



Curtin University

# AUSTRALIAN ALLY CONFERENCE 2018

## CONFERENCE REPORT

### ACTIVATING HUMAN RIGHTS

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status

*Leading the Change*

27 - 28 September

Curtin University  
Perth, Western Australia

**AUSTRALIAN ALLY CONFERENCE**

27-28 SEPTEMBER 2018

Presented by Curtin University

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

*The Australian Ally Conference 2018 brought together people from across the world and these lands now known commonly as Australia and the Torres Strait. On behalf of Curtin University, we pay our deepest respects to the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and the Torres Strait.*

*We would like to acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar people on whose land we convened this conference, and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of the Noongar people. We offer our respects and gratitude to their vibrant and endless culture and the leadership of the Elders of the Noongar nation, past, present, and emerging.*

*This country (boodja), where Curtin University is situated, has belonged to the Whadjuk Noongar people for thousands of years and is now a place of learning for all people. Curtin University is very proud to continue on with this very long tradition.*

## Conference Hosts

**Curtin Ally** - When students or staff are not comfortable in bringing their whole identity to Curtin, there is a risk both to their own performance and to the strength of their teams. That's why we're committed to creating an environment where our students and staff are welcomed, respected and valued, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or intersex status.

Creating and maintaining an inclusive university is central to Curtin's values and strategic positioning to "above all, be led by our values as we support our staff, promote Indigenous reconciliation and contribute to a fairer and more just society for all".

**The Centre for Human Rights Education** is a centre for research, postgraduate teaching, critical scholarship and advocacy on human rights. The Centre leads ethical scholarship, enabling individual agency and community engagement on human rights and social justice through the study and promotion of human rights at local, national and international levels.



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*Please note: Interactive hyperlinks are included throughout this document when viewing online. For links to all Conference Resources, please visit [humanrights.curtin.edu.au/events/ally-conference/resources/](https://humanrights.curtin.edu.au/events/ally-conference/resources/)*

## CURTIN ALLY

The 2018 Australian Ally Conference was organised by Principal Sponsors Curtin University in partnership with the Curtin Centre for Human Rights Education.



# AUSTRALIAN ALLY CONFERENCE 2018

Curtin University was proud to organise and host the 2nd Australian Ally Conference in September 2018. The Conference brought together academic and professional staff and students from 41 universities and education providers across Australia and New Zealand, along with practitioners from across Ally community groups in the education sector and beyond, and industry partners from 50 organisations across Australia to discuss issues and talk about the future of Ally in Australia.

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## CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES



To open up a national conversation on how to activate human rights in relation to sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics for all people.

To explore how Ally networks can contribute to enabling and ensuring the human rights of students and staff in higher education and in diverse institutional contexts.

To showcase best practice of Ally networks in diverse institutional contexts.



To bring together Allyship to the LGBTIQ+ community and also Allyship within the LGBTIQ+ community.

To encourage relationships, collaboration and dialogue across sectors.

To seek advancement of LGBTIQ issues in higher education through incorporation of best practice in university Ally networks and in the broader community.

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LGBTIQ+ refers collectively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex, and attempts to include the many people and communities who have additional ways of describing their distinct histories, experiences, and needs. For the purpose of this conference, LGBTIQ+ will be used to aid effective communication about complex concepts around bodies, genders, relationships, sexualities, histories, and lived experiences.

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## CONFERENCE DETAILS

The Conference was held at the Bentley Campus of Curtin University in Perth Western Australia on the 27th and 28th September 2018. The Conference program composed of 9 plenary sessions with 29 speakers, 20 concurrent presentation sessions with 76 speakers.

For more information please see the [Program Handbook](#) online, which also includes a list of participating organisations, sponsors and plenary speaker bios. More Conference information can be found on the [Centre for Human Rights Education website](#).



# CONFERENCE ORGANISATION



The Conference was tightly programmed, well organised and ran well over the two days, facilitating the inclusive participation and enjoyment of all who attended. The venues used for the Conference were easily accessible for all, with a rest room provided, free WiFi, closed captioning and non gender specific facilities indicated for the use of all participants.

The organisation of the Conference was managed and organised by the Director of Student Experience's Office and by the Curtin Centre for Human Rights Education. Various people from Curtin were also responsible for the success of the Conference, as outlined below.



