From the President

The year is flashing by – don't blink!

It is hard to believe that it's April already, and by the end of the month we will be a third of the way through the year! I feel like I have blinked and the time has passed me by. I am looking forward to a bit of a break over Easter and hope that will slow things down just a little bit. Then again, the energy and vibe on our campus with the start of the term and all the students fully back is very exciting. The only problem is of course, every year the students get younger and younger, because there is no possibility that I might be getting older, is there? I am sure many of you would agree.

Given that time is passing quickly, this is a good opportunity to talk about things to look forward to for the rest of the year.

First, our new website is about to be launched. Our Executive Officer, Liesha Northover, and Immediate Past President, Dave Marr, have been working with the developers behind the scenes to modernise, update and upgrade the user experience.

Spoiler alert! Below is a sample of what you might see.

Check the website over the next couple of weeks and see what has been done and what is new and different on the site. I know Liesha would appreciate feedback and suggestions, so please email your thoughts to her at info@aair.org.au. I certainly want to thank her and Dave for all their hard work in incorporating suggestions from the Executive Committee and feedback from the Website Survey circulated last month, and driving the project to a fantastic conclusion.

Two upcoming events that are always a highlight on the AAIR calendar are the SIG Forum and the Annual Forum. Both events are extremely useful for members and non-members alike to network, and to hear about the latest developments at other institutions and from sponsors. The SIG Forum will be held on 26–27 July at Macquarie University in Sydney, with the theme *Creating Connections & Exploring Possibilities*. The Call for Abstracts is now open, so please consider contributing a paper. The AAIR Annual Forum will be held at the Alice Springs Convention Centre in Alice Springs, from 31 October to 2 November. I know how hard the organising committees for both events are working to ensure that the programs are relevant and enlightening. So if you have any ideas please get in touch with our Vice President Don Johnston at don.johnston@scu.edu.au. I look forward to seeing you at one of these events.

Finally, thanks to those who responded to last month's column about pet peeves. It is obvious I am not the only one who has them. One response resonated with me in particular: "Present data in presentation. Have a senior manager present a contradictory anecdote. Have a group of senior managers nod in agreement. Try your very best to kindly suggest the boss is wrong." Anonymous contributor, we feel your pain!

Kathie Rabel
AAIR President

April Newsletter

Editorial 🌈

Welcome to the April 2017 edition of *The Institutional Researcher*, aka your monthly AAIR Newsletter.

Yes, we have a name and, yes, this month's newsletter is looking a little different compared to previous months, in terms of its overall look and feel. We are trialling some new designs to align with the AAIR's snazzy new website (drum roll please)! We suspect there will be some ongoing trial and error as we work through the template redevelopment process. So please bear with us and do let us know if you have any suggestions or recommendations! We'd love to hear from you.

Now back to the land of higher education. April has been a relatively slow month, in terms of newsy-ness. Perhaps we are all just waiting for the government to hurry up and unveil its new Higher Education Policy so that the games can begin.

Nevertheless, we are starting to see a renewed focus by several universities in reaching out and supporting the non-traditional and non-mainstream student cohorts, which can only be a good thing.

The recent launch of the National Science Statement has also sparked some excitement amongst researchers, especially if the government keeps its words that it will not just focus on applied research and commercialisation of outputs, but is also committed to blue skies scientific investigation. We will see.

Finally, don't miss our *Five quick questions with …* Ali Radloff, Research Fellow at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) Ali is this month's interview for the Institutional Researcher's Corner.

Happy Reading!

Tracy and Monica

Sector News and Views

Student attrition is overstated but not overrated. National re-enrolment data reveals that about half of students who withdraw from higher education return to the sector within eight years. Despite this positive trend, too many students still leave the sector and too few return. This is costly for institutions, but particularly for some groups of students.

Universities will play an indispensable role in Australia's foreign policy objectives in coming decades, the sector's peak body says in its submission to the Foreign Policy White Paper. Universities Australia also joins the dots between Australia's higher education policy settings and our success as a powerhouse exporter of international education.

Universities Australia has secured the commitment of all 39 Australian institutions to releasing data on sexual assaults on their campuses after concerns were raised about a landmark survey of 39,000 students that would not reveal how many assaults had occurred at each institution.

