Social Innovation Network (SInet)

SInet stands for the development of new concepts, strategies and tools that empower individuals, communities, profit and non-profit organisations and the government to improve quality of life where quality of life means material standard of living as well as personal well-being in terms of health and environment, and social harmony.

In short: **SInet research creates better futures for people.**

Launching the Coomaditchie e-commerce site - empowering local indigenous artists in partnership with SInet research

SInet aims at (1) facilitating the information flow between researchers with similar research interests, (2) providing a platform for sharing (ideas, expertise, networks, etc.), (3) strengthening social science research at UOW, and (4) strengthening the position of all SInet members by developing and jointly promoting a brand name.

All projects within the SInet will have the final goal of empowering individuals, communities, profit and non-profit organisations and the government to improve quality of life. The kind of research undertaken in the SInet is depicted below

---

**Network configurations, infrastructure and support**

SInet is structured in centre and project nodes. Centre nodes are existing, or newly formed, groupings of researchers with common research interests within a discipline. Project nodes are research projects which fit into the scope of social innovation research and are undertaken by at least one SInet member or SInet centre node. This illustrates that centres are not affected in their identity or structure through the SInet and that most of the network's activity happens in joint project nodes.

**Centre Nodes of SInet**
Faculty of Science
Human Geography (HGeo)

Faculty of Arts
Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS)
Centre for Social Ethics and Policy (SEP)

Faculty of Creative Arts
Cultural Innovations

Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences
Centre for Health Initiatives (CHI)

Faculty of Education
Child and Youth Interdisciplinary Research Centre (CYIRC)
Research Centre for Interactive Learning Environments (RILE)

Graduate School of Business
Centre for Health Services Development (CHSD)

Faculty of Commerce
Centre for Social Marketing Research (CSMR)
Centre for Human and Social Capital Research (CHSCR)
Health, Environment, Development and Growth Economics (HEDGE)
People and Organisations Research Centre (PandO)
Centre for Small Business and Regional Research (CSBRR)
Social Accounting and Accountability (SAA)
Centre for Applied Systems Research (CASR)
Marketing Research Innovation Centre (MRIC)

Projects within the Nodes of SInet

Human Geography (HGeo) – GeoQuEST
Wollongong human geographers are recognised nationally and internationally for their research in the social and cultural dimensions of environmental issues, including indigenous geographies and relations to land; and advanced research on the socio-economic future of cities and regions. Research clusters exist around externally-funded projects on creative economies and regional change; the political ecology of nature; sexuality and space; new paradigms for conservation landscapes, and changing environmental philosophies in population turnaround regions. We are innovative in:
- Providing an active social science research and teaching presence in the Science Faculty.
- Utilising a diversity of methodologies, from experimental cognitive methodologies in cultural geography to the use of geographic information systems for analysis of sociospatial patterning.
- Exploring issues of environment and society from the unique multi-disciplinary background of geography, which bridges the physical and social sciences.

Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS)
The Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS) at the University of Wollongong, formally established in 1999, is an Australian Research Council (ARC) Key Centre for Research and Teaching Excellence. Researchers in CAPSTRANS examine processes of historical, social and cultural change through innovative research by combining methods from a variety of disciplines including political science, economics, management studies, sociology, anthropology, media studies, social history and literature studies. CAPSTRANS is well-regarded nationally and internationally for its innovative research and research training programs on social change in the Asia Pacific. CAPSTRANS researchers are at the leading edge in terms of winning competitive research grants, producing major and influential publications, and undertaking novel research projects on a wide range of themes. Significantly, CAPSTRANS is unique for encouraging and supporting research that is comparative and multidisciplinary, seeking to understand social change in and between countries of the region. CAPSTRANS research effort is organised into five program areas, which each support a number of thematic research agendas:

Mobility and Exclusion
Researchers working on this topic explore how migration and other forms of mobility have led to the exclusion of some groups from development processes, and to limited opportunities to participate in political processes. Research projects are currently organised into four themes:

- Labour migration, regulation and work - a group of inter-linked projects examining the development of labour regimes in both colonial and post-colonial societies.
- Bordered exclusions - projects that examine how formulations of identity and citizenship along border zones intersect with gender, ethnicity, class and sexuality in shaping experiences of mobility and exclusion, and moral panics in relationship to refugees and migrants.
- Democracy and human rights - projects that explore processes of democratisation, including human rights and women's rights activism.
- Sovereignty and the moral legitimacy of state structures - projects that explore the moral basis of popular forms of nationalism and how they articulate and perpetuate racial, ethnic or religious divisions.

Globalisation and International Development

This research program examines the impact of globalisation on development at the local, national, and regional levels. Research projects are currently organised into three major themes:

- International agencies and development NGOs - inter-related projects that provide in-depth case studies of international agencies, regional bodies, international labour regimes, non-government organisations, and international environmental and human rights bodies.
- Social impact analysis - projects that examine how communities sustain themselves ecologically, culturally and economically, and how individuals and communities maintain, challenge or transform state and transnational forces.
- Environmental change and globalisation - projects that examine how communities in Australia and the Asia-Pacific are connected by climate change and resource development and their engagement in political and social actions as part of these changes.

