



Centre for People, Place & Planet

Strategic Research Centre





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Who we are

The Centre for People, Place & Planet is a Strategic Research Centre at Edith Cowan University. It was established in January 2021 and is co-hosted by the School of Science and the School of Education. It draws on members from multiple discipline areas across the university.

The vision of the Centre is to reconnect people, ecosystems, and place-based knowledges for universal well-being.

Our mission is to conduct transdisciplinary research using participatory methodologies in the context of global environmental change.

What we do

Reconnecting people, ecosystems and place-based knowledges for universal well-being.

Our research projects seek:



To co-design research and action, with and influenced by, Indigenous knowledge holders.



To transform human-environment relations through place-based, just, and collaborative processes.



To recognise living systems where there are interdependencies and mutualities.



To strengthen governance and management for sustainability and ecosocial justice.

Our Values



- **We live on land that holds Indigenous wisdom** and colonial histories. We stand in solidarity with, and on, Country.
- **We acknowledge, that social ecological systems are complex**, uncertain and require a transdisciplinary approach to avoid the structural societal problems associated with siloed sectors and disciplines.
- **We recognise that societies have much to learn from Indigenous knowledges and practices**, and the process of that learning is best done with the direct guidance and leadership of Indigenous people.
- **We value opportunities to co-design** and co-create research with communities in place.
- **We want our research to be transformational** (change-oriented and action-oriented), and process-driven, to deliver just outcomes.
- **We are supportive of each other** and willing to be open and learn, inclusive (while retaining our cohesion), participatory, reciprocal, and consensual in our decision-making.
- **We are creative and courageous**, open to ideas, opportunities, and serendipity, and we push boundaries where needed to create the society we envision.



Programs of Research



Katitjin Bidi means “knowledge pathway” in Noongar – the language of the Noongar peoples of Southwestern Australia.

To restore relations with people and place, the Centre has established *Katitjin Bidi* – an experimental and emerging methodological project that engages in On Country activities based on processes that will be reciprocal, relational, restorative and responsive, to demonstrate being-by-doing Indigenous-supported research. *Katitjin Bidi* contributes to all our research.

The CPPP has three programs of research which work towards our vision for reconnecting people, ecosystems and place-based knowledges for universal well-being.



**Food, Earth, and
Water Resilience**



**Place-based
Literacies for
Ecosocial Justice**



**Transformative
Responses to Global
Environmental
Change**

Food, Earth, and Water Resilience

Sustainability of agricultural production systems



Over the last 10-20 years, food production processes locally and globally have dramatically changed.

A range of alternative agricultural practices have emerged, focusing on ways to improve soil health, accrue organic carbon, and restore soil and landscape water content to support sustainable food systems. However, a thorough understanding of the collective practices comprising sustainable agriculture, the impact of these practices on outcomes such as improved nutrient density of food, and barriers to farmer transition to such practices, is lacking. Existing evidence suggests several barriers to adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, and policy makers recognise the imperatives to do things differently. However, tangible metrics to aid food system stakeholder decision making are lacking. There is a demand for this knowledge to inform food producers' practices, policy directions, and consumer purchasing decisions.

Our broad and embracing research program seeks to work with all stakeholder groups to address the shortfall in knowledge regarding sustainable agriculture. We will co-design our research program with farmers, farming groups and Aboriginal farmholders who have critical understandings of land, water and people relationships, to identify, design and test sustainability measures for agriculture, and advocate for the wider uptake of and support for sustainable agriculture practices among Australian farmers.

Place-based Literacies for Ecosocial Justice

Using feminisms, the arts, and more-than-human methods to develop place-based literacies for ecosocial justice

The present environmental conditions require a radical shift in how people reimagine and reconfigure the future survival of the planet.

This involves relearning how to be a part of the planet's ecological community, including how people should live, learn, and connect with place. Part of this relearning is through attuning to and developing place-based literacies. Place-based literacies involve attending to past and present histories, thinking more deeply about human relations with worlds, engaging with the entanglement of people, place, and planet, and working with the materiality of these complex and uneven relations.

Our research projects sit at the intersections of art, sciences and education and are grounded in Indigenous methodologies and knowledges of place. Projects include On Country learning, artist-led activations, and education for rethinking human relations with water, weather, and waste. We use feminisms, the arts, and more-than-human methods to generate place-based literacies for ecosocial justice. Projects include On Country learning, artist-led activations, and education for rethinking human relations with water, weather, and waste relations.



Transformative Responses to Global Environmental Change

Informing and promoting transformative systems change for the flourishing of people and planet

The world is experiencing significant environmental change, such as climate change and biodiversity loss, which has multiple and intersecting impacts on people and places.

Global environmental change is grounded in, and exacerbates, oppressive systems such as colonialism, neoliberal capitalism, patriarchy, and white supremacy. These complexities require courageous responses to transform dominant structures of injustice for the rights and flourishing of people and planet.

Our research supports and promotes interdisciplinary interventions that are participatory, informed by Indigenous knowledge systems, and principles of climate justice, and are action-oriented. Projects include studies of socially and ecologically just transitions from extractivism, inclusive social movements for climate justice, human mobility and place attachment, and ecological grief.

Our research aims to challenge existing paradigms to advance understanding of human-environment interactions, and to inform and promote transformative systems change. In partnership with communities, institutions and places, our research will create and construct new ways of knowing and being at the intersection of people and nature.



Our Core Members



**Professor
Mindy Blaise**

Mindy is co-director of the Centre and a Vice-Chancellor's Professorial Research Fellow in the School of Education, with research interests in feminisms and contemporary childhoods.



**Professor
Pierre Horwitz**

Pierre is co-director of the Centre and a Professor of Environmental Sciences in the School of Science, with a research interest in social ecology.



**Associate Professor
Justine Dandy**

Justine is an Associate Professor in Psychology in the School of Arts and Humanities, researching community and cultural psychology.



Dr Naomi Godden

Naomi is a Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Social Work in the School of Arts and Humanities, with an expertise in feminist participatory action research and climate justice.



**Dr Stephanie
Godrich**

Stephanie is a Senior Lecturer in Nutrition in the School of Medical and Health Sciences, with a special interest in food security.



**Dr Libby
Jackson-Barrett**

Libby is the Associate Dean and Senior Lecturer in Aboriginal Education in Kurungkurl Katitjin and School of Education, with an expertise in culturally responsive education.



Dr Aaron Jenkins

Aaron is a Research Fellow in Planetary Health in the School of Science, with an interest in eco-epidemiology.



**Professor Angus
Morrison-Saunders**

Angus is a Professor in Environmental Management in the School of Science, with an expertise in Environmental Impact Assessment.



Dr Mehran Nejati

Mehran is a Senior Lecturer in Business Sustainability in the School of Business and Law, with a special interest in corporate social responsibility.



Dr Jo Pollitt

Jo is an artist-scholar and Forrest Creative Fellow in the School of Education and Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, researching embodied pedagogies and dance.

Partnerships



We are committed to partnering with community, industry, and relevant stakeholders in all phases of our research.

This philosophy of co-creation of research with community, industry and government, means:

- including end-users and stakeholders in the conceptual design of research, and encouraging innovative, creative and participatory methodologies
- embedding knowledge brokering into all projects
- focusing on translation of complex systems into action and policy applications that will resonate with the broader community
- using implementation science to measure translation platforms to support evidence-based practice, educational and policy strategies for individual, community and system level change

Plans for translating and communicating research to stakeholders are developed and tailored for each project.

Contact Us



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ecu.edu.au/research/cppp



**Reconnecting
people, ecosystems,
and place-based
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