

Sunday, 13 February 2022

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**Media note:** See bottom of release for 10am interview opportunity details and download link for images, sound grabs and project summaries.

## Women leading the charge in research grant success

- \$5.5 million for 14 new research projects
- Highest application success rate in the country
- 78% of projects led by female researchers

The University of Tasmania is helping local researchers at the cutting edge of the sciences, health and the humanities continue the search for discoveries that will help understand our world and improve the lives of Tasmanians and people around the world.

The University was awarded more than \$5.5 million for 14 new research projects – 11 of which are led by women – from the Australian Research Council’s highly competitive Discovery Projects round for 2022.

The projects will tackle issues such as understanding how brain cells adapt to support lifelong learning, exploring how the ocean’s carbon cycle will respond to climate change, and investigating the role of mathematical talk in the early years of schooling.

University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor Professor Rufus Black said an application success rate of 30 percent, the highest of any university in the country, highlighted the strength, excellence and impact of the University of Tasmania’s research program.

“This outstanding result signals the depth of research talent here in Tasmania, with our people leading research that has a real impact in our home state and on a global scale,” Professor Black said.

“The fourteen diverse, new projects span the fields of sciences, humanities, social sciences and health. We look forward to starting this research and welcome the funding that allows this important work to take place.”

Associate Professor Kaylene Young, who leads the Brain Health and Disease theme at the University’s Menzies Institute for Medical Research, said she was thrilled to be helping to build understanding for how brain cells adapt to support lifelong learning.

“Having grown up in Tasmania and carried out research interstate and overseas, it’s wonderful to be back home leading a team of dedicated and skilled researchers.

“This project is looking at how to solve the challenge of becoming more forgetful as we get older, which almost all of us will face. People can also suffer from conditions where the brain can deteriorate at any age, and this project will give us clues on how we can counteract that happening.”

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Anthony Koutoulis said it was especially pleasing to see 78 percent of projects led by female chief investigators, and 50 percent led by mid-career researchers.

“Increasing gender diversity and supporting emergent research talent in research is critical not just for reasons of fairness and equity,” Professor Koutoulis said.

“We know – thanks to research – that greater gender diversity means more diverse perspectives, more new ideas, more accurate and higher quality science, more innovative solutions and more opportunities to grow the STEAM workforce so vital for our future of a prosperous and sustainable Tasmania and world.”

## **Media opportunity**

**Who:** Associate Professor Kaylene Young and Dr Carlie Cullen will be available to talk about their research.

**When:** 10am, today, Sunday, 13 February 2022

**Where:** Domain House, Hobart - <https://goo.gl/maps/h4LcJ1o9UFmfsqWW7>.

*Please see attached for summaries of three projects and a full list of successful grant applications.*

*Images, b-roll and interview footage are available for download here:*

<https://cloudstor.aarnet.edu.au/plus/s/BboALwzmn3OEK1y>

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