Australia__ in the Asia-Pacific

A series of inter-linked projects that explore Australia's place in the Asia-Pacific region. Researchers in this program examine aspects of pre-colonial and colonial interaction between polities and peoples, as well as the history of Australia's engagement in the region since Federation. These research projects are organised under two themes:

- Colonial encounters - projects that examine Australia's colonial history of engagement in South East Asia (including the presence of indentured labour in the tropical north), and how local Indigenous groups have responded to colonialism and modernity (accepting, rejecting and modifying western cultural practices).
- Constructing the Australian nation - a series of projects that draw on historical records as well as contemporary debates and practices to examine Australia's relations with its nearest neighbours in South East Asia and the Pacific, and the significance of these relations for the construction of the Australian nation. These projects also examine how internal forms of otherness often provoke re-examinations and re-assertions of the values of what it means to be Australian.

Culture and Representation

Researchers working in this program examine the impact that globalisation is having on local cultures, the media, art and literature. Their work includes the investigation of international regulatory regimes, human rights discourses, media policy, and national ideologies. This program is divided into four theme areas:

- Film, television and new media - interlinked projects exploring media policy and regulatory regimes in several Asian countries, and how local groups remake and reuse western technology in their own distinctive ways.
- Representing the other - examines representations of "otherness" through the analysis of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality in literature, and in mainstream and new media.
• Representing the Indonesian nation <http://www.capstrans.edu.au/about/culture-cap.html#rin#rin>* - projects exploring the representation of the Indonesian nation in popular culture, news media and history texts.

• Exploring languages in Asia <http://www.capstrans.edu.au/about/culture-cap.html#ela#ela>* - projects that examine language use and linguistics in a range of Asian languages.

**Globalisation and Education**
A new and emerging program that examines the intersection between globalisation and education, including work on transnational education, international markets in education, the internationalisation of vocational education, and language and literacy policy in South East Asia.

**Centre for Social Ethics and Policy (SEP)**
The projects currently being undertaken by SEP are briefly outlines below.

- **_Big-Picture Bioethics: Policy-Making and Liberal Democracy_**
  Professor Susan Dodds’ research focuses on the intersection between the developing technologies, ethics and political theories. She is currently pursuing two major research projects-- 1. "Big-Picture Bioethics: policy-making and liberal democracy", a project that examines the challenge of democratic public policy development on ethically contested issues like embryo and stem cell research and 2. A project on ethics and the development of nanotechnologies—specifically biomedical applications of nanoscience and bionics. Other research includes work on Human Research Ethics Committees and the protection of research participants; and gender, ageing and social policy. Her work is informed by debates in democratic theory, feminist ethics, bioethics and liberal pluralism as applied to current policy debates.

- **_Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health_**
  Dr Lindsey Harrison’s research explores the application of qualitative research methods to health research, social determinants of health, and policies directed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

- **_National Guidelines on Research Ethics_**
  Dr Renee Kyle’s primary research is focused on issues surrounding the development of the self and ethical obligations for promoting autonomy capacities. Her work is informed by developmental psychology, feminist ethics and bioethics. She is currently working on two projects one concerns the significance of bionics and enhancement technologies on conceptions of self the other explores the process of the development of national guidelines on research ethics.

- **_Social Exclusion, Access to Justice and Citizenship_**
  A/Prof Mark Rix’s research interests are mainly in the field of public policy, public administration and responsible governance, with a focus on issues relating to social exclusion, access to justice and citizenship. Much of his work explores the role and accountability of public sector and “third sector” organisations, i.e. those organisations that are either state bodies or non-government organisations that provide social welfare services.

**Cultural Innovations**

**Contemporary Art, Craft and the Audience**
This project addresses issues of audiences and contemporary art and craft, particularly in regional Australia. It breaks new ground in developing models for public galleries in programming, presenting and interpreting contemporary work. A broad audience research framework is being developed as well as innovative strategies for interpretation, drawing on an interdisciplinary theoretical basis which includes media studies, narrative and visual culture theory. There are two collaborating organisations on the project, Museums and Galleries NSW and Object: Australian Centre for Craft and Design.

**Tullimbar Village Community and Creative Arts Centre Study**
The research team is working with Miltonbrook Land Pty Ltd and Shellharbour City Council to research and develop an innovative model and sound planning framework for the town hall development at Tullimbar urban village in Shellharbour LGA. The project aims to:

• Foster collaborations and develop a shared understanding of the role of community facilities in contributing to urban vitality and to cultural capital.

• Identify world’s best practice in planning and managing community and cultural facilities

• Identify issues and strategies that will provide a framework for the development of an innovative new community centre model in the Tullimbar Village town centre.
**Search, Navigation and Annotation of Digital Museum Collections Using Concept-Lattices**

This project links research expertise and innovation in IT and New Media at the University of Wollongong with content management and collection access needs of The Australian Museum. Working with the Museum’s Vanuatu Collections and Indigenous communities in Vanuatu as the test case, it explores new ways to access museum-based virtual collections by developing a framework for mapping dynamically collection resources in terms of their annotated attributes. Technically the project links a variety of metadata standards to a concept-lattice based system representing collection resources as a structured associative network; in terms of design and museology it investigates effective means of visualising and interacting with this network. The project outcomes will be of substantial value to cultural institutions involved in archiving, image management, search and discovery and in forging links between objects and intangible cultural heritage for the benefit of various users, particularly Indigenous communities. The project’s innovative digital content management techniques are also applicable in the public domain.

**Centre for Health Initiatives (CHI)**

The Centre for Health Initiatives (CHI) was established in 2004 (under the name Centre for Health Behaviour and Communication Research, CHBCR). In May 2007, our name was changed to CHI to better reflect the diversity of research within the Centre, and to facilitate and enhance research opportunities for early career researchers (ECRs), established researchers, and industry partners that are associated with the Centre.

