

# Professor Kerry Brown

SBL Professorial Research Talk

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## Profile

Kerry Brown is the Professor of Employment and Industry in the School of Business and Law at Edith Cowan University. She is a Program Leader for the Governance and Organisational Planning Program of the Asset Institute. She is Director of the Centre for Innovative Practice at ECU. Her expertise is acknowledged as an invited external Affiliate Professor with international Business School, ESCP Europe based in Madrid.

Kerry has published extensively including 10 books and over 90 journal publications. She is an Executive Board Member and Founding Fellow of the International Society for Engineering Asset Management.

Professor Brown specialises in change management; collaboration, networks and business clusters; capability, strategy, management and policy for infrastructure and asset management; public management and policy; government-business-community relations; negotiation and employment relations.

Contact Kerry: [k.brown@ecu.edu.au](mailto:k.brown@ecu.edu.au)



## Food for Thought: An Agri-Food Strategy for Regional Development

Regions are challenged with a reduction in labour supply (drift or rush to cities) and a loss of professionals in regional centres and, the creation of new jobs mainly in the unskilled or semi-skilled categories leading to a loss of diversity and value-added economic and social activity in regions.

A plan for developing the capacity of regions to withstand shocks and create a resilient development approach could be an agri-food strategy that builds the capacity of local producers to expand their produce to wider markets and offer specialised products within a tourism context. Local producers and consumers within a region may benefit from the establishment of a local food strategy in the context of the concept of sustainable development through regional food.

Clusters of allied, connected activities are explored as a way to kick-start and/or foster regional development through agri-food. Where it is possible to establish a cluster by identifying anchor activity (such as local food production), attracting firms to locate in a cluster (framework policies) and participate in cluster activities (network effects); it is argued positive effects spread to the whole region (spillover effects): including job creation, higher purchasing power and other benefits of increased economic activity.

This presentation highlights the potential of Western Australia to benefit from an agri-food strategy that links food production, farms, local cuisine and tourism.