



February-May 2011

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## USQ awarded \$5.1 million under the Collaborative Research Networks scheme

USQ was recently awarded \$5.1 million for research into digital futures as part of the Federal Government's Collaborative Research Networks (CRN) scheme. The funding provides opportunities to strengthen USQ's research capacity and to further build research partnerships

The CRN scheme is designed to bring networks of universities together to develop research capabilities around topics of interest to all partners in the network. Twelve projects are being funded under the scheme.



Professor Graham Baker

USQ will lead a partnership with the Australian National University (ANU) and the University of South Australia (UniSA) exploring the future in the digital age, with a particular focus on social and policy challenges, technologies influence on participation in higher education and the nature of technology-rich learning environments. This research reflects USQ's reputation for expertise in the use of digital environments and will investigate the impact of digital environments on the community.

Professor Baker said USQ will bring together strengths in ethics and privacy, access and equity, digital and on-line learning, high performance computing and information management from across the network members.

'USQ has strong relationships with its local communities and the regional economy of these catchment areas. This network will enable us to expand our role in relation to digital environments in regional economies and will also allow us to explore those areas where government policy will be required,' Professor Baker said.

Congratulations to all who are involved!

The relevant USQ media release can be found at [www.usq.edu.au/newsevents/news/crnresearch](http://www.usq.edu.au/newsevents/news/crnresearch).

## \$113 000 USQ & CQU DEHub grant success

USQ and CQUniversity have been successful in obtaining a research grant from the Distance Education Hub for \$113,000 for a 16 month project to start in semester 2 this year. The project "*Distance learning at times and places chosen by the learner: Adapting resources and learner behaviours for working with mobile digital devices*" aims to evaluate the potential of small mobile devices to enhance student learning by increasing time on task for interactions that promote learning at times and locations more convenient for the learner. The results of the evaluation will enable USQ and CQUniversity to assess the feasibility of the integration of small mobile devices into learning and teaching systems currently in use.



**Research team members: A/Prof Peter Albion (USQ Education), Wendy Fasso (CQU Education), Teresa Sander (CQU Nursing), A/Prof Romina Jamieson-Proctor (USQ Education), Rose-Marie Thrupp (CQU Education), A/Professor Trudy Yuginovich (USQ Nursing), Dr Andrew Maxwell (USQ Engineering), Julie Harris (USQ Nursing), Dr Kevin Larkin (USQ Education).**

Increasing numbers of university students are choosing to study all or part of their degree by distance (or online). Because many students have busy lifestyles, bulky printed materials and media on computers limit the times and locations at which they can engage with study. Mobile digital devices, small enough to be 'always' carried by the user in a pocket or bag, have been developed for business, entertainment and communication. They can be used for accessing and storing a variety of media both on and off the Internet. Compared to more traditional portable devices, such as laptops, netbooks and tablets, they may offer learners studying at a distance or online new opportunities for learning. These smaller devices enable the student to access learning materials that can be stored on the device or, subject to network connectivity, to interact remotely with content, teachers and peers.

This project aims to specifically trial the iPod Touch (4th generation) within selected nursing and education courses at the two universities to evaluate its potential to enhance student learning. The project will conduct trials within the selected courses offered by distance or online modes at both USQ and CQUniversity. The research will focus on the use of the iPod Touch in three main areas of student use for learning: first, accessing pre-loaded or downloadable course materials and resources including text, images, audio and video that have been appropriately packaged using accepted mobile content standards for use on the devices, second, engaging in learning activities through peer to peer and teacher interactions, and third, making personal records of learning and/or for sharing media in interactions to enhance learning.

## \$48 200 funded through the Indigenous Heritage Program to fund research cultural heritage management plan on Mine Island



**Professor Bryce Barker**

Professor Bryce Barker recently received \$48 200 through the Indigenous Heritage Program for the research project: "The Mine Island ceremonial stone arrangement management". Professor Bryce Barker is the Head of the School of Humanities and Communication at the University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba. He is currently undertaking archaeological research in the western Gulf of Papua New Guinea, Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory and on the central Queensland coast. Professor Barker has been working on the central Queensland coast for over 20 years with Ngaro, Gia and Juru Aboriginal communities and the Mine Island project is an extension of this work.