CHI has six main streams of research (Initiatives), each led by a stream leader. They are:

- Initiatives in Social Marketing – A/Prof Sandra Jones
- Initiatives in Media & Health – A/Prof Sandra Jones
- Initiatives in Aged & Dementia Care – A/Prof Victoria Traynor
- Initiatives in Health Workforce Change & Leadership – Prof Patrick Crookes
- Initiatives in Individual Behaviour Change – Prof Don Iverson
- Initiatives in Health Professional Education Research – A/Prof Nicky Hudson

CHI brings together a range of research strengths from the School of Nursing Midwifery and Indigenous Health, the School of Psychology, the School of Health Sciences (including the Graduate School of Public Health), and the new Graduate School of Medicine. The Centre has strong ties with a range of health and research organisations including government and non-government organisations, Area Health services and other academic and research institutions.

An Example of a project completed in 2006 is:

**Potential Avian Influenza-Induced Pandemic: Minimising Public Panic**

This project consisted of a series of studies designed to increase understanding of public perception of health risks and expected response to infectious disease communications; and to devise suitable health risk messages to increase the likelihood that the Australian public will internalise and action these messages whilst maintaining a certain state of public calm. The project included three series of focus groups, two Australia-wide telephone surveys, intercept surveys at major airports, and the development and pre-testing of television and print advertisements for major phases of a potential pandemic. The project’s main achievements include consumer-tested advertising concepts, and evidence-based guidelines.

Examples of projects currently undertaken include:

**Efficacy of Strategies to Increase Participation Rates in Disease-And-Risk Management Programs**

The aim of this project is to determine the most effective strategies for maximising recruitment and retention of at-risk adults into evidence-based disease-and risk management programs, as well as completion of health risk assessments. It is evident from the literature on risk factor modification, and on the economic and social costs chronic diseases, that increasing participation in these programs will lead to reduced health costs and reduced morbidity and mortality among the target population. The primary outcome of this project will be evidence-based guidelines on the best strategies for recruitment to, and retention in, disease-and-risk management programs.

**The Use of Social Marketing Theory and Practice to Develop Innovative and Comprehensive Sun Protection Campaigns**

This project uses both academic theory and best-practice in real-world programs to develop a comprehensive strategy for the development of a social marketing campaign for the promotion of sun protection behaviours. This strategy will be then utilised in formative research and the actual development of a sun protection campaign conducted by TCCN.
**Asthma Foundation Partnership Grant**
The project will research the current needs (met and unmet) of older Australians with regard to asthma, as well as their knowledge and behaviour. Focus groups and interviews will be used to gather information in the target group as well as aged care and health care professionals. Furthermore, to inform a potential social marketing program, research questions will be proposed in terms of what would be a suitable message, who might be a credible spokesperson and what would be the most effective communication channels for this target group in the provision of asthma education.

**Determining the Best Format for Accurate Communication of Cancer Risks**
Evidence from a number of studies suggests that the presentation format of risk information can affect people's perceptions of risk and influence health related decisions, including decisions about whether to accept medical treatment. However, studies of particular formats are limited in number and have produced inconsistent findings, with evidence for the superiority of a presentation format in one study being absent or reversed in another. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of four different format manipulations on women's perceptions of their risk of developing breast cancer.

**Child and Youth Interdisciplinary Research Centre (CYIRC)**
The Child and Youth Interdisciplinary Research Centre (CYIRC) is a research centre that brings together researchers from a range of disciplines with projects/research interests that take child and youth issues as a focus. CYIRC offers an interdisciplinary perspective that engages with child and youth specific research and theory, and more broadly, contemporary social and cultural issues as they pertain to young people.

Recent projects include:

**The Life Activity Project**
The LAP is an ARC funded longitudinal qualitative study of the place and meaning of health and physical activity in young people’s lives. It has been conducted across three states, VIC, QLD and NSW and has relationships with parallel projects in Canada and New Zealand.

**The Impact of the New Health Imperatives on Schools and Young People**
This project is a two year ARC Social Science Linkage Project with partners in the UK and NZ. It investigates how messages about obesity and other health related issues impact on school practice and policy and on how teachers and students understand health and the relationship between health and body weight and shape. It uses a poststructuralist analytic framework informed by the work of Basil Bernstein and Michel Foucault.

Other projects include:
- Growing Up on The South Coast
- Aboriginal Children’s Health and Environment.
- Longitudinal Analysis of Psychological and Academic Well-Being in Adolescence: Phase 2 of the Wollongong Youth Study.
- Child Friendly Cities Projects.

**Research Centre for Interactive Learning Environments (RILE)**
The Research Centre for Interactive Learning Environments (RILE) focuses on the variety of ways learning environments can be supported using innovative learning strategies, technology and software tools.

The goals of RILE are:
- To support members to incubate new ideas for development and research in learning technologies, and to encourage and critique new research proposals.
- To research established and emerging technologies to investigate their potential for use in education and their capacity to transform the way people learn, and to develop innovative approaches to research in educational technology.
- To critically analyse, refine and describe the affordances of learning technologies, learning designs, learning environments and research approaches.
- To design and develop innovative learning environments and tools to support research projects.
- To collaborate with researchers throughout Australia and overseas, and across disciplines, and to exchange ideas with visiting scholars through RILE seminars and workshops.
• To disseminate research findings and the latest trends and practice in ICTs to inform classroom practice and policy.
• To share and celebrate members’ achievements and milestones in research and in their careers.

