



AAIR Newsletter February 2020



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... PLUS A RANGE OF INTERSTING
REPORTS AND NEW PUBLICATIONS
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FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT

Hello Possums, Kia Ora, G'day Cobber!

For 2020, I have stepped into the role of President for our esteemed Association, and I look forward to working with the Executive Committee as we continue to sustain and grow AAIR as your professional association.

I must give a huge thank you and acknowledgment to the outstanding leadership our Immediate Past President, Kathie Rabel, has provided to AAIR. Kathie's knowledge about our sector across the region and her willingness to share and engage with us all is of huge value to everyone. While Kathie has officially retired from the workforce, we are fortunate that she will continue to contribute to and support AAIR.

The current Committee for 2020 provides expertise and knowledge from a wide range of higher education institutions from across Australasia and is very well supported by our highly regarded Executive Officer, Liesha Northover.

Your current Committee members are:

- Stuart Terry – President
- Don Johnston – Vice President
- Kathie Rabel – Immediate Past President
- Greg Jakob – Honorary Treasurer
- TBA – Honorary Secretary
- Lisa Bolton – elected member
- Andrew Bradshaw – elected member
- Leone Nurbasari – elected member
- Eva Seidel –co-opted member
- Penny Szybiak – elected member

2020 launched the new decade with challenges on many fronts throughout the world. For our little corner of the globe, we saw terrifying bushfires throughout Australia and drought and floods in both Australia and New Zealand. Adding to the challenges of weather is the disturbing COVID19 (formerly novel coronavirus) which is impacting on all tertiary education institutions throughout Australasia.

This period of uncertainty creates an environment for speculation, fake news and irrational claims and behaviour. Our roles as institutional researchers are even more important in this environment as we take the lead gathering, analysing and presenting evidential based data. And keeping the focus on evidential! It is also a time when our own personal and professional ethics may be challenged because people don't like what the data is telling them or want it presented in a way to support their story. To me, integrity is at the heart of professional ethics and ethical behaviour. Integrity of the data we collect, the integrity of our analysis, and the integrity of how we report, are the foundations of our profession. Reminding ourselves of the [AAIR Code of Ethics](#) is one way to support professional and personal integrity in our roles when challenged. Making the most of the networks within AAIR and reaching out to members is another way our professional association can add value to support you into your role and profession.

You have all been invited to participate in our biennial member survey that is currently underway. If you haven't already done so, please take a few moments to complete our survey. We really want to hear from you, and I do appreciate life is full of questionnaires and polls, and they can cut into valuable seconds you will never get back! Our survey is one of the key ways you can tell us what is working well for you as a member and how we could make AAIR an even better association, so please contribute by using those few valuable minutes to give us your feedback.

Stuart Terry

President, AAIR



EDITORIAL

In our Institutional Researcher's Corner this issue, I interviewed John Stanley, Director of Institutional Research at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu. I first met John at the AAIR Annual Forum in Hobart last year. John, in collaboration with Dr Serge Herzog (University of Nevada at Reno), delivered their presentation, 'Leveraging "Big Data" and BI Visualization to Enhance Performance Benchmarking'. This topic attracted great interest from the participants, so John and Serge were given an additional timeslot to represent it at the forum!

February is usually one of the busiest months for the higher education sector, and 2020 is no exception. This month we have seen an incredible increase in efforts from the sector in helping to manage an unprecedented situation caused by the COVID19 outbreak.

I would like to quote a part of John F. Kennedy's speech in which he said, 'when written in Chinese the word crisis is composed of two characters. One represents danger (危), and the other represents opportunity (机)'. I believe this situation presents all higher education institutions with the opportunity to think, discuss and possibly collaborate to engage and support our students, no matter where they are.

Lizzie

AAIR ANNOUNCEMENT

The [AAIR biennial survey](#) will remain open until 28 February. We appreciate you taking the time (only 10–15 minutes) to provide your feedback! This helps us to better meet the needs of our members.

SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

[Monash University has won approval to set up the first foreign university campus in Indonesia, the Australian institution.](#) Indonesia has a big and young population, but the OECD grouping of rich nations says just about 16% of its young adults have attained a tertiary education (stefanieb, UB, 10 Feb).

[Coronavirus travel ban – NZ Universities fear financial hit:](#) Universities fear the temporary travel ban on foreigners from China due to the novel coronavirus outbreak is going to be a big financial hit. It's not yet known how many have already arrived for the 2020 academic year and how many might still be at home. To help those affected continue with their studies, it was looking at sending them individual study plans (RNZ, 8 Feb).

[3 ways the coronavirus outbreak will affect international students and how unis can help:](#) The 2020 academic year is off to a rocky start. Instead of the usual excitement that comes with a new semester, university students, particularly Chinese students still offshore (more than 100,000, or about 56%, of Chinese students) and those who have just returned, face uncertainty. Universities have been swift to respond in an inclusive manner by reassuring Chinese students in particular they will be welcomed back with little disruption to their studies. But the details have varied (Catherine Gomes & Shanton Chang, The Conversation, 7 Feb).

[What's in the performance-based funding formula:](#) the feds have announced the formulas for allocating domestic UG growth places under the new performance-based funding scheme (CMM August 8 2019). The four quantitative measures all appear innocuous, employment outcomes, student experience, student success, equity group participation. There is also qualitative category for special pleading by each institution, presumably to explain why the first four are uniquely unfair to it (CMM, 10 Feb).

[Education Minister Dan Tehan promises "maximum flexibility" to provide surety to students and academics whose visas are impacted by the Australian Government's response to the coronavirus.](#) Unis Aus chair Deborah Terry said last night, "That offer of 'maximum flexibility' from Government is so important – and we appreciate the commitment to work closely together through the challenges this situation presents." (CMM, 4 Feb).

[What the would-be doctors ordered:](#) Medicine and nursing are the most popular courses among Y12 uni applicants in NSW, with the Universities Admissions Centre announcing first preferences. Med degrees at UNSW (first), Uni Newcastle/U/NE (third), Western Sydney U (fourth), plus nursing at UTS (fifth) and Uni Newcastle (9th) made up half the top ten courses. UNSW (two), UTS (two), Uni Newcastle (two) and Uni Sydney (two) dominated the top ten (CMM, 4 Feb).

