

RMIT University

# Women Researchers' Network

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Annual Symposium

# Amplify & Action

Friday October 25, 2019

Storey Hall, RMIT University, Melbourne

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#WRN2019

#AmplifyAndAction

The Women Researchers' Network (WRN) has been operating for 7 years, and held their 4th annual symposium at RMIT University, inviting academic and professional staff, and HDR students to participate in a day filled with networking opportunities and a range of presentations from highly-regarded guest speakers.

The focus of the 2019 symposium was 'Amplify & Action', chosen to highlight that women in research need to be amplified and their platforms raised to pursue a brighter, more equitable future. The objectives of the symposium were to continue to encourage attendees to advocate for change and to foster supportive environments for women researchers.



A/Prof Sandra Phillips

A/Prof Angela Dobele (Chair, WRN Steering Committee) opened the day by exploring how 'amplifying' women in research and the workplace is so much more than just enlarging, expanding and adding detail to their stories. Angela defined what 'action' means, and how we all have the power to take action to promote and champion our female colleagues.

We heard inspiring stories of courage and determination in the face of gender bias and discrimination from our panellists and our keynote speakers, Dr Kat Page and A/Prof Sandra Phillips. We learned that sexual harassment is less likely to occur in gender-balanced workplaces, and gender-balanced leadership results in better team performance; gender diversity triggers conversation turn-taking and psychologically safe behaviours; negative experiences can actually be used as assets, as women bring enormous life experiences into teams; and that we should never avoid the possibility of critical self-reflection – it should be a way to manage our own unconscious biases and natural affinities.



Dr Kat Page

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Professors Lisa Farrell and Matt Duckham and Associate Professor Angela Dobele facilitated the inaugural 'Gender Lensing' interactive workshop, where participants applied a gender lens to actual Higher Education institutional policy documents. The workshop provided specific tools and tactics for recognising unintended consequences.

The 2019 Symposium was an excellent day filled with passionate speakers and interactive sessions, starting conversations about important issues that we all have a role in solving.

*"I am glad to have been given the opportunity to MC... it boosted my confidence level as an HDR student. I also learned a lot from the keynote speakers, it was an amazing experience!"*  
- Belinda Glover, HDR student



Symposium MCs: Nancy An, Belinda Glover and Lanie Stockman



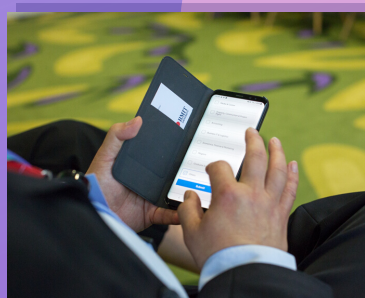
Gender Lensing Workshop



WRN Chair, A/Prof Angela Dobele



Vice-Chancellor's Fellow Panel



WRN Deputy Chair, Dr Stayci Taylor

#WRN2019

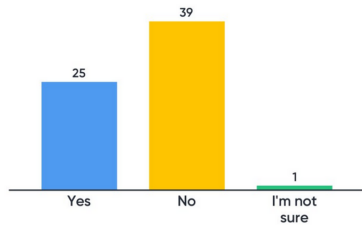
#AmplifyAndAction





# 2019 Attendees

Have you participated in any of the previous WRN symposiums?



65

What is your gender?



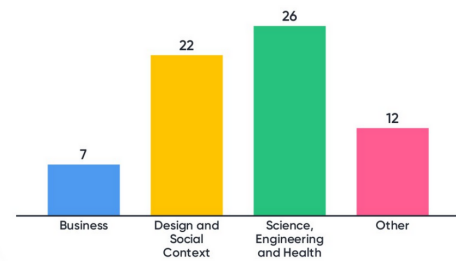
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What is your current role?