Current projects fall into the following areas: online communities of practice, simulations, learning designs, learning objects, educational animations, authentic learning, mobile learning, computer play, videoconferencing, action learning, design-based research, interactive television, and rural and remote technology-assisted learning.

Centre for Health Service Development (CHSD)

The CHSD was established in 1993 to undertake a continuing program of active research into methods to improve the management and provision of health services with the goal of making a significant contribution to improving the funding and delivery of health services in Australia. Fourteen years on, that continues to be our primary purpose. Our ideas of improvement include achieving greater equity in the distribution of resources, promoting fairer access to services, better continuity within and across the health and community care sectors, and basing management decisions on evidence.

The CHSD is a self-funded, multidisciplinary research centre, with a team of researchers covering 18 disciplines. It specialises in undertaking commissioned research that aims to inform public policy decisions. The CHSD typically undertakes 20-30 studies each year. Some examples of CHSD projects are described below.

Long Term Care of Catastrophically Injured Patients

CHSD is working with five specialist brain injury and spinal cord injury units in NSW in a study commissioned in the context of reforms to compensation arrangements for this group of clients and to inform the debate around the best arrangements for long term care.

The study has considerable ethical challenges concerning decision-making capacity and how to gain consent to collect information about the long-term care needs of a sample of clients, predominantly with traumatic brain and spinal cord injury. It is examining long term costs and outcomes after catastrophic injury and whether there are differences between people who get compensation and those that don’t.

Effective Caring

This new project includes an international literature review addressing five inter-related issues:
• Support for carers.
• Importance of carer and family values.
• Factors affecting carers.
• Carer burden.
• Workforce participation of carers.

As the first step, the project aims to identify and analyse current approaches to carer needs. The next stage will involve a workshop of key stakeholders to identify national research priorities to strengthen the evidence base on how best to support carers. The final step will be the development of a national research agenda for the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

Children’s Health and Wellbeing

In March 2005, CHSD completed research into evidence-based strategies for improving the health and wellbeing of Victorian children. This research was commissioned by the Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS) in late 2004 in order to support its Children’s Health and Wellbeing Flagship project. The purpose of the review was to identify what the DHS could do within each of 18 priority areas to deliver improved and more equitable outcomes for all children in Victoria. These priorities included child abuse, child behaviour problems, disability, language and literacy and parent mental health.

The CHSD worked closely with DHS staff to ensure that the research was delivered in a format that could be easily understood and applied in decision making. The research was influential in determining funding priorities for children’s health services in Victoria in the recent State budget. The report arising from the review, /Strategies for Gain – the evidence on strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorian children/, was made available on the CHSD website on 8 July 2005. In the six months to the end of December 2005, the report was downloaded by visitors to the website more than 18,000 times.

Ethical Research in Palliative Care: A Guide through the Human Research Ethics Committee Process
This booklet was written as a guide to the research community wishing to conduct ethical research in palliative care. The impetus for its production was feedback from palliative care researchers indicating that they were having unnecessary difficulties in obtaining Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval for their projects. Researchers in the field perceived that some HRECs were over cautious in approving research that involves patients with a life limiting illness and that they are unaware of the potential benefits of palliative care to terminally ill patients and their families. There was also a perception that HREC members were paternalistic in their attitudes to palliative care patients.

In addition, a number of important research projects, funded through the National Palliative Care Program and the NHMRC administered Palliative Care Research Program, had been subjected to lengthy delays as a result of the difficulties in gaining HREC approval. The resulting publication (Masso M, Dodds S, Fildes D, Yeatman H and Eagar K (2004) /Ethical research in palliative care: a guide through the Human Research Ethics Committee process/. Centre for Health Service Development, University of Wollongong ISBN 0 642 82473 8. Available at http://chsd.uow.edu.au/palliative_care.html#ethicalresearchguide) has been widely distributed across Australia and is being used well beyond palliative care.

**Australasian Occupational Science Centre (AOSC)**
AOSC is a community education and research centre within the CHSD and is located at the University's Shoalhaven Campus, in Nowra. AOSC is based on the premise of occupational science that people need to participate in purposeful occupation for their health and wellbeing.

Three key beliefs underlie the AOSC's occupational perspective:
- People need to participate in a balanced range of purposeful occupations for their health and well being.
- People have a right to participate in occupations relevant to their community.
- Participation in occupation promotes healthy individuals, communities and populations.

The goal of AOSC is to enable people of all ages to participate in purposeful occupation for their health and well being. Its focus is on:
- Developing personal skills.
- Creating supportive environments.
- Strengthening community action.

**Centre for Social Marketing Research (CSMR)**
The primary aim of CSMR is to undertake a program of active research that contributes to both the theoretical foundations of social marketing and its practical application. In conducting this research CSMR recognises that the formation of partnerships with government and non-profit organisations and the need for firms to adopt ethical marketing practices are fundamental issues within the social marketing paradigm. Consequently, the Centre also has research interests in the areas of non-profit marketing, critical marketing and corporate social responsibility.

Current research projects by members of the CSMR that are consistent with the Social Innovation Network are:

**The Role and Influence of Parents on Young Drivers**
This project, in conjunction with Youthsafe, Wollongong and Shellharbour City Councils, examines the role of parents in influencing the driver behaviour of young 17-25 year old drivers both pre and post licensure

**Community Perceptions of Crime and Safety**
This project, in conjunction with Wollondilly Shire Council, investigates community perceptions of localised crime such as vandalism, personal safety and the non-reporting of some crimes.