President Donald Trump laid out the spending priorities for his administration on Thursday, releasing a budget 'blueprint' that includes a US$9 billion cut for the United States Department of Education, more than 13%, as well as decreases at several agencies that provide money for academic research, such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

Universities face a dual and potentially conflicting responsibility to address both the local demands of society based on the race for global competitiveness and local and global demands to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable society, according to new report by the Global University Network for Innovation. (*See Reports and Resources*)

Switzerland is ranked number one on the INSEAD Global Talent Competitiveness Index followed by Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States, Sweden, Australia, Luxembourg, Denmark, Finland and Norway. What is striking is that in 2017, four of the top 10 countries on the talent index are Nordic countries. It is therefore immediately apparent that the size of an economy is not a guarantee of successful talent management.

Austrade says that Australia's fast-growing $21 billion-a-year education export industry is poised for a boost from students who are shying away from studying in the United States and Britain following the election of Donald Trump and the vote for Brexit.

Deans of law schools across the nation have joined forces to lobby the federal government to stop funding cuts to legal assistance which they say will deny access to thousands of people and put pressure on the private sector to plug the gap. Pressure is building on Attorney-General George Brandis from across the legal profession, after corporate law firms warned they cannot possibly fill the void and the Australian Bar Association launched a campaign to promote access to justice through proper funding.

Dr Jason Lodge from the University of Melbourne's Centre for the Study of Higher Education has written for the *Campus Review* on the validity of student surveys Opinion: is it time to retire student experience surveys in universities? Jason notes, "Learning is about ongoing development, not just about a capacity to perform. Therefore, the inability of students to accurately judge how well they are progressing is a problem for them, for teachers and for leaders in higher education".

In a Special Report, *University World News* covered the Global University Network for Innovation's sixth Higher Education in the World report: Can universities be locally and globally engaged?; Community engagement outperforms university rankings and; Universities and civic engagement on a global scale.

Applications from non-university providers into the higher education sector continue to boom despite a federal policy environment that is seen to disadvantage private providers and their students. TEQSA CEO Anthony McClaran said it was not possible to pin down why there appeared to be such healthy demand to enter the higher education sector nor whether providers were motivated by tighter rules in the vocational student loans space.

The private higher education lobby has renewed its calls on the federal government to create a level playing field for all university students by making student loan fees consistent in the upcoming federal budget. The Council of Private Higher Education says the current 25 per cent loan fee for students is inequitable and disadvantages the 50,000 students who undertake their higher education studies in institutions other than the 37 public universities. In a letter to the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet, Simon Finn, the new head of COPHE, described getting rid of the 25 per cent loan fee as "a critical equity reform".

'The Library Has Never Been More Important'. Arizona State University, known for rejecting norms of traditional campuses, will invest more than $100 million in its library, seeking to serve on-campus and a growing online study body. Arizona State University will spend "well more than $100 million" over the next few years to renovate and rethink its libraries.

Predatory publishing. A 'sting' operation reported in Nature has seen four academics secure almost 50 editorial jobs for a fictitious researcher called Anna O Szust — which translates as "Anna, a fraud" in Polish. Reported widely, "Szust" applied for editorial roles with 120 reputable journals with impact factors indexed on Journal Citation Reports; 120 included in the Directory of Open Access Journals; and 120 from a list of possible or probable predatory journals, compiled by University of Colorado librarian Jeffrey Beall.

Rankings:

UTS is first of the 23 Australian universities included on the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking of the top 200 universities aged under 50. UTS leads QUT up four places to 24th and the University of Wollongong, which lifts from 37 to 30. Five of the top ten universities are in Asia,

The 2017 Centre for World University Rankings have been released. In Australia the Group of Eight sit in the top ten nationally. In New Zealand, the University of Auckland and the University of Otago sit comfortably at 1st and 2nd nationally. Overall University of Queensland is 42nd in the world and number one in Australia in the first subject ranking from the CWUR which uses journal citation data from Clarivate Analytics (Thomson Reuters).

New data creates world's largest university ranking. U-Multirank has published a new release of data drawn from 1,500 universities, creating the world's largest university ranking, and throwing a spotlight on high-performing universities that might not be picked up by traditional international university rankings. This is the fourth year of U-Multirank's user-driven rankings – in which users can select the indicators they wish to use for comparison.

International education:

The Association of International Education Administrators is attempting to measure the efficacy and success of professionals in international education by releasing a first-of-its-kind standards of professional practice document for international education leaders and senior international officers.