[Reality of gig economy for graduates:](#) The short-term, contract employment gig economy can mean under-employment and precarious work for highly educated young people, warn Jenny Chesters and Johanna Wyn (Melbourne Graduate School of Education). And the "meaningful" work young people work can come at a price – it's often in short-term jobs (CMM, 29 Jan).

[Australian Research Council Linkage infrastructure grants were announced.](#) Some 47 projects are funded with 29 per cent of applicants receiving \$30m of the \$33m requested. Monash U and UNSW have money for six projects each, in sciences, engineering and technology. Uni Melbourne wins five and UWA four. All up 20 universities are in the money for research infrastructure. First Linkage projects: The first Linkage Grants of 2020 were also announced. The Commonwealth is kicking in \$9.5m, with more from project partners. Overall success rate is 39 per cent. Monash and Macquarie Us, plus the universities of Adelaide and Queensland win most awards, with three each. Swinburne U and UNSW have two each and 12 universities one a piece (CMM, 20 Jan).

[Uni Sydney announces it is accredited by the Association of MBAs.](#) It is already accredited by the US based Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business and the European Foundation for Management Development for its EFMD Quality Improvement System (CMM, 20 Jan).



Ranking and Rating

[The stats show it: Group of Eight unis are big equity achievers](#): participants in the Pitman-project, from the Australian Council for Educational Research, have published more ranking outcomes – assessing three key equity outcomes, access and participation, first-year experience and graduate outcomes. When heavier weighting is given to student retention, universities with smaller numbers of relatively high achieving equity group students are more prominent at the top of the rankings (CMM, 10 Feb).

[Ranking unis for student equity: do-able but not desirable](#): Tim Pitman (Curtin U) and colleagues from Australian Council for Educational Research created an equity ranking for Australian higher education and then scored universities on it. Some of the results put elite universities in top spots. Outcomes depended on how indicators were weighted. When they were all measured equally five of the top ten were Group of Eight institutions. "They achieved a high ranking due to their superior performance in the retention, completion and graduate outcomes of their equity students," the authors explain (CMM, 5 Feb).

[First ranking of 2020](#): Nature magazine reports its top ten Asia-Pacific universities for life-science research, based on staff named as article-authors in 82 tracked journals. Uni Tokyo is first, Uni Queensland is third and Kyoto U is fifth – the other seven are all from China, led by Peking U. (CMM, 23 Jan).

[Big four ranking successes and how they do it](#): Leah Dowsett from Curtin U analyses the performance of four Australian institutions in the Academic Ranking of World Universities. "The rise in prominence of international rankings has influenced planning activities at Curtin, Deakin, QUT and Wollongong, particularly in later years, and highlight how their strategic choices have contributed to them becoming Australia's 'fast movers' on the ARWU to 2018. For these four institutions, while the next foreseeable challenge may be to secure or regain a place in the top 200, their performance to date suggests the notion of attaining world-class status still appears imminent as a tangible reality." (CMM, 23 Jan).

International News

[HE seen as failing on social mobility, OECD expert warns](#): That was the take-away from an international gathering last week in Washington, where quality assurance officials from more than 25 countries grappled with how higher education can preserve its value – and values – in the face of what organisers called diminished public confidence. (Mary Beth Marklein, UWN, 3 Feb).



Photo: iStock

[Bard and partners establish global network to transform higher ed](#): Bard College and Central European University (CEU) have, with support from the Open Society Foundations (OSF), launched a new international network of higher education, research, and cultural institutions. George Soros, founder and chair of OSF, has announced a commitment of one billion dollars from OSF to create and support the Open Society University Network (OSUN). He made the announcement on Thursday, January 23, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland (stefanieb, UB, 31 Jan).

[Survey: University investments saw slower growth in 2019](#): The survey, released Thursday, found that college and university endowments returned an average of 5.3% in fiscal year 2019, down from the previous year's returns of 8.2% and 12.2% the year before that. The returns in 2019 were among the weakest in the past decade, but it's still seen as a long-term rebound over losses suffered following the 2008 financial crisis. (stefanieb, UB, 30 Jan).

[University of Michigan Showcases New AI Ethics Center](#): The Center of Ethics, Society and Computing has been unveiled by the University of Michigan, with a mission to intervene when digital media and tech replicate inequality, exclusion, deception, racism or sexism (Steve Marowski, govtech.com, 27 Jan).



The graphic for the University of Michigan Center for Ethics, Society and Computing

[More U.S. colleges are converting to a university. Here's why](#): Adopting the more prestigious-sounding "university" tag has multiple benefits, school officials and industry experts say. Universities can use the rebranding to re-introduce their institution to prospective students, and it can be particularly impactful with international recruitment. Many non-U.S. students hail from countries where "college" refers to what the U.S. calls "high school." But even though universities are generally thought of as offering more programs than colleges, the definition of what a university actually is varies from state to state. In Massachusetts, for example, a university must have at least two unrelated doctoral programs, while Connecticut's Department of Higher Education (DHE) doesn't actually distinguish between the two. (By Sean Teehan, HBJ, 27 Jan).

University to Help Society Wrap Their Minds Around Artificial Intelligence

Researchers at the University of Michigan have been exploring the need to set ethics standards and policies when it comes to the use of artificial intelligence, and they now have their own place to do so. The university has created a new Center of Ethics, Society and Computing (ESC) that will focus on AI, data usage, augmented and virtual reality, privacy, open data and identity (Steve Marowski, governing.com, 25 Jan).

[Computing society announces Open Access agreement with handful of major universities](#): ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery, entered into transformative open access agreements with several of its largest institutional customers, including the University of California (UC), Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Iowa State University (ISU). The agreements, which run for three-year terms beginning January 1, 2020, cover both access to and open access publication in ACM's journals, proceedings and magazines for these universities, and represent the first



transformative open access agreements for ACM (stefanieb, UB, 24 Jan).

New and different roles for business schools:

It is an exciting time for business education. For most of the past half century the reputations of American business schools have been defined largely by their MBA programs. Ironically, over this same period MBA programs have converged to the point where they differ very little in curriculum or program design. But I believe this is about to change. Evolving recruiter needs, shifting student preferences and advancing technological capabilities are spurring an unprecedented level of innovation and differentiation in business schools (stefanieb, UB, 16 Jan).