The Mine Island stone arrangement complex is one of the largest ceremonial sites in Australia with deep significance to Juru/Birri peoples. The arrangements are in excess of 20km of looping and u shaped aligned stones. The small island is currently part of a mining lease, in which cultural heritage sites have never been properly recorded and is subject to increased pressure from development and recreational use. It is the intention of this part of the project to comprehensively map the kilometres of stone arrangements and properly record all of the midden sites and ochre quarry on the island in order to produce, in partnership with the Gudjuda Aboriginal Reference Group (Ayr), a cultural heritage management plan for the island in preparation for the site's proposed heritage listing.

## ANSTO Funds \$6200 to aid in a collaborative search for rocky planets



**USQ astronomer Dr Brad Carter next to the Magellan II telescope at Las Campanas Observatory in Chile.**

One of most rapidly advancing areas of international astronomical research today is the search for planets around stars other than the Sun. In this field of research, a major priority is now the identification and study of habitable Earth-like planets orbiting the closest stars.

For the past decade USQ has been involved with the Anglo-Australian Planet Search, a survey that uses the 3.9m Anglo-Australian Telescope at Siding Spring Observatory in NSW. By measuring the subtle Doppler-effect colour change of a star whose orbiting planets make the star perform a slight recurring "wobble" motion in space, the search has efficiently produced several dozen discoveries of planets around stars. Most of these planets appear to be gas giants in close or eccentric orbits, in dramatic contrast to the layout of our solar system, where the gas giant planets are in distant, nearly circular orbits.

Recently, the planet search team has also turned its attention to using one of the largest optical telescopes in the world to search for tougher but very interesting targets, the rocky planets beginning to be detected orbiting some stars. In April Dr Brad Carter spent a few nights observing with the 6.5 metre aperture Magellan II telescope located at the Carnegie Institution of Washington's Las Campanas Observatory in the high, dry mountains in the northern half of Chile. The two Magellan telescopes at the institution are

some of the most effective large optical instruments worldwide, and the site has exceptionally clear skies and steady air. The travel was funded by the Australian Government's Access to Major Research Facilities Program managed by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO).

Dr Carter and the teams' search with Magellan II is targeting red dwarf stars as they are the most common type of star in the Galaxy, with many examples being relatively nearby and in some cases already known to have planets. The low mass of red dwarf stars also allows us to use our search technique to detect low mass and hence rocky planets similar to the Earth, and to detect worlds whose orbits and resulting planetary temperatures put them in the so-called "Goldilocks" zone suitable for life.

The team's April 2011 observing run with Magellan II was very successful, thanks to good weather and trouble-free operation of the instrumentation. Over sixty stars were carefully observed each night and analysed on the spot. The observations confirmed that any stellar wobble of more than about one metre per second or so (about as fast as a slow walk) can be detected with the team's technique, making the search among the most sensitive in the world. More observations are also being made by the team's US partners in the research, as observations spanning a period of time are needed to be confident of genuine planet discoveries. Over the course of the next year or so we hope to be able to say something more about what planets orbit the red dwarf stars in our corner of the Milky Way galaxy.

## Sustainable Research Excellence (SRE)

All staff who have a continuing or fixed-term employment contract that contains a research component are required to complete a staff survey of time spent in research-related activity. Relevant activities include: being an investigator on a current research grant; writing refereed research publications or conference papers; supervising HDR students; undertaking research activities such as data analysis, literature reviews; undertaking research activities resulting in curated events; being on leave to conduct research (eg study leave). The staff survey is being held from 6-12 June and 14-20 June (13 June is a public holiday) this year. The staff survey is available at the research website: <http://www.usq.edu.au/research/staff/sre>. The webpage contains links to FAQs, FOR codes and any other information that is necessary for the completion of the survey.