Netherlands one step closer to full degrees overseas as TNE bill passes. After two years of political debate, Dutch universities may soon be able to offer full degree programs overseas.

International applications down for 40% of US HE institutions, survey reveals. Four in 10 educational institutions in the US have reported a decrease in the number of international applicants for the fall 2017 intake, according to responses from an inter-associational survey. The preliminary findings of the survey, which consists of responses from 250 institutions, aimed to gauge international applicants' perceptions of the US.

Meanwhile, some universities in Canada are seeing increases in the magnitude of 20 percent or more. At the University of Waterloo, in Ontario, undergraduate international applications are up by 25 percent and graduate international applications have increased by 41 percent.

New Zealand's largest private education provider ACG Education has acquired The Campbell Institute (the Wellington- and Auckland-based English language school).

Students gaining University Entrance without necessary literacy, numeracy skills. University entrance requirements in New Zealand are unlikely to change despite a review that found widespread concern over first-year students' literacy and numeracy abilities. In a review of University Entrance (UE), the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) said tertiary providers found students entering a wide range of degrees lacked skills necessary for success, but believed raising the bar was unlikely to help.

Ako Aotearoa, New Zealand's Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, welcomed the attention given to teaching quality in the final report from the Productivity Commisson's inquiry into new models of tertiary education. Amongst the findings it was noted that the University Entrance standard does not reliably signify preparedness for higher-level study. It also implies that a young person who achieves University Entrance is best off attending a university, when this may not be the case

Campus updates:

University of Sydney's School of Architecture, Design and Planning has launched a new five-year professional program, a Bachelor of Design in Architecture followed by a two-year masters. Thirteen new staff have been appointed in the school to support the expanded program.

The trimester systems have always aroused fierce opposition, largely over impacts on the time available to academics for research and

students for exam preparation. The University of New South Wales has announced its plan to move to a trimester system (UNSW3+) commencing in 2019. However, this move could result in students on Youth Allowance losing their payments unless they enrol in all three semesters, according to the Department of Social Services.

The Australian government has announced the establishment of a new Maritime Technical College. The government will make an initial investment of $25 million in the maritime college — to be based in Adelaide — with the new school charged with delivering "world-class training" in areas such as steel-fabrication, welding and naval engineering. Defence Industry Minister Christopher Pyne added the College will commence operations in 2018.

Japan's Nihon University has revealed its plan to establish a campus in the NSW regional city of Newcastle. The local *Newcastle Herald* reported that the Tokyo based university has bought the former city courthouse for $6m. Nihon will convert the courts into a teaching space for 200 international and domestic students and accommodation for 100. The new campus is expected to focus on teaching and research on environment and infrastructure related disciplines.

Big Data, Online Learning, Analytics & Technology

Digital disruption lowers cost of pricey masters degrees: A round of price-cutting has broken out in the market for high-priced masters degrees with four Australian universities offering students a pathway to complete part of the degree online at a steep discount. In a sign of digital disruption hitting higher education, the University of Queensland, the Australian National University, the University of Adelaide and Curtin University are offering students the chance to do a quarter of a full masters degree at low cost through US-based massive open online course, or MOOC, provider edX which gives them a new credential called a MicroMasters. Students can then complete the degree at the regular cost, giving them at least a 20% discount overall.

Online learning has created new and exciting avenues for students to access postsecondary programming. This new environment hammers home the point that traditional approaches to management and success must evolve to suit these students. The EvoLLLution interviews Phil Disalvio, Dean of the College of Advancing and Professional Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston to unpack these

critical issues around leveraging data to support students in the online environment.

And further articles of interest from The EvoLLLution this month related to institutional data notably: The Move to Big Data Requires a Change in Campus Culture and the use of data in institutional decision making.

Seek will launch more online education courses with local and offshore universities and other partners, after increasing its stake in the booming Online Education Services, with its joint venture partner Swinburne University reducing its stake.

Attracting students is increasingly about digital leadership. A new report from Jisc highlights the increasing importance of the capable delivery of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. A UK survey of 1,000 16-24 year olds, commissioned by the digital experts, found that three-quarters (75%) of higher education students surveyed believe that having staff with the appropriate digital skills is an important factor when choosing a university. Ninety-nine per cent of students think that technology is becoming increasingly important in education, while 62% believe technology keeps them more engaged.