7 ways rightsizing (not downsizing) can help save colleges-Having the right size physical plant, workforce and programming can pay off—if you act now

Almost weekly we read about college closings. Some colleges in financial distress are merging with others. Some are creating partnerships with real teeth and enormous value in the short and long terms. But in many cases, mergers have wide and negative impacts on students, faculty, alumni and communities. What can any higher ed leader do now? Rightsize. It's something businesses have been doing successfully for years. Rightsizing involves creative forward thinking and action. It takes realizing that enrollment is down for the foreseeable future and rethinking how an organization can be structured to meet current needs. While there are no one-size-fits-all answers, here are seven rightsizing (not downsizing) strategies to consider. (Karen Gross, UB, 3 Jan)

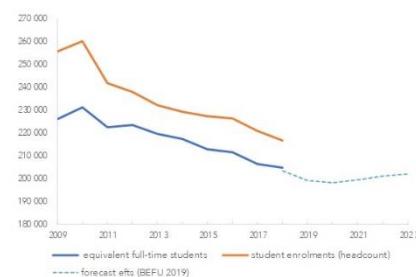


LEARNING & TEACHING

Hard data MOOC: "Discover storytelling with data and make better business decisions using data wrangling, modelling, and storytelling techniques," FutureLearn promotes a micro-credential from Monash U. It's open to "anyone interested in developing skills in the industry standard tools and techniques

and enhancing their ability to use data to inform decision making," – and who can stump-up \$1500 for the 12-week programme.

There's a puzzle here that may help to reveal some of the challenges our tertiary education system faces in meeting the skills needs of New Zealand's workforce. The number of people studying at tertiary education providers has been falling for a while. This reflects falling unemployment rates (especially for people aged 18-24) and demographic trends. Total enrolments are forecast to stay pretty flat for the next five years at least. [Where are all the part-time students in NZ?](#)



From the Crossley Lab: PhD training and the future of work:

it is often said that PhD training should adapt to take the diverse career trajectories into account. There are three aspects to PhD training: first, there is the specialist disciplinary knowledge; second, there is the development of skills (trouble shooting skills, critical thinking, attention to detail, social skills related to balancing team work and individual work); and third, there is the development of resilience and self-confidence. The last is probably most important. Completing a PhD – the experimental or other research work, and a write-up of say fifty to 100 thousand words – is a lonely and confronting task. Gradually converting PhDs into taught coursework degrees (which already exist as Masters) is unlikely to serve anyone's interests (Prof. Merlin Crossley, DVC(A), UNSW, CMM, 3 Feb).

Systems are Robust: Shaking the Tree at Victoria University:

Challenging a 90-year-old university system, its customs and practices, to effect change of this scale is not for the fainthearted. But it can be done. From a nascent idea in early 2017, Victoria University created an interdisciplinary First Year College to introduce the Block Model – a pedagogical and organisational approach known to enhance educational gain and sense of belonging. Now described as The VU Way, students in block engage deeply through active learning in small cohorts, study one subject at a time and complete

all assessment before moving onto the next subject. Results have been outstanding: all students have achieved higher quality learning outcomes, those from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds even more so. As other institutions watch closely, VU is now extending the model to all year levels (CMM, 2 Feb).

Challenges and Solutions of Research into the Quality of Online Learning: A Quality Matters Lens:

Research is essential for refining processes and improving the quality of education, but the structure of the research project is as important as the question itself. We explore the challenges of educational research and report on the Quality Matters experience, concluding with considerations important in the quest for robust research (Barbra Burch, Manager of Research and Development, Quality Matters & Stella Porto, Learning and Knowledge Management Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank, the Evollution, 31 Jan).



Zoning university technology to the students:

Only 63 per cent of responding undergraduate students and 60 per cent of coursework postgraduates believe their education is engaging. Only 63 per cent of undergraduate and 70 per cent of postgraduate alumni were satisfied with the teaching in their degrees. Today's learning technologies have the power to radically transform and amplify student achievement, engagement and industry application. The change is as simple as rezoning. Change the organisational structure and reallocate the budget lines so that the staff creatives are assigned to learning and teaching. This will ensure that universities distribute the learning oxygen to the students and thereby enable a future, digitally savvy, workforce (Shelley Kinash, CMM, 27 Jan).

The Evollution interviewed Leslie Oster (Program Director in the Pritzker School of Law, Northwestern University) to discuss the Ins and Outs of Internal Launch: Taking an Online Offering to Market Independently. New online programs can be created without an Online Program Management (OPM)



company but need to be approached with caution and expertise. (the Evollution, 27 Jan).



Macquarie University's Curriculum Transformation:

The Macquarie Curriculum Transformation project is a redesign of our curriculum architecture and the underlying systems/processes supporting our course suite. It is aligned with a continuing program for student success and MQ's touchstone that students are "co-creators" in their learning. (Sean Brawley, CMM, 21 Jan).

A QUT course is the first in Australia certified by Euro biz accreditor the European Foundation for Management Development. EFMD's "online course certification system" is, "firmly embedded in the general philosophy of EFMD accreditations: Internationalisation, practical relevance and quality improvement." QUT's "Leadership Coaching Through Turbulent Times," is provided via Future Learn (CMM, 21 Jan).

University of Kentucky Smart Campus Initiative continues to gain momentum:

The University of Kentucky launched the Smart Campus Initiative in 2019, involving students and faculty from across the campus looking at new ways of teaching and learning, among other objectives. On this week's edition of "Behind the Blue," UK Public Relations and Strategic Communications' Carl Nathe talks with three key leaders who are helping to implement this unique project. They discuss how it promises to benefit UK and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky (stefanieb, UB, 16 Jan).

Student Experiences, Retention and Success

Engaging students in an age of distraction: Encourage your students to use their phones to lock into—rather than tune out—class: Instead of lamenting the loss of students who never were, perhaps it's time for educators to recognize that the impetus is on them to be more engaging, dynamic and effective in

delivering content. This is not to imply that they need to be razzle-dazzle showpeople; they need to readjust their understanding of how to reach students. One surefire approach is to stop treating the phone as the enemy, and to start treating it as the ally it was always meant to be in education. Following are a number of ways you can encourage your students to use the phone to lock into—rather than tune out—the class. (Brent Warner, UB, 7 Feb).