**Voluntary Simplicity and Anti-Consumption**
This project examines the phenomenon of voluntary simplicity and anti-consumption in the context of selecting and using products that impact upon the natural environment and resources such as water.

Using Social Marketing to Improve Service Delivery

**Centre for Human and Social Capital Research (CHSCR)**
Human capital is the stock of knowledge and skills embodied in people. Social capital is the access that people have to groups and organisations whose members are likely to cooperate because of
commonly held goals, attitudes or values. The acquisition of human and social capital constitutes an investment in that costs are incurred now in the expectation that they will be recouped in the future. Costs may be direct (out-of-pocket) or indirect (opportunities foregone). Expected benefits take the form of increased productivity. Education, training, job search, health care and migration are examples of activities that can increase human capital. Examples of organisations that facilitate access to social capital are the CWA, Rotary, church organisations, clubs, as well as less formal relationships among people that provide support and mentoring. The CHSCR supports research into all aspects of human and social capital, including its acquisition, its costs and benefits and its implications for economic and social well being.

Current research projects by members of the CHSCR that are consistent with the Social Innovation Network are:

**Academic Productivity within Australian Universities**
This research project involves (a) the development of ways to measure academic productivity, which is multi-dimensional in nature, (b) ranking universities and disciplines within universities according to various measures of academic productivity, and (c) explaining differences in research productivity among departments of the same discipline in terms of the stock of human capital embodied in their members and commonly shared departmental attributes.

**Influences on the Academic Performance of Tertiary Students**
This project involves the evaluation of various aspects of the tertiary environment on student performance. One study has evaluated peer-assisted study sessions (PASS) among undergraduate students and found them to have a positive impact on academic performance. A further two studies have examined the impact of class attendance on academic performance of students studying 100-level subjects in economics and statistics. Both studies found small but statistically significant, negative effects of skipping class.

**Labour Markets**
The labour market project has several components. An analysis is underway of policies that are likely to encourage older workers to remain in, or re-enter, the labour markets of OECD countries, many of which are experiencing rapid ageing of their populations. At the other end of the age spectrum a second project is to evaluate the likely effects of Work Choices legislation on the youth labour market in Australia. A third project focuses on non-traditional forms of employment, in particular an analysis of part-time and full-time employment in Australia. Substantial (unadjusted) part-time wage penalties of 21 per cent for men and seven per cent for women have been found, which can be explained by differences in human capital, type of job and by self-selection into full-time or part-time employment.

**Poverty**
This research project investigates the extent, causes and consequences of poverty in developed countries. The project has several components: to contribute to the methodology of poverty measurement within a dynamic context, to identify groups within the Australian population among whom chronic poverty is most intense and to identify the events and conditions that cause chronic and transitory poverty. A major objective is to determine the extent to which poverty is perpetuated from one generation to another, the conditions that lead to intergenerational poverty and the events and activities that are likely to break any such cycle of poverty.

**Social Capital Renewal of International Students**
There is a literature documenting that international university students, upon arrival in their host country, lack supporting social networks and confront unfamiliar cultural and educational institutions. This project investigates how, and to what extent, international students renew their social networks and what impact it has on their wellbeing and academic performance.

**Inter-organisational Cooperation**
Cooperative behaviour among firms reduces transaction costs and encourages the sharing of capabilities. This project addresses the use of social capital strategies to build marketing relationships between pastoral agents and farmer customers. It additionally looks at the role of industry associations as bridging organisations that build cooperative social capital among firms in the wool-broking industry.

**Creativity and Innovation: Social Science Perspectives and Policy Implications**
This project provides a multidisciplinary social science understanding of creativity and innovation. It examines how nine different social science disciplines -- sociology, psychology, law, management, economics, history, policy studies, education and political science -- conceptualise and explain...
creativity and innovation and the relationship between the two processes. The project is significant as it addresses critical drivers of national progress and productivity --creativity and innovation-- and contributes to a key national research priority goal, ‘Promoting an innovation culture and economy’.

**Innovation**

The purpose of this project is to extend our understanding of the role of disruptive innovations in the modern economy with emphasis on how they affect economic growth. A creative economy generates an immense number of innovations, both technological and organisational. This project focuses on technological innovations that are also disruptive innovations. The existence of disruptive innovations is the manifestation of creative destruction at work. Empirical analysis of specific innovations will be based on recent developments in innovation theory.

**Health, Environment, Development and Growth Economics (HEDGE)**

HEDGE is an Economics-based research centre with a focus on health and the environment, health and economic development, and health and economic growth. The principal objective of the centre is to serve as a forum for generating economic research leading to high quality analyses and publications in these areas. The centre may also serve as an address to other research units specialising in health-environment-development related studies and seeking behavioural and institutional economic insight and input. Current research projects by members of HEDGE that are consistent with the Social Innovation Network are:

**Health Services, Epidemics and Economic Growth**

This project investigates the relationships between health and economic growth with time-series and cross-country panel data. The investigation includes a cross-country analysis of the effect of population health and health services on total factor productivity, cointegration and causality tests of investment in public-health services and economic growth, and a simultaneous-equation econometric analysis of public spending on health, prevalence of epidemics, and economic growth.