As funding is reliant on our participation in the surveys, we need to have an accurate and timely response rate of 67%. SRE was introduced by the Federal Government in 2009 to help address the shortfall in university funding to meet the indirect costs of research. To be eligible for the full amount of funding under the program, universities have to participate in a transparent costing exercise and have a percentage (67% in 2011) of eligible academic staff complete a staff survey of time spent on research activity. The funding available through the SRE will grow

from a sector-wide total of **\$85 million in 2010 to \$300 million by 2013**, making this a significant funding source for USQ in the future. Funding received from block grants, including the SRE, supports a range of initiatives including Centre and Faculty research funding, as well as the internal schemes like the Research Infrastructure Program (RIP), Early Career Research (ECR) and Staff Doctoral Qualifications Scheme.

## ERA updates for 2012

On Monday 30 May, the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, announced changes to ERA 2012 in response to feedback received from the sector. These updates are:

- The removal of rankings from journal and conference listings
- The introduction of a journal quality profile, showing the most frequently published journals for each unit of evaluation
- Increased capacity to accommodate multi-disciplinary research to allow articles with significant content from a given discipline to be assigned to that discipline, regardless of where it is published
- Increasing the low volume threshold to 50 outputs in peer-reviewed disciplines to bring them in line with citation disciplines
- The relaxation of rules on the attribution of patents, plant breeders' rights and registered design, to allow those granted to eligible researchers to also be submitted
- Staff will need to be employed for 0.4 FTE (up from 0.1 FTE), in order to be eligible for inclusion, while maintaining the right to submit for staff below this threshold where affiliation is shown, through use of a by-line, for instance).

The ARC continues to investigate strategies to strengthen the peer review process, including improved methods of sampling and review assignment.

The guidelines for ERA 2012 are expected to be released for consultation in July 2011.

## ANU/USQ Research workshop

A successful research workshop was held at ANU on 19 May 2011 under the auspices of the USQ/ANU Alliance. The workshop was initiated by USQ with the aim of providing opportunities for the partners to explore areas of mutual strength and interest. The three themes nominated by USQ were Sustainability (environmental and business); Rural and Regional Australia (health and regional business and community development); and Digital Futures.

The objectives of the workshop included:

- Increasing awareness of each institution's research capability
- Building on existing research relationships
- Creating new opportunities for research relationships
- Building a framework for collaborative research development into the future.

Expected outcomes from the workshop were strengthened research relationships; increased awareness of complementary research possibilities; increased interest in and promotion of staff and student exchanges' increased opportunity for collaborative projects and joint funding opportunities; development of momentum for ongoing research initiatives; and the opportunity for cross-institutional supervision, mentoring and placement of PhD students. A number of potential collaborations were identified during the workshop.

One of the first tangible outcomes from this meeting will be a presentation by ANU's Director of the Office of Research Integrity in early July. Research Integrity covers issues of academic conduct, privacy, and public perception of USQ's research integrity; it is much more than meeting the requirements of university research ethics committees. Further information about this workshop will be made available as arrangements are completed.



USQ attendees at the ANU/USQ workshop in Canberra, 19 May 2011.

## Supervisory Workshops

For accreditation as a research higher degree supervisor at USQ, supervisors must attend the mandatory workshops or provide satisfactory evidence to the faculty of equivalent experience or training. A number of these workshops have been scheduled for 2011:

- [USQ Policy and Procedures related to HRD supervision](#)
- [Developing Positive Research Supervision Relationships](#)
- [Research Supervisors: Thesis Writing Workshop](#)

For registration details and available time please refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/hr/odt/profdev/timetable>

## HDR scholarships

USQ and the Brazil Family Foundation are offering [The Brazil Family Foundation PhD Scholarship](#) to carry out research in the area of the economics of stable or decreasing populations. The successful applicant would be expected to develop and complete a research project that considered the economic implications for a nation, of having no population growth or a decrease in the population over time.