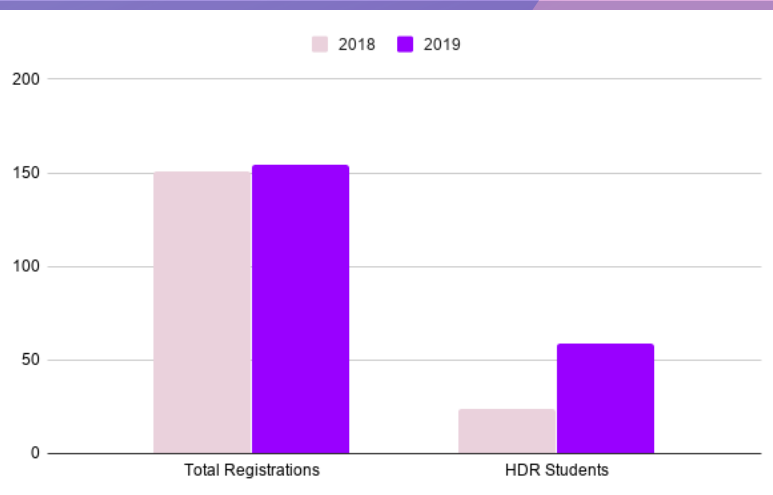
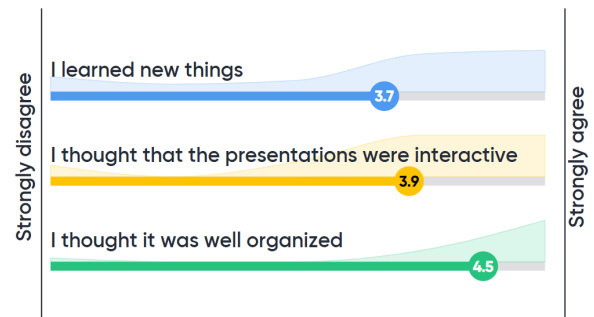
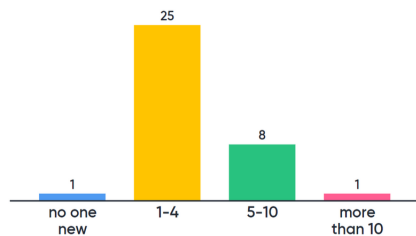
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Which COLLEGE are you from?



67

How many new colleagues did you speak with at the WRN symposium?







# 2019 Attendees



**A/Prof. Michelle Spencer**  
@AProf\_MS pencer

A/Prof. Sandra Phillips giving us some excellent insights on 'Hidden biases' at RMIT's WRN Symposium [#wrn2019](#) [#AmplifyAndAction](#) @WomenSciAUST



Getting people talking about this issue with the view to increasing awareness and hopefully a change in attitude.



**Dr Angela Dobele**  
@DrAngelaDobele

Great advice from our first panel of the day. [#WRN2019](#) [#AmplifyandAction](#)

**Women Researchers' Network** @RMIT\_WRN  
Advice from VC fellow panel - Be enthusiastic and be generous in giving others your time. Seek mentors with aligned values who will push you and put you forward for opportunities. [#WRN2019](#) [#amplifyandaction](#) @RMIT @ResearchRMIT

10:50am · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for Android



**Marian Makkar**  
@DrMarianMakkar

Greater participation of [#womeninleadership](#) roles is vital for [#researchinnovation](#) to take place @RMIT\_WRN [#amplifyandaction](#) [#WRN2019](#). 45% women are applying for leadership roles at @RMIT! Well done women researchers

10:19am · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for iPhone



**Kim Gordon**  
@drkimgordon

@DrSRP1 calls out the lack of [#siloed](#) [#disciplinary](#) fit in [#academia](#) for [#Indigenous](#) [#knowledges](#) [#wrn2019](#) @TeachingSana @marcialangton [#decolonize](#) [#universities](#)

11:43am · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for Android



**Anna Urbanowicz**  
@aurbanowicz

How refreshing hearing panelist Nicola Henry at [#WRN2019](#) say they make the conscious decision to not work evenings & weekends! Here's to me heading home at 5pm each day next week! 🙌 [#AmplifyAndAction](#) @RMIT\_WRN