To Improve Persistence, This College Asks Professors to Have a 15-Minute Meeting With Each Student:

Professors sometimes learn what's going on in students' lives when they volunteer it during a class discussion, a piece of personal writing, or a visit to office hours. But in plenty of other cases, students face problems that hinder their academic performance — and their professors have no idea. The 15-minute meetings are part of a broader effort, called the Persistence Project, which seeks to use the connections students form with their professors to keep more of them enrolled (Beckie Supiano, chronicle.com, 6 Feb).

EdSights launches ML-powered chatbot for students retention and wellbeing:

EdSights announced the general availability of its student retention solution for higher education institutions throughout the U.S. EdSights is an SMS-based, machine learning ("ML")-powered chatbot that gathers real-time insights into college students' experiences to identify those that may be at-risk for dropping out. It presents colleges and universities with data-backed solutions to improve opportunity for intervention, and in turn, student retention. (stefanieb, 4 Feb).

How the reach of virtual college advising is expanding:

'Near peers' and virtual coaches guide students in choosing best-fit schools. Virtual advising, embedded graduates and other novel approaches are bringing college advising to a wider group of students—some of whom may not otherwise receive any substantial guidance in making decisions about

postsecondary education. College Advising Corps has placed more than 800 recent college graduates in about 800 under-resourced high schools to serve as college advisors for first-generation, low-income and other underrepresented students from urban, suburban and rural communities (Matt Zalaznick, UB, 30 Jan).

Cultural bias and a lack of plurality of voices may account for low numbers of BAME postgraduates in subjects such as history and philosophy:

Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students make up 22.3% of all master's graduates, but just 11.5% of humanities postgraduates, and this drops to just 8.6% for history and philosophy and 9.2% for the arts.

Business, law and medicine on the other hand have much higher proportion of black and Asian research postgraduates.

Diversity specialist and business psychologist Binna Kandola says it can be easy for BAME students to feel excluded by lack of representation in the historical account (Helena Pozniak, the Guardian, 28 Jan).



Quick, practical actions for supporting students: 5 moves for reducing student attrition from EAB's Student Success Playbook:

One need not dig deep into higher education realities to find that student dropouts are causing college leaders to face reputational and financial challenges. Nearly one-third of students drop out of college before beginning their second year, and that hurts the bottom line as much as it does educators' hearts. Removing registration obstacles is one action that is relatively easy and effective. The report advises auditing the registration process to remove or mitigate logistical and financial barriers that prevent students from re-enrolling. EAB's report provided a few practical actions that should help get students to persist (Melissa Ezarik, UB, 22 Jan).



Staff and Student Wellbeing

An informed and authentic approach to supporting student transition: We need to understand and embrace the students we have in order to unleash their potential. In the context of performance-based funding, when there is a risk that higher education institutions could take a macro view of their cohorts, it has never been more important to nuance our approaches to support the diverse needs of students and assist their successful transition across the lifecycle. As HE providers, it is our role to enable and empower our students to do just that. But where do we start? (Rebecca Eaton, CMM, 9 Feb).

Student self-care practices on the course syllabus: With many college students, even high-achieving ones, feeling overwhelmed, faculty can play a role in encouraging students to take care of themselves. To support a more grassroots effort to help students, professors can help to destigmatize mental illness. Some examples from Laura Horne, Active Minds' chief program officer: Include self-care tips in the syllabus; Hold brief meditation sessions in class to support mindfulness; Assign self-care assignments. (Stefanie Botelho, UB, 21 Jan).

More US college students than ever seek mental health services: Universities nationwide have been facing a growing epidemic of mental health crises. The number of college students seeking treatment for depression and anxiety has continued to rise over the past several years, according to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health at Penn State. Yet similar studies reveal that college students seeking mental health help can wait weeks, sometimes months for an appointment with a counselor. (stefanieb, UB, 21 Jan).

Researchers face widespread bullying and insecurity: A survey of 4,000 researchers conducted in the United Kingdom and globally for the Wellcome Trust provides an alarming insight into research culture, revealing widespread bullying and feelings of job insecurity. Poor research culture is leading to unhealthy competition, bullying and harassment, and mental health issues. Close to half of researchers have experienced bullying and more than half have sought or wanted to seek professional help for depression and anxiety. At the same time, the vast majority of researchers have

worries about job security. (Brendan O'Malley, UWN, 16 Jan).

GRADUATE OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY

Are gender gaps closing in most lucrative college majors? As gender inequality in college majors ebbs in some more lucrative fields, such as accounting and biology, companies that achieve income equality between male and female employees will "come out ahead," say a team of researchers analyzing current labor conditions. Shift of women into high paying degree programs should force companies to erase income inequality. (Matt Zalaznick, UB, 10 Feb).



A new UK university wants to teach students skills employers actually want: The London Interdisciplinary School (LIS) will launch in 2021 with a target of 100 students, will offer a three-year bachelor of arts and sciences degree designed to tackle real-world issues. The curriculum is built around interdisciplinary problems—knife crime, childhood obesity, palm oil in supply chains, plastic pollution—as well as quantitative and qualitative research skills. Employers like the Met Police, Innocent, and Virgin will provide project ideas and offer five-week work experience for students. The skills students develop, the founders hope, will more closely align with what an AI-infused, automated world demands: collaboration between people and machines, critical thinking, speaking and writing skills, and data management, to name just a few things. (Jenny Anderson, Quartz, 1 Feb).



An "Internet of Careers" platform using blockchain: Joining forces with Velocity Career Labs, developer of innovative

blockchain technology, 14 industry leaders from across the Human Capital Management and Education markets came together to launch the Velocity Network Foundation. Together, the vendor-neutral, nonprofit organization will define, deploy and champion the Velocity Network: a globally accessible, open-source, blockchain-powered "Internet of Careers." (stefanieb, UB, 31 Jan).

The unis with grads employers love: New employer survey data reveals strong satisfaction with graduates, but it's way stronger at some universities than others. The top five institutions are; Bond U (94.6 per cent), Australia Catholic U (89.9 per cent), Uni Wollongong (89.6 per cent), University of Notre Dame Australia (87.4 per cent) and Western Sydney U (87.3 per cent). As for any argument that ratings relate to the SES status of students, four Group of Eight universities are below the system-wide average (CMM, 31 Jan).

