Introduction

Over the past 12 months the Institute for the Study of Social Change (ISC) has focused on producing and promoting policy research addressing some of the most significant challenges facing our community. These include the supply of affordable housing, the changing nature of work and population pressures.

This research, funded by the College of Arts, Law and Education with contributions from colleagues across the University, has achieved significant media coverage for the Institute, and has influenced political debate.

The Institute aims to build on this success and over the next 12 months the ISC will work with the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment and other researchers to develop a plan to grow and extend the University’s policy capability and influence.

Since our last annual report, the ISC has launched a new research report series, called Institute Insights, which has been very well received by policy makers, the media and wider community. From this year, we are also shifting to a calendar year report.

We also continued our community engagement efforts by hosting free public events ranging from seminars and lectures to panel discussions and industry forums. Our researchers have also embarked on meaningful and productive collaborations with partners from government agencies, the community sector and industry.

In 2018 we continued to grow our network of affiliated researchers, who span the University’s breadth of schools and disciplines, and we responded to our colleagues’ desire for more Institute engagement in the north of the state.

This report provides a snapshot of our achievements in 2018, but we encourage you to explore the ISC website, including our blog, for more details about our activities and research programs.

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Achievements in 2018

| Policy research papers, reports and workshops | 6 Insight policy reports | 3 housing reports /updates | 5 policy workshops |
| Media impact | 442 media mentions | Audience reach of 4.3 million | $2.5 million equivalent advertising value |
| Events and community engagement | 14 research seminars | 13 public forums and lectures | Audience reach: 5000 attendees and 1500 online views |
| Parliamentary submissions and evidence | 4 parliamentary submissions | 3 presentations of evidence by invitation |
| Research income | $423,190 in new ARC and category 1 research funding | $925,413 in new contract research income | Total of $1,348,603 in new research funding |
About the Institute

The Institute for the Study of Social Change is located within and funded by the College of Arts, Law and Education at the University of Tasmania. It brings together researchers across the University of Tasmania who are passionate about understanding and addressing social change in this state and beyond.

Institute staff, together with our colleagues across the university, deliver a range of policy, demographic and social research publications, including reports and services to inform public policy and community debate.

We present free public events to stimulate discussion around key issues affecting Tasmania and the wider community.

Policy research

In late 2017 the Institute launched a new research series called Institute Insights, providing evidence-based analysis of policy challenges facing Tasmanians and aim to promote community discussion and influence policy debate. We also work with fellow researchers across the University of Tasmania to promote research relating to issues of importance to the Tasmanian community.

With the Tasmanian economy in transition, our initial focus in late 2017 was on the changing nature of work in Tasmania: which industry sectors and regions are growing, who is being employed and on what basis. Understanding these complex dynamics is vital for government, business and the wider community.

As housing emerged as one of the crucial policy challenges for Tasmania, our Insight Three report, released in February 2018, focused on pressures within the existing local housing market and potential solutions.

Insight Four: Planning for the Future of Aged Care highlighted the need to change perceptions about older Australians and their paid carers in order to meet growing employment demand.

Insight Five: A Snapshot of Media Literacy in Australian Schools identified an urgent need for greater digital media awareness and media literacy support for Australian teachers and students.

Insight Six: Positive signs, but how can we make it last? Tasmania’s changing population dynamics detailed how Tasmania’s population growth has shifted in recent years and identified the knowledge gaps that are impeding efforts to both attract more people to the state and plan for their arrival.

> Dr Lisa Denny leads the Institute’s research on population and workforce change
Housing: key reports, parliamentary submissions and policy impact

In June 2018, following the release of two ISC research papers on the housing situation in Tasmania and a public forum on the impact of short stay accommodation platforms on housing affordability and availability, Tasmania’s Legislative Council established an inquiry into the booming short-stay accommodation sector, while political parties adopted many of the Institute’s policy recommendations.

Our report *Insight Three: Blueprint for Improving Housing Outcomes in Tasmania*, released in February 2018, outlined a politically and economically viable pathway to a fairer property tax system and improved housing outcomes in Tasmania.