10:51am · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

Motivation to engage and push for change within my immediate working group and department



**Women Researchers' Network**  
@RMIT\_WRN

Great interaction at the [#genderlensing](#) workshop. Working through [#university](#) policies looking for evidence of [#gender](#) sensitivity, exploitation, and inequity. [#WRN2019](#) [#amplifyandaction](#)



2:38pm · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for iPhone



**Dr Monica Barratt**  
@monicabarratt

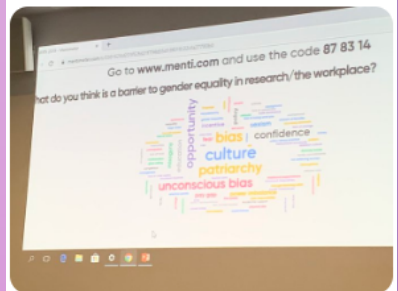
Great question from the floor: some of the most biased treatment women in research receive is from more senior women - how to call that out and manage it? [#WRN2019](#)

This is the first event I've attended and overall it was great, I'd definitely attend next year and encourage others.



**Marian Makkar**  
@DrMarianMakkar

Barriers to [#genderequity](#) [#genderequality](#) in [#research](#) and [#workplace](#). [#culture](#) [#unconsciousbias](#) and the [#patriarchy](#) are amongst the highest opinions amongst @RMIT\_WRN members and attendees. @ResearchRMIT [#amplifyandaction](#) [#wrn2019](#)



**Marian Makkar**  
@DrMarianMakkar

[#Diversity](#) of thinking matters for team performance @KatPage6 [#outcomes](#), [#impact](#) and [#alternatives](#) and systemic [#biases](#), especially [#gender](#) diversity [#wrn2019](#) [#amplifyandaction](#) @RMIT\_WRN @RMIT

1:44pm · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for iPhone



**Women Researchers' Network**  
@RMIT\_WRN

Women make up only 25% of [#executive](#) [#leadership](#) teams in [#ASX](#) 200 companies. Women often in functional roles rather than line roles. But number of female CFOs has doubled. [#WRN2019](#) [#amplifyandaction](#)

1:28pm · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for iPhone



**Women Researchers' Network**  
@RMIT\_WRN

In her 20 month tenure as Coordinator of Indigenous Higher Degree by Research at @UTSEngage @UTSResearch A/Prof Sandra Phillips brought in 23 new [#Indigenous](#) [#HDR](#) student applications [#WRN2019](#) [#amplifyandaction](#)

11:50am · 25 Oct 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

For me, stronger connections with two people I'd met previously, and new connections with at least 5 others.

[#WRN2019](#)

[#AmplifyAndAction](#)

# Thank You!

The Women Researchers' Network would like to thank everyone who was involved with organising and assisting the 2019 Annual Symposium. Everyone's contributions created a very successful and memorable day.

The WRN extends its thanks to A/Prof Angela Dobele (Chair, WRN Steering Committee), Prof Swee L Mak (Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research & Innovation Capability) and Dr Stayci Taylor (Deputy Chair, WRN Steering Committee); our keynote speakers, Dr Kat Page and A/Prof Sandra Phillips; our panellists, Dr Bobbi Fleiss, A/Prof Nicola Henry and Dr Megan Nethercote; our workshop facilitators, Prof Matt Duckham and Prof Lisa Farrell; our MCs, Ms Nancy An, Ms Belinda Glover and Ms Lanie Stockman; and our Organising Committee, A/Prof Hannah Badland, Dr Ella Chorazy, A/Prof Michelle Spencer and Ms Em Coy.

We also thank Ms Glenda De Jager from Mukti Australia, Mary and Steve Catering; Dr Amanda Spry for her official tweets; our Menti facilitator Dr Justyna Dabrowska; and finally, the WRN support team, Zach Edwards, Alice Boland, Riaan Lourens, Rachel Nowotnik, Lucy Ryan, Louise Francis, Raziff Sharil and Arty Owens.