## Indigenous Staff Scholarship for 2012

If you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person working at a USQ you may be eligible for a national Indigenous Staff Scholarship to study in your chosen field in 2012. Successful applicants can take 12 months leave from their job to study full time in your chosen field. Up to \$23 600 will be paid as a living allowance and up to \$11 800 to cover tuition fees and student contribution amounts for the year. Applications close 31 July 2011.

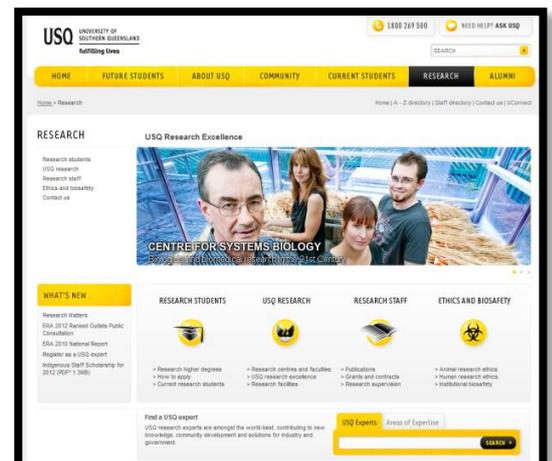
For further information go to [www.deewr.gov.au/iss](http://www.deewr.gov.au/iss).

## New USQ research website

Thanks to the efforts of Graphics, Marketing Services, Office of Research, staff, students and many others who have been providing advice, documentation and comments throughout the process of renewing the research website to take on USQ's "new look and feel". We believe the new website is much more professional, better communicates our research to the world wide community as well as still providing staff and students with necessary information regarding university research processes.

The new research website went live on Monday 6 June 2011. Most forms and documentation previously on the old site will still be available on the new site. However due to the restructure of the website, you may find that many of your old links you have saved as "Favourites" may not exist when the new research website goes live.

Please contact [Sarah Raican](#) if you have any difficulties accessing the various sections of the new research website or attached documents/forms.



New university research website:  
[www.usq.edu.au/research](http://www.usq.edu.au/research)

## USQ Research Publication Update

The Office of Research wishes to thank all staff who submitted their 2010 publications to ePrints. Due to the substantial increase in publications for 2010, ORHD is still working through the publications to determine if they are research reportable. However, please ensure all 2011 publications are submitted into ePrints as soon as the publication is published and you have access to verification material. ORHD no longer requires you to send the verification material and coversheet to your faculty. Instead we ask that you scan the verification material (including an approved and published version of the publication if it is a book chapter, article or conference paper) and upload the verification material in the same way as the approved/published version of the publication. The verification material you need to provide is listed on the Commonwealth Reporting Coversheet within ePrints. Once you have uploaded the necessary verification material there is nothing else required.

The new web address for publication information is: [www.usq.edu.au/research/staff/publications](http://www.usq.edu.au/research/staff/publications). If you are unsure of the publication process for 2011 please contact [Sarah Raican](#) from the Office of Research.

## CoP-RS: The Community of Practice - Research Supervisors

Helen Phillips from the Ethics office has taken on the role of Project officer for the CoP – RS which is facilitated by Associate Professor Aileen Cater-Steel.

The CoP was established in 2009 to meet needs identified by Associate Professor Aileen Cater-Steel and Dr Jackie McDonald during research for an ALTC Associate Fellowship. In alignment with the objectives of the FIRS consortium, it demonstrates national and international good practice to staff involved with research supervision.

### What is the focus?

The CoP-RS is committed to providing a growth environment for research supervisors. As such, it has a specific practice focus.