Also in February, we hosted a booked-out public forum in Hobart’s Town Hall titled *Inside AirBnb: Exploring the impact of the sharing economy from New York to Hobart*. The forum, available on livestream, focused on concerns and evidence about the impact of the booming short-stay accommodation sector on housing affordability.

In March the Institute prepared a *directions paper* as a resource to inform the deliberations of the State Government’s Tasmanian Housing Summit held on Thursday, March 15, 2018. Vice Chancellor Professor Rufus Black and ISC Director Professor Richard Eccleston represented the University of Tasmania at the Summit.

The ISC produced subsequent housing updates in *May* and *August*, delivering on the University of Tasmania’s ongoing commitment to analyse the key factors influencing the supply and demand of housing in our state.

In Sydney in July ISC director Richard Eccleston launched the final report of the national *Pathways to Housing Tax Reform* research project which was described in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as “compulsory reading for all state and federal politicians” by respected economics reporter Jessica Irvine.

In August, with the Hobart City Council and Shelter Tasmania, the ISC co-hosted a forum titled *Homelessness and Housing*, which featured a panel of experts, including the ISC’s Dr Lisa Denny, discussing the current evidence and community experience of homelessness in Hobart.

Also in August, Institute Director Richard Eccleston and Research Fellow Dr Julia Verdouw made a submission to the Parliamentary Enquiry into Regulating Short Stay Accommodation and have been called to give evidence to the inquiry on two subsequent occasions.

In September the ISC held a national workshop titled *Regulating the short-stay accommodation sector: evidence and issues*. Attendees included researchers, local and state policy-makers, and welfare and housing advocacy groups. The presentations highlighted the diversity of current trends and changing regulatory responses around short-stay accommodation in Australia, particularly in recognition of the deepening impacts of the sector on some cities and local communities. The in-depth and constructive roundtable discussion focused on understanding effective pathways towards, and current barriers to best practice regulation, particularly for Hobart.

The ISC is currently preparing an ISC Insight report on regulatory responses to the sector, which will be published in the first quarter of 2019.
Industry engagement and commercialisation

The ISC increased its industry engagement and commercialisation activities over the course of 2018. Highlights included the successful commercialisation of technology developed by the award-winning Tourism Tracer project established by the Institute in 2015 with support of academics from across the University of Tasmania. The resulting collaboration between Tasmanian-based ICT firm Ionata Digital and the University of Tasmania will see Tracer technology being used to track and analyse visitor movements interstate and beyond with pilot projects already underway in Sweden and Japan – an inspiring example of our research expertise and technology being used globally.

Engagement activities included industry workshops with housing providers, the energy sector and the Tasmanian tourism operators and presentations at a number of industry forums and conferences. The Institute continues to support the outreach activities of a number of affiliated research groups including Future Energy, Tasmanian Institute Law Enforcement Studies and the Tourism Research and Education Network.

Supporting emerging social and policy researchers

In early 2018, in a Tasmanian first, the Department of Premier and Cabinet and ISC on behalf of the University of Tasmania established a new PhD research scholarship to address policy challenges affecting the state. The first three-year PhD project will identify effective governance strategies for state governments to facilitate and promote sustainable regional economic development.

The inaugural scholarship recipient is University of Tasmania student and 2016 University Medallist Lachlan Johnson, who will work collaboratively between the ISC and the Premier’s department.

Other policy contributions

April 2018: Vice Chancellor Professor Rufus Black, Pro Vice Chancellor Professor David Adams and ISC Director Professor Richard Eccleston, presented evidence at the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities for the inquiry into the Australian Government’s role in the development of cities.

They proposed a framework to help guide the sustainable development of cities and regions, in particular Tasmania with its highly distributed population.

June 2018: Richard Eccleston and fellow researcher Lachlan Johnson made a submission to the Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into tax avoidance in the aged-care sector. The submission described some of the aggressive accounting strategies employed by some of the larger for-profit aged care providers in Australia and made recommendations that government should insist on corporate tax transparency in order to receive government subsidies or contracts.