Making the Numbers Add Up: Closing the Skills and Diversity Gap in Data Science: The stark reality is that not enough women or people from minority groups—including lower income—are working within data science. Closing this gap isn't just a moral question, or as some cynics would argue 'virtue signaling,' it is a commercial imperative. One of the easiest ways we can make a tangible difference, is to engage students from all backgrounds at an early age. Get them when they are young. Educate them on what a career in data science looks like, what the options are, what they need to do to make it and, I think most importantly, inspire them by showing them what the job entails (insidebigdata, 28 Jan).

Liberal arts degrees pay off in the long-term in the US: The median return on investment for liberal arts colleges 10 years after enrollment is \$62,000, which is \$45,000 below the median ROI of all colleges. By 40 years after enrollment, that ROI rises to \$918,000, which is nearly \$200,000 higher than the median ROI of all colleges, according to a new report, "ROI of Liberal Arts Colleges: Value Adds Up Over Time" by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (Matt Zalaznick, UB, 27 Jan).

Robots Are Coming, But Hybrid Skills Will Keep Humans in Control: The World Economic Forum also recently highlighted that "purely technical occupations are expected to show a new demand for creative and interpersonal



skills. For healthcare practitioners, for example, technological innovations will allow for increasing automation of diagnosis and personalization of treatments, redefining many medical roles towards translating and communicating this data effectively to patients." Today's jobs require hybrid skills that bridge the human skills of the liberal arts with technical skills needed to be able to work with and understand the data, algorithms and automation of the workplace (Rob Kadel, the Evolution, 27 Jan).



2020: The Year of Boutique

Employability: The point is that the new year is the time when we, as well as our students, can decide who is in control of our professional choices and of the content of work that we do. The point is that the new year is also a time to decide how we define ourselves as professionals. If we define ourselves with one dimension while answering the "what do you do?" question, we again follow a conventional approach to employability: We define ourselves as an "accountant," "teacher," "army officer," "supply chain manager" or any other one-dimensional term, while keeping our other interests and qualifications aside. (Julia Ivy, Faculty Director of the Masters in International Management, Northeastern University).



Unis must be up-front about what a degree delivers and when says equity expert: Sarah O'Shea (Uni Wollongong) reports the experience of first in family grads, often from equity groups, in her fellowship report for the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, at Curtin U. "Many of the participants in the study felt that they had been the victim of a hard-sell in terms of their degree, and that they had been misled as to the employability outcomes of their

qualification." She also has some suggestions for universities in [the report](#). (CMM, 24 Jan).

Fix, build, solve: Engaging girls with careers in engineering: A new report commissioned by the Engineering for Australia Taskforce and the Women in STEM Ambassador highlights the need to build engineering capability in our children and educate the public about the impact of engineering on everyone's lives. Download and read the [full report](#). (CMM, 21 Jan).

BIG DATA, BUSINESS ANALYTICS/INTELLIGENCE

Not Just a Statistic_Women in Data Science: there are literally hundreds of job openings for positions that require some level of tech skills and experience. Unfortunately, data science and other tech-based positions are far from gender equal. In fact, the field is dominated by men. The data science career path impacts nearly all other industries – not just IT fields — meaning that women within data sciences can have a profound impact across nearly every aspect of our economy and culture. Many experts believe that the diversity gap begins as early as grade school where women may not receive the same level of encouragement and support in STEM subjects as their male counterparts (insidebigdata, 1 Feb).

Leveraging analytics to boost enrolment: Achieving financial and enrollment goals by relying solely on traditional practices is no longer enough. College and university executives and other leaders within enrollment management must leverage new approaches and skills to compete in today's higher ed marketplace. Connect data with decision-making to compete and thrive—or paltry prospects and eroding enrollments will continue (Jason Simon, UB, 30 Jan).



How to secure data institutionwide: The recent proliferation of business intelligence systems and analytical capabilities has provided colleges and

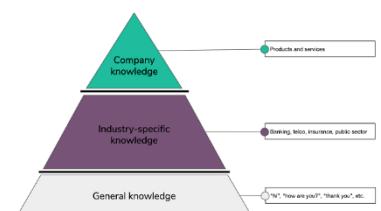
universities with amazing insights into student behaviors and administration processes that were previously inaccessible. How do we enable faculty and staff to easily work with the data, using their preferred tools, while maintaining security over the data? Starting with a centrally controlled and protected environment is key (Damian Doyle, UB, 30 Jan).



Trifacta, a leader in data preparation and data wrangling, released its "[Obstacles to AI & Analytics Adoption in the Cloud](#)" report, which reveals inefficiencies that are hindering analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) adoption in the cloud. The time-consuming nature of data preparation is a detriment to organizations: data scientists are spending too much time preparing data and not enough time analyzing it. if the quality of data is bad, analytics and AI/ML initiatives are going to be worthless (insidebigdata, 29 Jan).

Conversational AI—A New Wave Of Chat-Enabled Customer Service: Much of the confusion for companies looking to adopt a conversational AI solution stems from a misunderstanding of what technology is out there, and how it can be used to improve customer experience. The best conversational AI providers have developed a three-pronged approach to building up a holistic body of knowledge for each client. This can be referred to as the three levels of conversational AI knowledge.

- General knowledge (e.g. "hi", "how are you?", "thank you", etc.)
- Industry-specific knowledge (e.g. banking, telco, insurance, public sector, etc.)
- Company knowledge (e.g. brand-specific products and services)



(insidebigdata.com, 25 Jan).



[3 points to consider before taking on data analytics](#): Boosts in strategic decision-making institution-wide make data analytics programs worthwhile, but understanding first all the work involved is key. 1. The technical build-Analytics is a specialized field that requires its own system. 2. The culture shift

When data has been owned by individual departments for so long, it can be a seismic shift to move from a culture of "my data" to a culture of "our data." 3. The measurement lag. The last thing to remember is that your analytics efforts aren't a project with a target end date, but an ongoing capability and capacity requiring continuous attention and development. This is a new enterprise data platform, and you should treat it as such. That means business processes; change management; staffing; and institutional care, feeding and investment. It's hard, but the sooner you start, the sooner you'll see the impact data analytics can have on the success of your students and your institution. (Darren Catalano, UB, 21 Jan).