**Public and/or Private Health Services: Quality, Cost and Affordability**

The objective of this project is to assess the efficiency of Australia’s two-tier system of health service provision and compare it to other international systems.

**Environmental Health Hazard and Choice of Residence**

This project develops a conceptual framework for analysing the relationships between the values and dispersion of residential properties and the environmental-health quality of their locations. A residents’ health-adjusted lifetime-utility function is constructed by combining satisfaction from consumption over the lifespan with risk to life from living in an environmentally unhealthy location. This utility function is employed in assessing willingness to pay for environmental-health quality, choice of location and residential dispersion and its relationship with income distribution. The conceptual framework will be applied for testing the effect of distance from Port Kembla steel work on the market value of houses in greater Wollongong.

**Between City and Bush**

A model of optimal allocation of water with implications for population growth, urban-rural composition, environment and public health is developed. The project intends to apply the model to assess the Illawarra and Shoalhaven’s export of water to Sydney and to evaluate the allocation of water along the Murray-Darling basin.

**Sticky Floors, Glass Ceilings and Mental Depression**

The terms "sticky floor" and "glass ceiling" are casually used to indicate low promotion prospects for employees with minority backgrounds. This project will assess the appropriateness of their use in a relatively transparent and growth-essential knowledge-industry—the public university system. It will estimate the effects of a worker’s ethnic representation and the representation of co-workers with different ethnic backgrounds on the floor and above the ceiling on the worker’s career prospects. Assessing the prevalence and causes of unequal opportunities for employees with minority backgrounds is essential for addressing ethnically based disparities and improving the allocation of human resources and employees’ satisfaction and mental health in a multicultural society. (An application for a two-year funding as an ARC Discovery Project was submitted in March 2007.)

**Developmental, Environmental and Health Economic Aspects of Internal Conflicts**
The objective of this project is to highlight the nexus of relationships between rival groups’ strength and developmental, environmental and health economic variables in countries plagued by internal conflict. The project constructs a macroeconomic model for such countries that spells the various channels through which internal conflicts can influence the country’s economy, environment and public health and the rival groups’ armament race and reliance on foreign powers.

**Evaluation of Environmental Improvement – Lake Illawarra Case Study**

This project has been funded by the Environmental Trust for 2007. It uses the Hedonic Pricing method to evaluate how the community values improvements to the water quality and surrounds of Lake Illawarra by estimating incremental changes in house prices in the area. If the methodology proves successful, it could be extended to coastal lakes throughout NSW.

**Cost effectiveness Analysis of Community Service Delivery**

This project has been discussed with the Illawarra Forum, the peak body for NGOs in the Illawarra. It would involve an analysis of different funding methods for community service delivery, particularly a comparison of long term base funding versus short term project money. Some preliminary work has been undertaken but it has not progressed due to time constraints on both parties.

**People and Organisation Research Centre (PandO): focussing on emergence, change and precarious systems**

The research centre’s members have a broad range of interests and projects that are concerned with benefiting people and organisation through high quality conceptual and applied research. These are clustered within the centre according to orientation: change, critical studies, identity, international, and new and precarious systems. There are a number of ongoing project collaborations among members as well as with researchers in other national and international institutions.

Current projects undertaken by PORC members are listed below.

**Change**

- **OHS Management in Organisations**
  Conceptualisation of occupational health and safety management for high performance in organisations, and empirical exploration of key propositions through an in depth exemplary case analysis of innovative and engaging world-class OHS management.

- **Cultural Change at BHP/Bluescope Steel**

- **Women’s Career Issues in Family Business**

  This project explores women’s career issues in a variety of contexts, including family business and the professions, and in the light of the ageing workforce.

- **Gender and the ASU**

  Improve the position of women in unions.

**Critical Studies**

- **Inter-organisational Timeframes**

  Conceptualisation and analysis of the nature of timeframes, time perspectives and dimensions that arise between universities, industry firms and external funding agencies in social science research collaboration. Implications for such collaborative research are examined.

- **Ethical Issues in Australian Call Centres**

- **Perceptions of Threat and Responsibility for Information Security**

- **Improving the Working Lives of Public Servants**

- **Social Dialogue and Reflective Employees**

**Identity**

- **Building ‘Our’ Productivity: Understanding Sustainable Collective Productivity in New Zealand Firms**

- **Discourses around Tourism and Australian**

- **Gender Issues at Work**

  Examines how gender relates to communication, and also emotion work.

- **Organisational Issues in the Australian Film Industry**

**International**

- **Corporate Governance**

  Identify different approaches for corporate governance in large, medium and small organisations.
Strategies and Management Involving Ethnic Networks and Concept of Social Capital

New and Precarious Systems
Sustaining Remote Maternity Services – To Sustain Services in Remote Communities
· Socially and Culturally Sustainable Biotechnology
· Learning in Project Based Environments
· Integration in Supply Chain Systems
· Indigenous Industries and Entrepreneurship

ATUL: Activities and Tools for Users and Learners
ATUL was established as the Activity Theory Usability Laboratory in 2001 and has grown to now offer a selection of innovative services designed to assess and improve the performance of organisations, groups and individuals. It is set up for practical Usability Testing with a focus on how people use technology creatively to achieve successful outcomes within their everyday world. ATUL also has a set of innovative tools to support a variety of approaches to business analysis and collaborative learning. ATUL is itself a Learning Organisation whose members strive to continually expand their understanding of the way people engage, in meaningful activities, in an ever-changing world. Taking a human centred view of ICT used to support work and decision making, ATUL applies the principles of Activity Theory to analyse knowledge work in complex networks of teams and groups. This work is supported by an ARC Discovery grant linking investigators at Wollongong with others at DSTO (Department of Defence Canberra), Monash University, the Australian National University, University of Technology Sydney and Central Queensland University.