Another Jisc survey has noted that Students want tracking apps in HE. The Jisc survey has found that 86% of HE students think an activity tracking app for learning and teaching would be helpful. Further findings show that 78% of HE students would be happy to have their learning data collected if it improved their grades, and more than half would be happy to have their learning data collected if it stopped them from dropping out (61%)

Overcoming Siloes to Use Data More Strategically. As many institutions grappling with the idea of leveraging Big Data, the first obstacle that must be overcome is the siloed storage of information that can make it difficult to develop a truly campus-wide view. In this interview, Param Bedi from Bucknell University in the US shares his thoughts on why it's so important to take this first step and reflects on how institutions can go about overcoming data siloing

Naveen Joshi on LinkedIn: How data scientists differ from BI data analysts? A data scientist and BI analyst can take Big Data analytics and data warehousing programs to the next level. They can help in deciphering what the data is actually telling a company. They are also able to segregate relevant data from irrelevant data. A data scientist and a BI analyst will hopefully be able to leverage the enterprise data warehouse, currently in place, to take a deep dive into the data. Organisations must, therefore, know about the difference between data scientists and data analysts.

Calling Bullshit: In the Age of Big Data. This new University of Washington 10-week course started in March. The synopsis of the course is listed succinctly as "Our world is saturated with bullshit. Learn to detect and defuse it." The course looks to teach students key skills for judging information. The specific ways in which those taking the course will benefit are outlined in the syllabus:

- *Remain vigilant for bullshit contaminating your information diet.*
- *Recognize said bullshit whenever and wherever you encounter it.*
- *Figure out for yourself precisely why a particular bit of bullshit is bullshit.*
- *Provide a statistician or fellow scientist with a technical explanation of why a claim is bullshit.*
- *Provide your crystals-and-homeopathy aunt or casually racist uncle with an accessible and persuasive explanation of why a claim is bullshit.*

Graduate Outcomes and Employability

Online student record service **My eQuals** will launch next month. It's being built for Universities Australia subsidiary Higher Education Services and piloted by Monash University and the universities of Auckland and Melbourne. According to University of Auckland (which goes live next year) by 2018 it will be in place at 45 ANZAC institutions

Castlemaine Goldfields and Federation University Australia have joined forces to provide a work placement program for students currently studying Geology, Mining Engineering and Mineral Processing at the University's Faculty of Science and Technology. The inaugural program provided seven students with access to geology, engineering and metallurgy professionals working within the mining industry at the Ballarat Gold Mine.

The business community has intervened in the long-running dispute over funding for vocational education and training, calling for a stalled federal-state agreement to be

rekindled [to fix a floundering apprenticeship system](). Three business peak bodies are urging Canberra to avert an "imminent crisis" by recommitting to the $1.75 billion National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform.

[Undertaking a university degree later in life]() can be a daunting prospect, but those who persist are likely to land better paying, higher status jobs, new research confirms. Obtaining a qualification after the age of 24 is associated with wage increases of 9 per cent for men and 7 per cent for women, according to the study by Francisco Perales, a senior research fellow at the University of Queensland and Jenny Chesters, a research fellow at the University of Melbourne. Financial instability as mature-age students juggle children and other caring duties is one of the most pressing reasons students in regional universities are likely to drop out, a [new report]() has found. It also found that financial pressures can take a toll on the health and wellbeing of low socio-economic status students.

Learning & Teaching

[Bond University is offering a variety of bridging courses]() after realising more and more students are taking unconventional pathways into undergraduate degrees. The university already has 200 students taking part in the bridging courses and has forecasted that more than 20 per cent of its students will have completed a pathway program by 2020.

Marketing and communications students looking to reinforce their careers in the online space will have an industry advantage if they study at [Melbourne's Swinburne University of Technology](), which has launched a world-first digital studies course in conjunction with Adobe. The digital advertising technology major, which is part of the marketing and communications degree but can be taken by other undergraduate students, is being launched with a 40-student cohort after a trial last year.

Literacy and numeracy tests for Australian student teachers in 2016 found that around 95 per cent had adequate skills to teach in classrooms. [Announcing the results of the tests](), the Minister for Education and Training, Senator Simon Birmingham said more than 13,000 students studying to be teachers sat for the new Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education Students last year.