July 2018: Richard Eccleston and fellow researcher Nicholas Gribble made a submission to the Tasmanian Government’s Review of the Tasmanian Electoral Act 2004 with 17 recommendations which, once implemented, would ensure that Tasmania has among the most the transparent campaign disclosure frameworks in Australia.

The ISC will continue to contribute to the review of the Tasmanian Electoral Act over the course of 2019.
The ISC is working with partners across the government, industry and community sectors to expand the joint scholarship program.

In addition to the PhD program launch, the ISC offered a limited number of fellowships for recent University of Tasmania PhD graduates to assist them in publishing from their research. Successful applicants are funded to work intensively for two to three months to produce publications related to their doctoral research.

This year’s recipients were University of Tasmania graduate scholars Ruby Grant, Michael Guerzoni, Hanne Nielsen and Phillipa McCormack.

The recipients presented their work to date at a forum hosted by the ISC in November 2018.

Dr Ruby Grant – Sex education as civic engagement
Dr Ruby Grant is an early career researcher in Sociology and Gender Studies at the University of Tasmania. Her research interests include intersectional feminist theory, queer studies, and LGBTI health.

Dr Mike Guerzoni – Child protection and clerical challenges in Tasmanian Anglicanism
Dr Mike Guerzoni is a criminologist whose research focuses on clerical culture, attitudes, and behaviour towards child sexual abuse and child protection, and on the prevention of child sexual abuse in Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism.

Dr Phillipa McCormack – Reforming restoration laws to support climate change adaptation
Dr Phillipa McCormack does research at the intersection of ecology and law, critically evaluating Australia’s biodiversity conservation laws. She highlights legal and policy challenges and opportunities to help biodiversity adapt as the climate changes.

Dr Hanne Nielsen – Framing Antarctica: A place to visit, to use, or protect
Dr Hanne Nielsen specialises in cultural representations of Antarctica and human relationships with the far south. She is immediate past president of the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists and spends her summers as an Antarctic tour guide.
Academic research and funding

In addition to applied policy research and engagement the Institute continues to make a contribution to the University’s academic research program both directly and by supporting our network of affiliated researchers. Academic research highlights include:

- A $365,940 Australian Research Council (ARC) research project examining the estimated $500 billion-a-year global problem of tax avoidance by the world’s biggest companies. The project is led by Richard Eccleston and Hannah Murphy-Gregory at the University of Tasmania with support from researchers at Sydney and The University of Western Australia.
- The Institute also supported an ARC project led by Professor Douglas Ezzy (School of Social Sciences) that aims to make Australia safer through identifying strategies to maintain social cohesion and prevent violent responses to religious diversity.
- Institute staff also published research in a wide range of national and international journals and published three significant books over the course of 2018:

Research Collaboration

2018 saw the Institute continue to expand research collaborations with a range of partners including the Tasmanian Department of Health; Department of Communities; State Growth and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. We have also worked with and support TasCOSS, Centrecare Evolve, Anglicare, Colony 47, Tasmanian Community Fund, Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, the Tamar Community Peace Trust and the Devonport Festival of Learning.
Community and media engagement highlights

Public events

In late 2017 and throughout 2018 the ISC continued its community engagement efforts through the hosting of free public events, ranging from seminars and lectures to panel discussions and industry forums.

We held several high profile public events in Hobart and Launceston and supported dozens of other University of Tasmania events by providing administrative and organisational assistance.

Through these events the Institute helped the University reach a cumulative audience of more than 5000 attendees, while live-streaming saw another 1500 people view events online.

In early August 2018 we once again partnered with the Tamar Valley Peace Festival to present a free public event aimed at sparking community discussion in the state’s north.

