriculture, carbon labelling, traceability and trust, the legal and ethical ramifications of unhealthy 'foods' and more. The day closed with consideration of food insecurity among Macquarie students and the need for a Macquarie Food Policy that creates a healthy, affordable, and environmentally sustainable food culture on campus.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the day. Professor Brian Atwell, MQ Natural Sciences, summed the Symposium up as 'a roaring success,' saying that 'the breadth of the talks and the uniformly lovely people attending, as well as the nutrition and venue, all made it a great day.'

Associate Professor Paul Beggs (Director) accepted the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) 2023 "Tony McMichael Public Health Ecology and Environment Award" on behalf of the MJA-Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change in Australia team.



The team includes 37 authors from around 20 leading institutions in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK who have contributed to the annual MJA-Lancet Countdown reports and policy briefs from 2018-2023. The award is for significant, discernible contributions in the combined domains of public health and ecology or environmental health.
<https://www.phaa.net.au/documents/item/5820>

Photo: Paris Lord/PHAA. Australian Public Health Conference, Hobart, 28 September 2023. A/P Paul Beggs & Dr Tarun Weeramanthri, President of the Public Health Association of Australia (left).

Associate Professor Paul Beggs appeared in [The Sunday Age](#) and [ABC News Radio](#) discussing climate change and the changing seasonality of pollen.

Associate Professor Peter Davies considered the capacity of state infrastructure to meet Sydney's growing demand for [water](#).

Dr Josephine Chau talked to [The Conversation](#) about research on the benefits of sit vs stand desks at work.

Dr Caragh Threlfall won the Macquarie University [Pitch Week Final](#) competition receiving \$3000 in co-funding from the DVCR for her grant proposal *Doing more with less: Reimagining urban plantings for*

pollinators and people. The Pitch Program, run by Grant Development challenges Researchers to showcase their pitching skills in front of academic peers and grant development experts.

Dr Rohan Best presented the September *Smart Green Cities Lunchtime Leadership Series* with Professor Michelle Leishman. The concept of Nature Positive and the related Nature Positive Economy Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) were the focus of the seminar.

Discussions centred around: key barriers for financing the restoration of nature, the proposed Australian nature repair market, and overcoming the barrier of a lack of standardised financial measures for nature with the recent activity of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures. These broad dimensions of investigation offer many opportunities for research by Smart Green Cities members, for example working on the bid for the Nature Positive Economy CRC.