[Teaching academic roles in Australian universities]() have risen [three fold]() over the past decade, making up around 5% of the academic workforce – and [further roll outs]() are expected. Recent [research]() by Curtin University found that teaching academic roles were perceived as a negative career move for academics transitioning from research roles, and a career limiting move for academics new to the sector. [Research from the UK]() suggests that few promotions to senior positions are based on teaching excellence alone. Conversely, Merlin Crossley, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) from the University of New South Wales is [hopeful]() that "we'll reach an equilibrium where both teaching and research are properly respected and all academics can find the balance of teaching and research that works for them and their students."

Research

The Australian government has launched the [National Science Statement](), outlining its commitment to science as part of the [National Innovation and Science Agenda](). This comes in advance of the [2030 Strategic Plan](), with Innovation and Science Australia commissioned by the government to review Australia's performance in science and innovation, and offer a plan up to 2030. In his speech to the National Press Club, the Industry, Innovation and Science Minister, Arthur Sinodinos reassured researchers that the government is not just focused on applied research and commercialisation of outputs but is committed to blue skies scientific investigation.

[Researchfish](), a London-based company, which includes all 15 research funding bodies among its clients, has opened its doors in Australia with a platform to measure the impact of research. Sean Newell, Chief Executive of Researchfish, said the platform could objectively compare a variety of outcomes with too much focus on publications and citations.

In a speech titled '*Can Australia become a Top-tier Innovation Nation?*', Bill Ferris AC, Chairman of Innovation and Science Australia said Australia performs much more poorly when it comes to knowledge transfer and collaboration, particularly among research institutions and business. Mr Ferris told [The Australian]() that he is disappointed at the emergence of a "big chunk of silo mentality, with industry not seeking out their colleagues in the research community and vice versa".

The University of South Australia will be putting a number of research projects up for [crowd-funding]() to help the broader community understand the work of university researchers.

Reported in the [Campus Morning Mail](), The National Health and Medical Research Council reports 3446 grant applications this year, down from 3651 in 2016.

Editor's note *(with thanks for Louise Hargeraves for the tip-off):* **Find Open Access Articles Faster with UnPayWall**

Have you heard of **Unpaywall?** It is a free Chrome/Firefox extension that helps you quickly find open access versions of articles you're searching for. While Unpaywall is obviously useful for researchers, it is also really helpful for people outside academia, who don't enjoy the expensive subscription benefits of institutional libraries. The background details from the Impactstory team behind Unpaywall can be found here: [http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/04/04/announcing-unpaywall-unlocking-openaccess-versions-of-paywalled-research-articles-as-you-browse/]()

(More) Reports and Resources

[Universities Australia Responds to TEQSA Consultation on Publication of Decisions]()

Source: Universities Australia

In a submission to TEQSA Consultation on Publication of Decisions, Universities Australia has voiced its opposition to the regulator's proposed changes to the reporting of decisions. Universities Australia is of the view that "the changes would lead to additional imposts on the agency and substantial, possibly unfounded, reputational damage for individual providers or the sector as a whole."
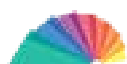
[Towards a Socially Responsible University: Balancing the global with the local]()

Source: Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi)

The report is the sixth report in its "Higher Education in the World" series on the social commitment of universities. The report studies the duality of university engagement with both the immediate needs of local society and the global challenges of the world. Eighty-six experts from 28 countries (including Australia) have contributed to the dissection of the topic in the report and the identification of good practices that can help academic leaders and policy-makers realise the highest purposes of education and research. Case studies are presented from both Australia and New Zealand.

[Preparing young people for the future of work]()

Source: Mitchell Institute, Victoria University

Kate Torii and Megan O'Connell bring together the outcomes of a national roundtable of education practitioners, government leaders, policy specialists and researchers who put forward two ideas about how Australia's education system can change to accelerate innovation and improve transitions to employment:

1. Transforming senior secondary education; and

2. Revitalising apprenticeships

In terms of higher education the findings indicate university degrees do not interest all young people, nor do they necessarily equip them with the applied skills workers will soon need - and see the VET system playing a crucial role (which is currently underutilised.)

Facilitating success for students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds at regional universities

Source: Federation University Australia. Professor Marcia Devlin and Dr Jade McKay

The evidence gathered through the present study includes:

- a thorough review of previous research and relevant literature;

- interviews with 69 successful students from low SES backgrounds approaching completion of their studies at six regional universities; and

- interviews with 26 staff from these six universities who are expert in how these students succeed.