Centre for Small Business and Regional Research (CSBRR)
Centre members are currently involved in a number of projects/activities

Sutherland Shire City Council
This project started last year and will probably finish in a year’s time (a URC partnership grant has been obtained in this regard). The main purpose is to assess and evaluate the impact of marine industry activities (both on the demand and supply sides) on the infrastructure of marine facilities for recreational boat users in the Sutherland Shire Council area and on the performance of marine industry firms in the same Shire. This will assist the Shire to properly plan its infrastructure expenses regarding these facilities, and it will also assist the relevant firms to plan their business activities in the near future. The ultimate aim is to compare the results for this Shire with similar studies in other areas of NSW (that will constitute the aim of an ARC grant

Prospects and Strategy for the Socio-Economic Revitalisation of Berkeley – A SWOT Analysis
This project is to be conducted in collaboration with Wollongong City Council, and aims to: develop a framework/methodology with which to evaluate perceptions, intentions, and impacting key factors of both businesses and residents in the Wollongong LGA in relation to the suburb of Berkeley; highlight key factors impacting on Berkeley’s social and economic disadvantages; identify key factors for Berkeley’s business and economic revitalisation; highlight Berkeley’s key economic/business strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; provide a good understanding and awareness of business development opportunities in the suburb and key factors affecting the business attractiveness of the area; provide important input into the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan for Berkeley; provide Wollongong LGA with a useful planning tool/methodology for broader application to achieve economic and social revitalisation of other suburbs in the LGA.

Free Trade Agreements and Their Impact on the SME Sector – A Case Study of a Prospective Australia-Japan FTA
This project is being conducted in collaboration with the Centre for SME Studies at Senshu University in Japan. The primary objective of this study is to focus on the implications of a prospective Free Trade Agreements on the SME sectors in Japan and Australia. CSBRR will focus on the potential impact in Australia and the Centre for SME Studies for the impact in Japan. The study will emphasise business opportunities and threats for each of these sectors.

An Examination of the Driving Forces behind ICT Adoption in Australian Rural and Regional Medical Practices
The aim of this study is to examine the groupings and priorities of drivers to ICT adoption in regional medical practices in Australia and has been conducted in collaboration with the Illawarra Division of Medical Practice. Data has been obtained by means of a survey involving regional
medical practices in NSW, Queensland and Victoria, and a factor analysis applied to the rating of
drivers to ICT adoption. The factor analysis showed that 16 drivers could be grouped according to 3
factors ‘improvement to business and medical care’, ‘external pressure’ and ‘communications’. It is
intended to expand the survey to the whole of regional Australia (future ARC Linkage application).

**Business Processes and Practices in General/Medical Practices in Regional Australia**

This survey, co-sponsored by the Centre for Small Business and Regional Research (CSBRR) and
the Illawarra Division of General Practice, aims to identify and conduct a review of key
developments in business processes and practices in General Practices located throughout the
Illawarra region. This study is part of a broader research project concerned with changing trends
and issues in the provision of health services by medical practices in NSW, and Australia more
generally. In particular, it aims to identify areas of increased pressure for medical provision
including that from an ageing population, rising health costs, implications of rapidly developing
information and communications technology, and availability of GPs at the regional level and its
impact on how such medical practices (in a businesses sense) will be required to successfully
respond to these pressures

**Coomaditchie Web Site development**

Led by A/Prof Ann Hodgkinson and A/Prof Helen Hasan, an ongoing supportive relationship has
developed with the Coomaditchie Aboriginal Community through the application of University
expertise in business applications and information systems to assist the community to achieve its
overall aim of developing an independent, self sustaining source of income by selling its art works.
The main aim of the partnership is the development of an e-commerce website to enable the
Coomaditchie artists to sell their artworks. The website was launched at the Wollongong Art Gallery
in October 2006, by the Gallery director. The launch was attended by members of the Wollongong
community including two senior political figures, local aboriginal elders, with strong representation
from various community and business organisations. This Social Innovation is continuing with a
number of benefits:

- A potential source of income for the community.
- An online place to make their culture and current activities known to the wider community.
- A renewed sense of confidence and pride that the local community can do something.
- Motivation for members of the Coomaditchie community to up-skill in the areas of business and
technology.
- An enriching experience for University students involved in the project.
- An opportunity to carry out creative and meaningful research in social innovation.
- An enhanced reputation and understanding of the University by this marginalised group.

**Social Accounting & Accountability (SAA)**

It is increasingly acknowledged that accounting is not an objective, neutral practice, but emanates
to a large extent from the justification and mobilisation of the agenda of private enterprises,
governments, and non-profit organisations. Accounting and its networks of accountability are not
limited in their effects to the economic, but have social and political consequences, re-forming the
way in which we view the world. In identifying the social effect of existing accounting practices,
and imagining new mechanisms for accounting and accountability that include social implications,
researchers in the Centre focus on a wide range of projects, from the Kyoto protocol, to the
accountability of aid agencies and accounting’s role in the deinstitutionalisation of mental hospitals.
Current research projects by members of SAA that are consistent with the Social Innovation
Network are

**Kyoto Protocol and Environmental Accounting**

Current work on environmental accounting has considered environmental ethics and its impact on
the development of environmental accounting; the role of accounting in the negotiation of
international environmental accountability for greenhouse gases (Kyoto Protocol); and considered
the way environmental accounting information is being operationalised by corporations through
systems such as the carbon disclosures project and web based corporate social responsibility
reporting. Currently, Dr Jane Andrew is collaborating with Dr Corinne Cortese in a study on
accountability mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol.