Symposium Organising Committee and A/Prof Sandra Phillips



Poster Winner, Dr Subashani Maniam



Mary and Steve Catering



Mukti Australia



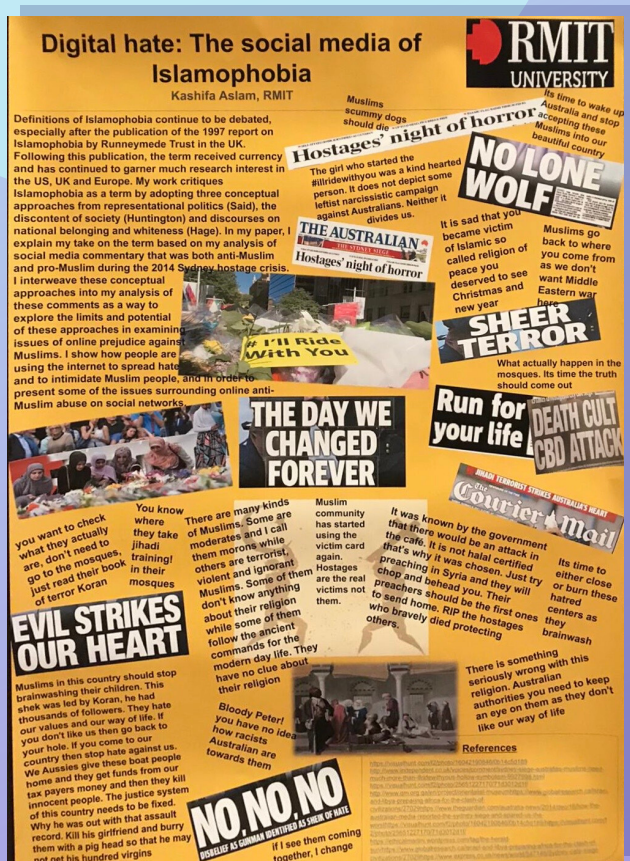
#WRN2019

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# Winners

Congratulations to Ms Kashifa Aslam for winning 'People's Choice' and Dr Subashani Maniam for winning First Prize in the academic poster competition!




'Digital hate: The social media of Islamophobia' by Kashifa Aslam

People's Choice Award



Women Researchers Network

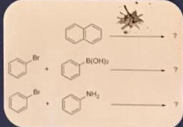
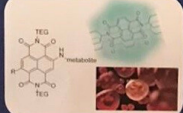

## Functional Materials and Beyond



**Dr Subashani Maniam**  
Applied Chemistry and Environmental Science  
School of Science  
Location: Building 3, RMIT City Campus  
Email: [subashani.maniam@rmit.edu.au](mailto:subashani.maniam@rmit.edu.au)

My research focuses on combining the elegance of *organic synthesis* with state-of-the-art physical and analytical techniques to develop new and exciting systems that function as a result of some form of stimulus. I am also interested in developing **technology and teaching tools** in chemistry for undergraduates.

- **Exploring Synthesis**  
*In collaboration with Dr Torben Daeneke (RMIT University)*
  - ✓ Developing synthetic methods using liquid metal
  - ✓ Exploring various organic reactions
  - ✓ Understanding the mechanism of reaction
- **Tracing Cancer Metabolites**  
*In collaboration with Dr Sandra Maniam (UPM, Malaysia) and Dr Toby Bell (Monash University)*
  - ✓ Developing water soluble fluorescent organic molecules
  - ✓ Understanding their photophysical properties
  - ✓ Utilising them as tracer molecules
- **Exploring AR for Chemistry**  
*In collaboration with Dr Sebastian Rodriguez and Dr Fabio Zambetta (RMIT University)*
  - ✓ Developing AR technology for learning chemistry
  - ✓ To understand 3D structural conformation
  - ✓ Useful for teaching chemistry for undergraduates

#WRN2019  
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'Functional Materials and Beyond' by Dr Subashani Maniam

First Prize Winner

#WRN2019

#AmplifyAndAction