This study found that one key factor in the success of students from low SES backgrounds at regional universities is their possession of particular personal attributes. Specifically, the present study found that students' own attitude, motivation, determination and resilience helped them succeed at university despite the challenges and obstacles they faced. Another key factor was family support. Where such support was available, whether through psychological or emotional encouragement, financial support or 'in-kind' assistance, this contributed to student success at university.

On the Move

Linda Trenberth is to be Vice Provost (Academic and Equity) at Victoria University of Wellington. She moves from Griffith U where she is the business school's academic dean.

Tanya Rhodes-Taylor joins the University of Sydney as Vice Principal for External Relations and **Stephen Phillips** as Vice Principal, Operations.

The National Health and Medical Research Council has a new commissioner of complaints, **Chris Reid**, a former general counsel for the Department of Health. Mr Reid replaces Associate Dean of Law at the University of Tasmania, **Don Chalmers**. The commissioner investigates complaints about funding decisions.

Sarah Pearson is the University of Newcastle's inaugural PVC for Industry Engagement and Innovation. Sarah joins from the Canberra Innovation Network is an Oxford PhD in particle physics.

Professor **Megan Davis** is the inaugural PVC Indigenous at UNSW.

Ana Deletic is the University of New South Wales' incoming PVC Research, replacing Emma Johnston who takes over as Dean of Science in May.

Craig Robertson will become the new CEO of TAFE Directors Australia, replacing Martin Riordan who will stand down after 12 years at TDA. Mr Robertson is a former senior federal VET official and most recently a deputy secretary for higher education and skills in the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

Marcia Langton is the University of Melbourne's inaugural Associate Provost. The university has also created a position of PVC Indigenous, responsible for strategies to support Indigenous staff and students, work formally done in the portfolio of then DVC **Ian Anderson** who has moved to Canberra to run the federal government's Closing the Gap agenda.

Julie McLeod is the University of Melbourne's new PVC for Research Capability. She moves from the University's Social Equity Institute where she is Deputy Director.

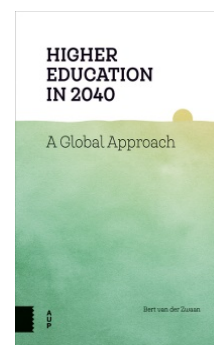**Les Field** will step down in December from his UNSW post as Senior DVC.

Book Reviews

Predictive Analytics in Higher Education

Manuela Ekowo and Iris Palmer

Colleges and universities alike, are under increasing pressure to retain their students. In America, federal and state officials are demanding that those who enter their public institutions— especially students from underrepresented groups— earn a degree. Over two dozen states disburse some state funding on how many students an institution graduates, rather than how many it enrolls. Predictive analytics plays an important role that help universities generate revenue, improving an institution's bottom line, via student retention. In Predictive Analytics in Higher Education, Manuela Ekowo and Iris Palmer discusses the five guiding practices to using predictive analytics to improve student outcomes.
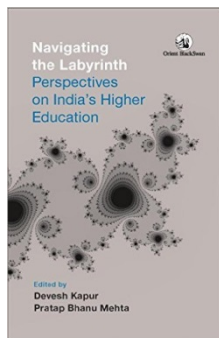

Higher Education in 2040: A Global Approach

Bert van der Zwann

This book explores the future of modern higher education by looking at it on a global scale. Bert van der Zwaan compares European developments with those taking place in North America and Asia to argue that the phoenix of an entirely new type of university will rise from the ashes of the classical system: less tied to buildings and set locations, the new university will embed itself more deeply in society by offering innovative forms of digital knowledge and making customized teaching available on demand. Amongst the predictions, Indian and Chinese universities will expand one-
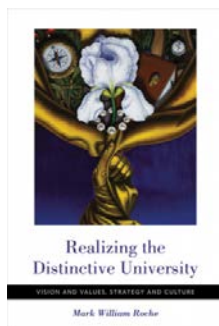
hundred-fold and the future will be dominated by 'grand knowledge hubs' with four in Asia, two in North America, one in the UK and maybe others in Sweden/Denmark, Germany/Switzerland, Belgium/Netherlands and France.