REPORTS, RESEARCH & RESOURCES

[The Creativity Challenge](#): This Chronicle issue brief examines how colleges can help students develop creative skills that will help them in their academic careers and beyond. Designed for administrators and faculty members alike, it serves as a primer on why creativity is important, how students can develop it, and what higher education might look like if faculty members were to encourage creativity in every discipline and in every course.

THE CHRONICLE
of Higher Education

The Creativity Challenge

Teaching students to think outside the box

[The Recession-Proof College](#): This issue brief explores how institutions can create financial stability, adapt to an ever-evolving market, and emerge from an economic downturn stronger and savvier. At a time when increasing tuition is rarely an option, it is essential that colleges and universities take advantage of niche opportunities, develop austerity plans, and increase reserves. Some institutions never fully recovered from the last recession, but with strong leadership, strategic mission-driven planning, and a continued emphasis on student success, they can be better equipped to mitigate the impact of the next economic downturn.

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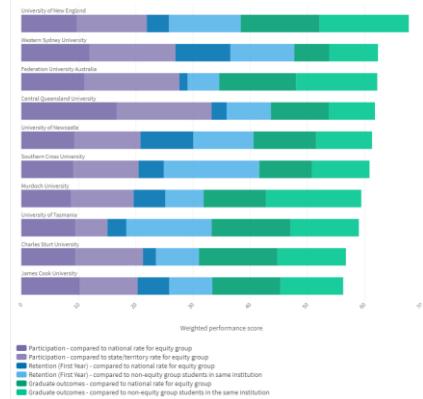
The Recession-Proof College

How to weather the coming economic storm

[Ranking universities on student equity performance](#): In 2020, Australia's public universities will move to a performance-based funding model that will include a 20 per cent weighting for student equity measures. Given the identified limitations of a ranking system, the study team recommends that alternative options for measuring higher education equity

performance be explored. Such options for measuring and reporting higher education equity performance might include approaches like benchmarking, which 'rate' outcomes based on an agreed standard (<https://rd.acer.org/>, 6 Feb).

Top 10 Australian public universities based on low SES student equity performance (2018 data)
Scenario 1: Equal weight ranking



[Roundtable Report Responding to Workforce Needs](#): Views on how colleges can partner with employers to teach students 21st-century skills: Higher education is growing its efforts to expand and shape curricula through new partnerships with organizations to be more responsive to student needs. However, there are barriers to growth. Faculty are apprehensive about giving control of the curricula to company partners, while employers are looking for a specific set of soft skills that current programming lacks.

ROUNDTABLE REPORT

Responding to Work-Force Needs

Views on how colleges can partner with employers to teach students 21st-century skills

THE CHRONICLE
of Higher Education®

On-the-job training and vocational training: what's the difference?

What's the best way to transition from school to employment or to change your career path? Should you enrol on a vocational course or can you get the training you need in the workplace? Anna Clements reports (Education Central, 3 Feb).



New report indicates unique succession and diversity challenges ahead for aging faculty workforce in the US: The report, The Aging of Tenure-Track Faculty in Higher Education: Implications for Succession and Diversity, examines how tenure-track faculty are distributed by age, how age and rank intersect with salary, and the representation of women and racial/ethnic minorities by age and rank. Women and racial/ethnic minorities are not adequately represented among faculty in higher ed, particularly in the more senior academic ranks. Women make up just 25 percent of tenure-track faculty older than 55, while racial/ethnic minorities comprise only 16 percent. With each increase in rank, from assistant to full professor, the percentage of minorities decreases. Since this decrease occurs in relatively recent promotions (i.e., from assistant to associate professor), it likely reflects a lack of promotion of women and minorities. The report also evaluates variations of age across faculty discipline, noting that retirements are likely to vary considerably (stefanieb, 24 Jan).

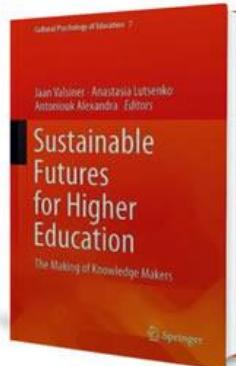
The road less travelled to internationalisation of HE: Research tells us that academics find it difficult to engage with the process of internationalisation of the curriculum for various reasons. The powerful role of internationalisation of the curriculum as a change agent for academic teams on several levels. They demonstrate that academics are motivated to embark on the process for the purposes of empowering their home student population, and that different academic teams gravitate towards it for various instrumental reasons. (Amit Marantz Gal, UWN, 18 Jan).

Management capacity – A key element in research excellence: Many international research and development funders recognise the role of universities in solving global problems and increasingly structure their funding around societal grand challenges while encouraging global interdisciplinary teams to address these. Managerial and administrative capacity is every bit as important as research excellence; in the US, it is estimated that 44% of the time of researchers leading federally funded grants is devoted to administration. To be successful, universities must have demonstrable research governance infrastructure and highly competent research managers. (Rebecca Ward, UWN, 16 Jan).

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Department of Education and the Department of Human Services (DHS) are delivering the Transforming the Collection of Student Information (TCSI) in a joint project to transform how student information is collected by Government agencies. TCSI will provide solutions that will replace the Higher Education Provider Client Assistance Tool (HEPCAT) for all education providers and the Centrelink Academic Reassessment Transformation (CART) for universities. The CAUDIT Special Interest Group (SIG) on Student Data provides a collaboration of practitioners involved with student data reporting, management and systems across the higher education sector working towards the common goal of increasing clarity, working through the government requirements, issues and challenges and sharing knowledge and experiences relating to the TCSI project. Join the Student Data SIG [here](#).