### What is the role?

CoP-RS meetings provide an informal opportunity for research supervisors to share experiences and acquire knowledge and resources to develop their supervision capability and enhance the learning journey of post-graduate research students. Past meetings have discussed matters such as:

- R&HD Progress Reports : Katrina Hall
- communicating with External Doctoral Students: A/Prof Peter Albion and Prof Ronel Erwee
- ALTC project report - Building research supervision and training across Australian universities . discussions re: the recommendations of report and their relevance to USQ : A/Prof Aileen Cater-Steel
- Insights into the Supervision Journey. Group discussion facilitated by Prof Ronel Erwee. Supervisors of graduating R&HD students are invited to share the highlights, challenges and lessons learned from their experience as supervisors
- panel of USQ Staff members who are recent PhD graduates share their PhD journey experiences: Clint Moloney; Les Bowtell; Coralie Graham; David Lai
- Academic literacy – what does it mean in the context of Research and Higher Degree candidates? Group discussion facilitated by Dr Sara Hammer
- Thesis Examination Process – Presentation by Annmaree Jackson
- Panel of 3 USQ Staff members who are experienced supervisors share their advice on selecting examiners and examining theses - Panel members: Professor Grant Daggard, Professor Patrick Danaher, Professor Chris Lee.

All documents from the meeting can be found on CoP – RS Moodle site link:

<http://mystaffdesk.usq.edu.au/moodle/course/view.php?id=6672>

Please contact [Helen Phillips](#) for the password.

The next meeting is scheduled for 14 July 2011. Mr Lester Norris from the ORHD will speak on the Scholarship process in the first session before lunch. The topic for the second session will be 'Articulation from Masters to Doctorates'.

All research supervisors are welcome to attend. Keep an eye out for our invitation in early July 2010.

## Grant Highlight of the Month: NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarships

The aim of the NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarships scheme is to support outstanding Australian health and medical graduates early in their career so that they can be trained to conduct research that is internationally competitive and to develop a capacity for original independent research. This is usually achieved by NHMRC funding successful applicants to attain a research based postgraduate degree, which may be a PhD, a PhD equivalent degree, or Master's degree.

Scholarships are awarded in the following categories:

- **Biomedical Postgraduate Research Scholarships**  
Biomedical Postgraduate Research Scholarships encourage honours graduates of outstanding ability to gain full-time biomedical research experience while enrolled for a higher degree.
- **Primary Health Care Postgraduate Research Scholarship**  
Primary Health Care Postgraduate Research Scholarships encourage graduates to obtain formal training in primary health care research, with an emphasis on rural communities.
- **Public Health Postgraduate Scholarship**  
Public Health Postgraduate Research Scholarships encourage graduates to obtain formal training in public health research.
- **Training Scholarships for Indigenous Health Research**  
Training Scholarships for Indigenous Australian Health Research are awarded to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Health applicants to provide support for research training, or to non-indigenous applicants to undertake training leading to research in areas of particular relevance to the health of Indigenous Australians.
- **Co-Funded Partnership Scholarship**  
These awards are offered through funding partnerships agreed between NHMRC and partner organisations. [Further information on the current Partners.](#)

For further information regarding these scholarships please visit to:

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/fellows/types/granttype/scholars/index.htm>. If you are interested in the funding opportunity, please contact Jill Albion or Tracey Burke on [ORHDgrants@usq.edu.au](mailto:ORHDgrants@usq.edu.au).

## Research Grants and Postgraduate Research Scholarships

Due to the large number of Research Grants and Postgraduate Research Scholarships opportunities that are now being received, a separate document with current listings can be found on the Research website ([www.usq.edu.au/research/staff/training/newsletter](http://www.usq.edu.au/research/staff/training/newsletter)) or by clicking on the [Grants 2011, Issue 3](#) link. Further information regarding funding opportunities can be obtained by emailing [ORHDgrants@usq.edu.au](mailto:ORHDgrants@usq.edu.au) or by phoning Jill Albion (Grants Manager) on + 61 7 4631 1982 or Tracey Burke (Grants Officer) on +61 7 4631 1799.

Please note that all research grant applications must be submitted through the Research Office.

## Office of Research and Higher Degrees – Important Contacts

Ms Katrina Hall (Director) – [katrina.hall@usq.edu.au](mailto:katrina.hall@usq.edu.au) – 4631 2866 (x2866)

Ms Ann Strutt (Research Support Officer) – [strutta@usq.edu.au](mailto:strutta@usq.edu.au) – 4631 2955 (x2955)

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