Navigating the Labyrinth: Perspectives on India's Higher Education

Edited by Devesh Kapur and Pratap Bhanu Mehta

This book brings together a series of essays by a diverse cast of academics and professionals on a range of pressing issues. From the need for vocational education and multidisciplinary research universities to issues of internal governance and finance, the individual chapters are useful contributions. Thomas Manuel's review of the book in The Wire adds that the book seems to show most starkly how little headway has been made in higher education scholarship on India over the last decade.

Realizing the Distinctive University: Vision and Values, Strategy and Culture

Mark William Roche

Mark Roche changes the terms of the debate about American higher education and argues for the importance of an institutional vision, not simply a brand. Using the history of the German university to assess the need for, and implementation of, distinctive visions at American colleges and universities, Roche makes a significant contribution by delineating means for moving such an institution from vision to implementation.

Positions Vacant

Seeking another opportunity in Institutional Research in Australia? Try our **Higher Education Jobs** webpage for current vacancies in the profession. If you are seeking an international career change see our American colleagues **AIR Careers** page.

Editor's note: There are plenty of vacancies at the moment – please explore these at www.aair.org.au/pages/higher-education-jobs.

Looking for some training and development?

See our **Training and Development** webpage focused on training for institutional researchers.

Looking for higher education conferences and events?

Here is a selection of upcoming events (or past events) that may be of interest. See our **Events/Fora** webpage for more national and international events.

***Please note*: Campus Review's Futureproof 2017 (16 May, 2017) has been cancelled**

Association for Tertiary Education Management events:

ATEM University Finance Conference

11-12 May, 2017 Palazzo Versace Hotel, Gold Coast, Australia

The theme for the conference is *'Navigating the World of University Finance'.*

Registrations and the Call for Papers are now open! NB. Discounts are available for groups of 3 or more.

More information: http://www.atem.org.au/conferences/uf-conference

Registration open: Student Service Centres Conference. Exploring the theme of 'Tailoring the Student Experience',

24 - 26 May, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Call for papers: Aotearoa Regional Conference.

3 - 4 July, Wellington, New Zealand

Exploring the theme *- Advancing Excellence in Tertiary Education Management: Together, Yes we can! -* the Conference is looking for delegates ideas, experiences and aspirations for the New Zealand tertiary education sector.

AIR Forum

May 20 – June 2, Washington DC, United States

The Forum, the annual conference for the Association for Institutional Research, is the world's largest gathering of higher education professionals in institutional research, effectiveness, assessment, planning and related fields. The four-day event features more than 300 educational sessions and an Exhibit Hall showcasing the latest tools and services for these higher education fields

More information on Forum webpage.

EduTECH International Congress & Expo

8-9 June 2017, Sydney, Australia

EduTECH is the LARGEST education event in Asia-Pac and the Southern Hemisphere consisting of one large exhibition with eight parallel conferences, and eight pre-event masterclasses.

More information: http://www.edutech.net.au/ and AAIR members might consider the Tertiary Education IT Leaders stream of the event http://www.edutech.net.au/tertiary.html

STARS Conference (registration open)

2-5 July, Adelaide, Australia

This conference provides the opportunity to disseminate and discuss current research, good practice, emerging initiatives and leading edge ideas that are aimed at enhancing students' tertiary learning experiences.

Digital Campus and Blended Learning Innovation: The New Era of Teaching and Learning

18-20th of July, Melbourne, Australia

The conference will bring forward case studies from institutions across Australia, as well as from other parts of the world, allowing you to gain insights into best practices and bench mark your institution's progress against industry leaders.

Bluenotes Americas 2017

1-4 August, 2017 The Brown Hotel Louisville, KY United States

This year's *Bluenotes Americas Conference* theme is 'Higher Education in the 21st Century: Using Data to Respond to Opportunities and Challenges'. A three-day conference to connect, share expertise, and learn from best practices.

EAIR 2017

3-6 September, 2017

EAIR is the The European Association for Institutional Research (International association for higher education researchers, practitioners, managers and policy-makers). In 2017 the conference will be titled: "Under pressure? Higher education institutions coping with multiple challenges". There will be eight major tracks: governance and management, teaching and learning, quality management, strategy and strategising, professionals, performance and assessment, funding and regional innovation.