**Public Accountability**

A current study is concerned with issues of public accountability and the impact that ‘contracting
out’ has had on the delivery of services and infrastructure that are essential to communities.
Specifically, Dr Jane Andrew has focused on the privatisation of prisons in Australia and how this
has impacted on public accountability. She is currently using theories of neoliberalism to explore prison policies in New South Wales.

**Corporate Social Responsibility**
A Corporate Social Responsibility project is currently being undertaken by Dr Corrine Cortese and Dr Helen Irvine which focuses on the way in which corporations in Australia report on their social policies. Together with Dr Kathy Rudkin and Mr Shyam Bhati, Anura DeZoysa is studying the reporting practices of corporations in India and Sri Lanka in relation to their social obligations. Specifically the project aims to investigate as to how these corporations integrate the social and environmental concerns in their business operations and provide information on a voluntary basis. For this purpose, information available in annual reports will be analysed and gain insights into and construct a critique of corporate social disclosures in India and Sri Lanka.

**Social Capital**
Currently Dr Helen Irvine is working with Prof Sara Dolnicar and Katie Lazarevski on a paper about local volunteering organisations and the effect of grant funding on social capital.

**Corporate Strategic Bankruptcy**
Research is currently undertaken into the effect of institutions in shaping corporate ‘strategic bankruptcy’ in relation to James Hardie Industries and the implementation of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative in developing countries.

**Social Implications of Accounting Education and Theory**
Dr Kathy Rudkin, Dr Anura DeZoysa and Dr Kathie Cooper are currently working on the social implications of both accounting education and accounting theory. Currently they are widening a pilot study of accounting students’ socio-economic circumstances to a national level to expand the findings of the AVCC report. This work is being undertaken alongside a parallel study by Nagoya University to develop an OECD country comparison in the Asia Pacific region. Dr Kathy Rudkin is also working on an accounting theory project to develop a new model of accountability beyond economic reciprocity, drawing on postmodern Baudrillar sign and gifting theory. The purpose of this project is to develop a more socially sensitive and wider encompassing notion of accountability beyond that of the neoclassical economic version associated with, for example, Agency Theory of Positive Accounting Theory.

**Societal Impacts of Accounting on Public Policy Choices**
Research is currently being undertaken into the societal impacts of accounting and other quantified calculus on public policy choices. A recent publication reflects on “how the direct costs that fall within the parameters of the health budget are privileged (inscribed), compared to how indirect costs that fall outside this boundary fail to be inscribed appropriately”, concluded that from a social accounting point of view, this boundary is arbitrary and an example of poor accounting.

**Financial Market Trading System**
This area of research focuses on the financial market trading system, financial market integration and corporate structure and governance, and includes issues of social innovation and social welfare from a societal wide view, on the understanding that the better the quality of financial markets in society, the greater the social welfare available to members. Currently Assoc Prof Gary Tian is examining trading architecture innovation in order to improve market quality, which will benefit traders and investors; studying market integration and market non-linearity to learn how to avoid financial crashes and diversify investment risk; and analysing the impact of ownership structure, capital structure and dividend payout ratio on firms’ performance and default risk in order to find the optimal corporate structures to benefit both shareholders and society.

**Changes in Australian Universities – Social Impact**
Over the last decade, profound changes have occurred in the way Australian Universities operate. These inevitably have social consequences for educators and students. From the perspective of the accounting discipline, change in university education is inevitable. Research is undertaken in the area of change in accounting education within the Western models of universities, and an analysis of previous proposals is essential in order to ascertain their relevance to current debate. The needs of the accounting and business industry, employers, accounting professional bodies and government sponsored bodies are called into question, as alternative visions are proposed by academics working within the field of accounting education. The ability to adapt to the profound changes in Australian Universities and to administer change in accounting education is an area of study that needs attention.
**Fraud Prevention**
A current project by Annamaria Kurtovic focuses on corporate financial fraud. She will be assisting Croatia to minimise fraud and corruption which will have a potential effect on issues like Croatia’s public health system and future government policy. She is also working on a pilot study whose purpose is to create a national database which will be used by government agencies and others in their fraud prevention and detection strategies. This database is unique in that the information which will be available will be based on actual financial crime cases and will allow for subject and case profiling. This research has a social impact, since its outcomes assist in providing a better quality of life. Fraud affects everybody in some way, especially when corporations such as HIH collapse, and investors lose significant amounts of savings.

**Accounting theory development**
Traditionally accountants have mistakenly believed they act neutrally in providing objective financial information to users to aid business decision making. This has, in fact, resulted in their merely serving the needs of dominant economic and business interests. Thus, by ignoring the broader societal implications of accounting information the profession has often fallen short of enabling accountability and responsible corporate governance. The work by Professor Gaffikin’s is designed to draw attention to the shortcomings of past accounting theory and practices and provide directions for overcoming these shortcomings. As such it is multidisciplinary, drawing on notions developed in a wide range of other disciplines especially philosophy, history and sociology.