GOOD READS



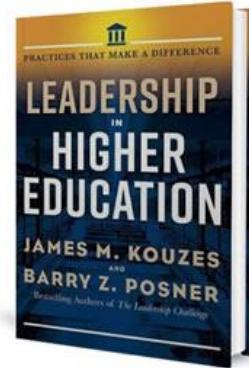
Sustainable Futures for Higher Education: The Making of Knowledge Makers

Editors: Jaan Valsiner, Anastasia Lutsenko, and Alexandra Antoniouk

[Buy Now](#)

This book captures the current trends and perspectives of the Knowledge Makers from various nations of the world on meeting and greeting the challenges of globalization and the pressures of the knowledge economy. It makes a strong case for universities of tomorrow sustaining their autonomous thinking and yet nurturing an environment of collaborative partnership with society, corporate and industry to fuel innovations in plenty and continuous supply of new science and technologies. Higher

Education has been and shall remain a powerful vehicle of national and global transformation. I see a great value of the publication in impacting the minds of the leaders in higher education around the globe for revitalizing the universities.

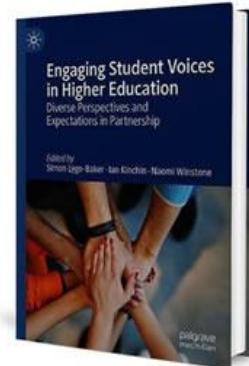


Leadership in Higher Education: Practices That Matter

James M. Kouzes & Barry Z. Posner

[Buy Now](#)

The book offers higher education professionals a set of leadership skills and practices that are available to everyone, not just a charismatic few. This book is meant for all leaders on campus. Not only academic faculty, but the staff and managers of residential life, career development, student records, admissions, campus safety, information technology, library, counseling and health centers, facilities, alumni relations, and development, and all other organizations on campus. Kouzes and Posner identify Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership(R) and provide case examples of real people on college and university campuses who demonstrate each practice.



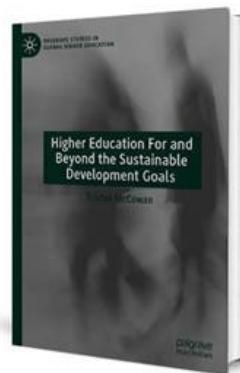
Engaging Student Voices in Higher Education: Diverse Perspectives and Expectations in Partnership

Editors: Simon Lygo-Baker, Ian Kinchin, & Naomi Winstone

[Buy Now](#)



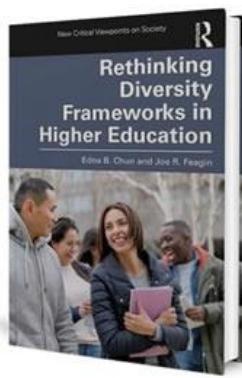
This book examines the importance of exploring the varied and diverse perspectives of student experiences. The editors and contributors explore how notions of the 'student voice' as a single, monolithic entity may in fact obscure divergence in the experiences of students. Placing so much emphasis on the 'student voice' may lead educators and policy makers to miss important messages communicated - or consciously uncommunicated - through student actions. This book also explores ways of working in partnership with students to develop their own experiences. It is sure to be of interest and value to scholars of the student experience and its inherent diversity.



[Higher Education For and Beyond the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

Tristan McCowan

[Buy Now](#)



[Rethinking Diversity Frameworks in Higher Education](#)

Edna B. Chun & Joe R. Feagin

[Buy Now](#)

The book offers concrete approaches, concepts, and tools that will enable higher education leaders to identify, address, and counteract persistent structural and behavioral barriers to inclusion. As such, it shares a series of practical recommendations that will assist presidents, provosts, executive officers, boards of trustees, faculty, administrators, diversity officers, human resource leaders, diversity taskforces, and researchers as they seek to implement comprehensive strategies that result in sustained diversity change.

This book analyses the role of the university in working towards the Sustainable Development Goals. In contrast to the previous Millennium Development Goals, higher education is seen to have a crucial role in this new agenda. Yet how can the university fulfil these weighty expectations, and are the dominant trends in higher education supporting or undermining this vision? This book draws on the idea of the 'developmental university', a model characterised by its porous boundaries with society and commitment to teaching, research and community engagement in the public interest.

ON THE MOVE

Simone Ulalka Tur becomes PVC Indigenous in Flinders U.

Christy Collis joins USQ as associate director for academic development.

Kade Brown becomes strategy director at RMIT Online.

Aleksandar Subic will become DVC for science, engineering and health and VP digital innovation at RMIT.

Ashley Franks become PVC Research Capability at La Trobe U.

Jessica Gallagher is appointed Uni Queensland's PVC for global engagement and entrepreneurship.

Josh Pienaar joins Uni Southern Queensland as PVC Students.

Reuben Bolt joins Charles Darwin U as PVC Indigenous Leadership.

Anthony Mcclaran will become VC of St Mary's University Twickenham.

Claire Annesley is moving to the University of NSW to become dean of arts and social sciences.

Caroline Dunne joins Griffith U as chief of staff to VC Carolyn Evans.

Ian Henderson moves to director at the University of Queensland's Institute for Molecular Bioscience.

Helen Partridge join Deakin U in March, as PVC teaching and learning.

Michael Sankey is the new president of the Australian Council on Open, Distance and e-Learning. Professor Sankey is the deputy director in Learning Futures at Griffith U.

Cindy Shannon joins Griffith U as inaugural PVC Indigenous.

POSITIONS VACANT

AAIR
Australian Association for Institutional Research

Looking for a change?
Want to list a job?
Visit our Jobs Board.

[Jobs Board](#)

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

See our [Training and Development](#) webpage focused on training for institutional researchers.

[TCSI-webinar-gallery](#)

HEIMS will be decommissioned end of June and replaced with TCSI Analytics.



[The Data School](#)

The Data School has launched in Australia! The Data School is a paid two-year long immersive course which will create the next generation of great data analysts and consultants. Over the last



twenty-six years, the team at MIP Australia have worked with leading organisations to provide data and analytics consulting services. We have also trained thousands of people to use Tableau and Alteryx.

Data Science Melbourne

This is a group for anyone interested in 'Data Science'. We are not quite sure what the exact definition of a Data Scientist is, but if you deal with something generally related to converting data into useful insight then you will hopefully benefit from joining the group. Please follow the link to join in the group and [follow the events posted on Meetup.](#)

AIR Webinars

AIR provides online resources, innovative practices, professional development opportunities, and training for AIR members and non-members and the higher education community, including professionals from IR, effectiveness, assessment, planning, and related fields.