SEAAIR 2017 Annual Conference

6-8 September 2017

Theme: ASEAN Higher Education at the Crossroad: Challenges, Changes, Capacities, and Capabilities

From networking with peers to presentation sessions by leading experts in the field, the annual conference is the must attend event for academics, educators, researchers and practitioners in higher education

Higher Education Institutional Research (HEIR) Conference (Call for submissions)

13-14th of September, 2017, Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland

The conference brings together a community of higher education researchers, practitioners and enthusiasts from the UK and Ireland, with a growing international presence. Discussions this year will focus on how institutions can make best use of evidence to empower learners, engage audiences and influence decisions.

 The deadline for submission of abstracts to the conference is **14 April 2017**.

Tertiary Education Management Conference 2017

17-20 September 2017, Crown Convention Centre, Melbourne

The TEMC this year will be exploring the theme *Eureka*. The conference will be revolutionary in exploring ideas that encourage and create fabulous discussion, innovation, awesome networking and important information sharing. The Organising Committee is now calling for abstracts, which closes on **Sunday 23 April 2017**.

Service Improvement and Innovation in Universities
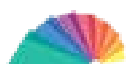
19-20 October 2017, Pier One, Sydney Harbour

Building on successful conferences in 2015 and 2016, the Service Improvement and Innovation in Universities Conference will again take place in 2017. This year's conference will sharpen the focus on innovation; what innovation is in tertiary education and skills for creating innovation. Detailed announcement of conference themes and learning outcomes will follow shortly.

28th ISANA International Education Association & 22nd Australia and New Zealand Student Services Association Conferences

5-8 December 2017, STAR, Gold Coast, Australia

The theme for the conference is '*Widening Perspectives of Student Success*'.

The conference will give us the opportunity to explore and discuss the many factors that contribute to the overall student success, both within and outside the classroom. There will be an exciting program of speakers, workshops, social activities and lots of networking opportunities. Delegates will be able to share successful strategies, engage with key stakeholders and develop important partnerships.

Institutional Researcher's Corner

Five questions with Ali Radloff, Australian Council *for* Educational Research (ACER)

What is your job title?

Research Fellow

Briefly, how would you describe your role in terms of your place in your institution?

I work in the Tertiary Education Research Program at Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). ACER is an independent, not-for-profit research organisation whose mission is to create and promote research-based knowledge, products and services that can be used to improve learning across the lifespan.

Most of the work that I do involves leading and contributing to a range of commissioned research projects for a range of different clients, including individual universities, government and intergovernmental agencies, both in Australia and overseas.

Much of the work that I do focuses on survey research, and includes developing and administering surveys, analysing data and preparing reports for clients based on survey research. Some examples of recent projects that I have been working on have involved developing a customised graduate survey for an Australian university, running a survey of doctors in a training program about their training experience, conducting an adaptation of the SES with a partner in Japan – the Japan University Experience Survey, and analysing data on student pathways between VET and higher education sectors. The work is always diverse and interesting!

From your perspective, what are the emerging areas of interest in institutional research?

I think that one area of interest that's been around for a while but seems to be strengthening is measuring outcomes from higher education and post-secondary training. Although there've been mechanisms to measure graduate outcomes for decades in Australia, I think there's been increasing interest in measuring graduate outcomes more broadly, rather than focusing on employment outcomes alone, exploring other ways of measuring graduate "success".

There also appears to be quite a bit of interest in exploring longer-term outcomes of higher education, such as the work being done in the UK using the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) database and the Graduate Longitudinal Study New Zealand (GLSNZ). There also appears to be ongoing interest in improving assessment practices and developing fit-for-purpose assessment to better measure education and training outcomes.

What do you believe will be the future priorities for institutional research?

More thoroughly mapping and understanding student pathways and outcomes, from secondary schooling, through to VET, higher education and other post-secondary training or work, to graduation and beyond and back again to further understand the pathways that people are taking across their lifetime.

Complete this statement: *In my role, I can't operate effectively without …*

… my colleagues at ACER. I'm really lucky to be able to work with such a great team in Tertiary Education Research, and also across ACER we have such a range of expertise, including in psychometrics, assessment development, and sampling, as well as support from our librarians, and staff in marketing, design and IT.

Call for contributions
The Institutional Researcher Issue 5, May 2017

A great way to get involved with the AAIR community is to share your thoughts and ideas. Do you have something you would like to share with your IR colleagues? The next AAIR Newsletter will be published in mid-May. Please send your contributions to the editor@aair.org.au by **Tuesday 9 May 2017**.

Monica Chen and Tracy Creagh
The Institutional Researcher **Editors.**