The ISC hosted a public talk and series of school visits across northern Tasmania by lawyer, women’s rights activist and poet Sara Mansour. Sara is the founder and host of Bankstown Poetry Slam (BPS) in Sydney and a founding board member of NOW Australia. Inspired by the global #MeToo movement, NOW Australia is a non-profit organisation spearheaded by journalist Tracey Spicer to help end sexual harassment, intimidation and abuse in the workplace.

Other key school engagement activities for the ISC included an Australians of the Year event for high school and college students at the Stanley Burbury Theatre in Hobart. The Institute’s events program aims to demonstrate the University of Tasmania’s commitment to promoting diversity and the strength, resilience and creativity that it brings. Over the course of 2018 we hosted more than 50 speakers, achieving a gender balance, while presenting a wide range of perspectives on key social issues.

In coming years are determined to host a greater percentage of speakers from culturally diverse backgrounds and from regional communities.

Media engagement

The ISC continues to lead the University of Tasmania’s public and media engagement activities and from November 2017 to November 2018 the Institute’s work and/or researchers were featured in 442 media articles or segments, reaching a cumulative audience of more than 4.3 million readers/viewers/listeners. This reach is equivalent to an advertising spend of more than $2.5 million.

> ISC Deputy Director Dr Meredith Nash hosted Sara Mansour as part of the Tamar Valley Peace Festival
Highlights from our events program

23 November 2017
Public talk: Political correctness of common sense? The Australia Day controversy
Professor Henry Reynolds, historian and Honorary Research Professor, University of Tasmania

23 February 2018
Public talk: Inside AirBnB: Exploring the impact of the sharing economy from New York to Hobart
Murray Cox, Inside AirBnb
Dr Kathleen Flanagan, Housing and Community Research Unit, University of Tasmania
Professor Peter Phibbs, University of Sydney
Chair: Professor Richard Eccleston, Institute for the Study of Social Change

28 February 2018
Public forum: Tasmania votes 2018: Key issues and likely outcomes with Antony Green
Antony Green, ABC Election Analyst
Chair: Professor Richard Eccleston, Institute for the Study of Social Change

1 May 2018
Public forum: The price of rising inequality
Professor Stephen Bell, University of Queensland
Dr Michael Keating, Australian National University
Kym Goodes, TasCOSS
Saul Eslake, independent economist and Vice Chancellor’s fellow, University of Tasmania

31 May 2018
Schools event: Australians of the Year
Jessica Manuela, Young Australian of the Year, Tasmania 2018
Tony Scherer, Senior Australian of the Year, Tasmania 2018
Judi Adams, Local Hero, Tasmania 2018
Dion Devow, Australian of the Year, ACT 2018
Dr Graham Farquhar, Senior Australian of the Year 2018

1 Aug 2018
Tamar Valley Peace Festival: The future of feminism and diversity: A conversation with Sara Mansour
Sara Mansour, lawyer, poet, feminist and founder of Bankstown Poetry Slam
Chair: Dr Meredith Nash, Institute for the Study of Social Change
12 September 2018

Public talk: Gender, identity and why words matter
Nevo Zisin, author
Dr Son Vivienne, RMIT
Chair: Dr Meredith Nash, Institute for the Study of Social Change

2 October 2018

Public talk: China’s growing influence in Tasmania
Professor Clive Hamilton, Charles Sturt University

16 October 2018

Anti Poverty Week public event: Ending the cycle of poverty
Dr Kathleen Flanagan, Housing and Community Research Unit
Professor Natalie Brown, Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment
Kym Goodes, TasCOSS

21 November 2018 (Launceston) 22 November 2018

Memoir launch: Kerry O’Brien
Kerry O’Brien, journalist, former ABC 7:30 host
Chairs: Dr Louise Grimmer, Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania
Professor Richard Eccleston, Institute for the Study of Social Change

22 November 2018 (Launceston)

Local media in Northern Tasmania: Can it thrive in an era of digital disruption
Mark Baker, Fairfax Media
Lisa Watts, The Conversation
Brian Carlton, Tasmania Talks, Grant Broadcasters
Zahra Rajab Ali, Launceston City Park Radio