Accuracy Matters: Accessibility in Faculty-Created Video

Thursday, February 20, 2020
Time: 2:00 pm EST

Videos are essential for online programs, but they must be accessible. Requiring already-busy faculty to create captions for videos can be a challenge. Attend this webinar to learn strategies to ensure faculty include accurate captioning in videos across your campus, presented by the Co-Director of the Center for Excellence at Northwood University.

Scheduled speakers:

Jeanna Cronk

Co-Director, Center for Excellence

Northwood University (Mich.)

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION®

WEBINAR

The Next Dimension for Online Education: Teaching Diversity and Difference

Wednesday, March 4, 2020
2:00 P.M. ET /11:00 A.M. PT

SPEAKERS



Suzanne Gibbs Howard
Founder and Dean, IDEO U Partner



Dr. Paul J. LeBlanc
President
Southern New Hampshire University



Goldie Blumenstyk
Senior Writer
The Chronicle of Higher Education

The ability to work effectively in multicultural, diverse environments is becoming increasingly important in today's workforce. To meet this demand, colleges are designing online courses to teach students skills that don't fit neatly into disciplines but represent vital knowledge for living and working in a 21st-century society.

HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCES & EVENTS

The 2nd Student Services and Amenities Fee Forum

Tuesday, 17 March
the Spencer St Campus of CQ University in Melbourne

This national forum is an opportunity for professional staff of HE providers (HEP) to discuss operational, planning, delivery and compliance matters associated with the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF), to share best-practice case studies and experiences and identify key issues and concerns.

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network 2020



Quality Assurance for Higher Education 4.0 in the Asia-Pacific Region

16–19 April 2020
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts & Singapore Management University, Singapore

Sub-themes:

1. Digitalization of Quality Assurance
2. Innovations in HE Accreditation in Era of Disruptive Technologies
3. Internationalization of Quality Assurance
4. Quality Assurance of Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning
5. The Role of the Governments in Higher Education 4.0

You are invited to submit papers relating to topics from the list above, or one of your own choices by 30 Dec 2019. Please indicate the number or title of your selected topic.

2020 Student Service Centres Conference



THE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER ISSUE 2/2020

9–11 June 2020
Victoria University of Wellington
New Zealand

The SSCC will be in its 14th year and remains a key conference on customer service for all stakeholders in tertiary education management. Find out more about previous SSCC's and keep updated on latest information. In conjunction with the SSCC each year, Customer Service Benchmarking Australia (CSBA) offers a benchmarking program and pre-conference workshop.

Heads of Student Administration Conference 2020

26–28 August
Novotel Northbeach, Wollongong

The theme of this year's conference is currently being finalised so stay tuned!

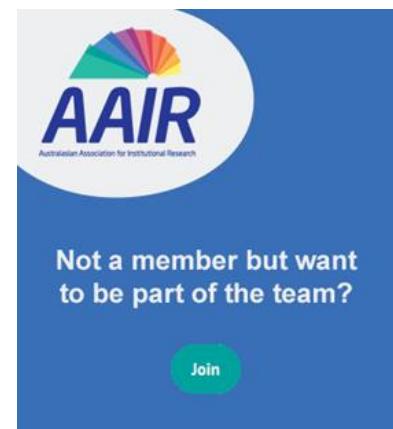


ATEM Conference 2020



"Bright Futures – Shining the Light on Excellence"
13–17 September 2020
Brisbane, Queensland

Your TEMC destination for 2020 is the glorious city of Brisbane, where we will once again meet to bring together professionals from the higher education sector to meet, collaborate, design, influence, network and most importantly harness new skills and knowledge to take home and share with colleagues.



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five quick questions with John Stanley

What is your role/status?

Director of Institutional Research at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu.

What is the most interesting finding of your doctoral research?

I'm the Director of a small, two-person IR office at a regional four-year undergraduate university with an enrolment of just over 3,000 students. Since our student information system and data warehouse are managed centrally by our System Office, my office tends to focus more on analysis opposed to data management and report automation.

My role entails providing decision support to senior leadership, which includes providing analyses that not only provide historical context, but also help decision-makers evaluate possible outcomes and return-on-investment. Examples of data analysis projects we commonly work on are estimating student price response, enrolment prediction analysis, and evaluating program effectiveness for some of our federally funded student programs.

Briefly, how would you describe your career and its connection with the institutional research?

With the emergence of 'big data' and the power of new predictive tools and techniques, I see more institutional research offices moving beyond their reporting duties towards more analytical and predictive territories. As a result, the traditional IR function is becoming more of a steward and teacher of data, instead of a back-office reporting operation.

Tell us why you are interested in undertaking the Newsletter co-editor role?

There was a time when institutional research was more strongly grounded in empirical research and scholarship. I believe the field has moved away from this. New technology—using machine learning, for example—has made it easier to run explanatory and predictive models at the click of a button. One challenge is that these 'point and click' models are often untethered from model fit criteria and path analytical logic (e.g. causality,

THE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER ISSUE 2/2020

directionality). The results are not always intuitive to decision makers and often vary from what's rendered using a traditional stats-informed process. Regardless of methods, I believe a priority for IR should be ensuring that subjective decisions governing what's included in a model are made and that they are ideally based on empirical cumulative research.

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

...my assistant, Christi Palacat, who is an amazing analyst and programmer. She is working hard to develop her statistical and programming skills simultaneously, which is a rare combination that will take her far. I hope she can travel with me to the AAIR forum in 2020! Also, my friend and mentor, Dr Serge Herzog who has taught me more about research and analysis than I could have ever learned on my own.

Connect John via University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu's [IR website](#)



SOAPBOX



The Soapbox gives members the opportunity to pose a perplexing question to the entire AAIR readership (both

members and non-members). This could be used for the purposes of information gathering or research. Please click the microphone below to browse current inquiries.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Issue 3, March 2020

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? Please send your contributions to the editor@aaир.org.au by Friday, 6 March 2020.

A reminder about the organisations' social media links to keep you up-to-date and in touch with all the latest news and events.



AAIR on Twitter [@AAIRaustralasia](#)



Lizzie Li
Co-Editor, *The Institutional Researcher*

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers/authors and not necessarily those of AAIR or the institutions that make up the AAIR membership.