## Conference Convenors

Ms Michelle Rogers, Director, Student Experience, Curtin University

Professor Baden Offord, Director, Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University

## Conference Organising Committee

Carolyn Cross

Misty Farquhar

Gaylene Galardi

Christopher Macfarlane

Sheldon Smith

Elle Walker

## Conference Advisory Committee

Panizza Allmark, Edith Cowan University

Jane Armstrong, City East Mental Health, Perth

Wendy Cumming-Potvin, Murdoch University

Hayley Davis, Curtin University

Liam Elphick, The University of Western Australia

Deborah Hunn, Curtin University

Aaron Matthews, Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University

Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, Deakin University

David Rhodes, Edith Cowan University

Fadzi Whande, The University of Western Australia



# CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

## Program

The Conference program presented a mix of panel plenary sessions, individual presentations and workshops, covering a broad range of LGBTIQ+ issues, organised in the following sessions over the two days:

### Day 1 Plenaries

- Rainbow Voices: Who Am I? This Is Who I Am
- Universities and Inclusive LGBTIQ+ Cultures: A Case Study
- Rainbow Rights and The Complexity of Belonging
- The Role of Allies in Industry

### Day 2 Plenaries

- Alliances and Solidarities
- The Complexity of Visibility and Social Recognition: Out in the University / Out in the Workplace
- How Can Universities Champion Full LGBTIQ+ Inclusion?
- Politics and Alliances

## Concurrent Session Themes

- University Ally
- Activism
- Youth
- Community Ally
- Intersex issues
- Promoting Human Rights Education
- Media
- Workplace Ally
- Being 'Out'
- Ally Network in Focus
- Hi-Visibility Bi-Visibility: How to Be A Better Bisexual Ally
- Trans and gender diverse people
- Ally in Education
- Human Rights
- Ally
- Queer Generations
- Research

## Workshop Themes

- Building Ladders to Get Out of The Lobster Pot- A Queer Lateral Hostility Toolkit
- Building the Future of the Ally Network
- Trans Pathways

Download the full [Program Handbook](#) from the Centre for Human Rights Education website.

## CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

The Conference attracted speakers from diverse backgrounds and expertise in academia, community and industry experience. Plenary sessions and concurrent presentation sessions were rich in rigour, lived experience and discussion, with people presenting their papers within selected topics.

### Plenary Speakers

**The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG**

**Professor Deborah Terry**, Vice Chancellor, Curtin University

**Commissioner Ro Allen**, Commissioner for Gender and Sexuality, Victoria

**Jane Armstrong**, Senior Mental Health Practitioner City East Mental Health Life Coach, Director Homelessness We Care Perth

**Jax Jacki Brown**, Disability & LGBTI/Queer rights activist

**Terri Butler MP**, Member for Griffith, Queensland

**Morgan Carpenter**, Intersex activist and researcher, PhD Candidate, University of Sydney

**Rodney Croome, AM**, LGBTI Rights Activist and Academic

**Misty Farquhar**, PhD Candidate, Curtin University

**Mackenzie Godson**, Senior Manager, Corporate Tax, PwC, Perth

**Sarah Guargliado**, Executive Manager, Customer Outcome Owner, Bankwest

**Braden Hill**, Director of Aboriginal Education, Equity and Inclusion, Murdoch University

**Mark Hodgson**, Manager Pinjarra Alumina Refinery, Alcoa of Australia

**Nick Lawrence**, Founder of TransFolk of WA

**June Lowe**, Chair, GRAI (GLBTI Rights in Ageing Inc)

**Aaron Matthews**, Associate Lecturer, Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University

**Bradley Nodari-Stewart**, Assistant Director, Workplace Diversity, Australian Taxation Office

**Professor Baden Offord**, Director, Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University

**Dr Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli**, Academic, Author and Community Activist

**Senator Louise Pratt**, Senator for WA, Shadow assistant Minister for Universities, Shadow Assistant Minister for Equality

**Professor Adam Shoemaker**, Vice Chancellor, Southern Cross University

**Senator Dean Smith**, Senator for Western Australia

**Dr Shawna Tang**, Lecturer at the Gender and Cultural Studies Department, University of Sydney

**Sadie Ward**, Youth LGBTQIA+ activist and Social Work Student, Curtin University

**Michelle Webb**, Lecturer, Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University

**Dr Dino Willox**, Director of Student Employability, The University of Queensland

**Jeremy Wray**, Senior Account Manager, Oilfield Equipment division of Baker Hughes, a GE Company (BHGE)

**Hon. Alison Xamon MLC**, Greens Member for the North Metropolitan Region



# CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

## Participants

The number and diversity of participants, as well as the quality of the presentations and discussions that went on each day, exceeded expectations and greatly contributed to the success of the Conference. There were over 230 participants coming from Universities, community and health organisations, corporations and government.



## CONFERENCE RESOURCES

Resources from the Conference can be found at the following links:

- [Full Program Handbook](#)
- [Photographs on Flickr](#) including: [Day 1](#), [Conference Reception](#) and [Day 2](#)
- Other [Conference Resources](#) including:
  - Pre Conference Interviews with Media Sponsor RTR FM
  - Conference Reporting by Graeme Watson from Media Sponsor OUTinPerth
  - Other post Conference media coverage
  - Human Rights Lecture – Lecture transcript, media coverage and [Photographs](#)

The photographs throughout this report and online are credited to Gaylene Galardi, Christopher Macfarlane and Elle Walker.



# CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHS



Baden Offord, Conference co-convenor



Michelle Rogers, Conference co-convenor



June Lowe, Plenary 1 speaker



Concurrent Panel sessions, day 1



Concurrent Panels 7 & 8 speakers - Danae Gibson, Katie Darby, Kate Charles, Caitlin Gurney, Bri McKenzie and Graeme Watson



Plenary 2, Universities And Inclusive LGBTIQ+ Cultures: A Case Study, with Professor Adam Shoemaker in conversation with Baden Offord



## CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHS



Concurrent Session 10, Ally Network In Focus - Allan Goody and Jen de Vries



Concurrent Session 11, Hi-Visibility Bi-Visibility: How To Be A Better Bisexual Ally - Hanna Saltis, Duc Dau, Misty Farquhar & Baden Offord



Concurrent Workshop Session 13, Building the Future of the Ally Network



Plenary 3, Rainbow Rights And The Complexity Of Belonging Commissioner Ro Allen, Terri Butler MP, Jane Armstrong, Dino Willox, Michelle Webb, Rodney Croome AM



Plenary 4, The Role of Allies in Industry - Brad Nodari-Stewart, Mark Hodgson, Jeremy Wray, Mackenzie Godson and Sarah Guargliardo



Plenary 5, Alliances and Solidarities: Commissioner Ro Allen and Dr Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli with Professor Marion Kickett (Chair)



# CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHS



Plenary 6, The Complexity of Visibility and Social Recognition : Out in the University / Out in the Workplace  
Braden Hill, Morgan Carpenter, Dr Shawna Tang, Jax Jacki Brown and Nick Lawrence



Conference Rainbow Sponsors, Alcoa of Australia



Concurrent Panel 19, Human Rights -  
Tania Penovic presenting



Concurrent Panel 23, Research -  
Leanne McRae presenting



Plenary 7, How Can Universities Champion Full LGBTIQ+ Inclusion? - Professor Archie Clements (Chair), The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG, Professor Deborah Terry AO, Commissioner Ro Allen, Braden Hill and Misty Farquhar



Plenary 8, Politics and Alliances -  
Hon. Giz Watson MLC (Chair), Hon. Alison Xamon MLC, Rodney Croome AM, Senator Louise Pratt and Senator Dean Smith



# PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

## UNIVERSITIES

Australian National University  
Bond University  
Burgmann College, ANU  
Castan Centre for Human Rights Law  
Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University  
Centre for Social Research in Health, University of NSW  
Charles Sturt University  
Curtin Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University  
Curtin University  
Deakin University  
Edith Cowan University, South West Campus  
Edith Cowan University  
Griffith University  
Kurongkurl Katitjin, Edith Cowan University  
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South Australian Law Reform Institute, The University of Adelaide  
Southern Cross School of Distance Education  
Southern Cross University  
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The University of Adelaide  
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The University of Melbourne  
The University of Newcastle  
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University of New South Wales  
University of South Australia  
University of Southern Queensland  
University of Tasmania  
University of Technology Sydney  
University of Wollongong  
Western Sydney University

# PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

## ORGANISATIONS

ACT Government  
AIDS Council of NSW (ACON)  
Alcoa of Australia  
Anglicare NT  
Anglicare WA  
Assisting Your Life to Achieve Inc. (AYLA)  
Australian Taxation Office  
Baker Hughes, a GE Company  
Bankwest  
Bentley Health Service  
BHP Billiton  
Bisexual+ Community Perth  
City East Mental Health Services  
Clifford Chance  
Collective Impact  
Connection And Wellbeing Australia (CAWA)  
Department of Education, NSW  
Department of Fire and Emergency Services, WA  
Edith Cowan Student Law Society  
GLBTI Rights in Ageing Inc (GRAI)  
Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA)  
Inclusive Education WA, WA AIDS Council  
Intersex Human Rights Australia  
Just Equal  
National LGBTI Health Alliance  
National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU)  
Newcastle University Postgraduate Students Association (NUPSA)  
Notre Dame Student Association  
OUTinPerth  
Palmerston Association  
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) WA  
Psychology for Thriving  
Presbyterian Ladies College  
PricewaterhouseCoopers  
Pride in Diversity  
Pride WA  
Rainbows in Schools  
RTR FM  
Telethon Kids Institute  
The Queer Connection Incorporated  
The University of South Australia Rainbow Club  
The Youth Educating Peers Project (YEP), Youth Affairs Council WA (YACWA)  
TransFolk of WA  
Transgender Victoria  
Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victorian Government  
WA LGBTI Health Strategy Reference Group  
WA Police  
Wheatbelt Health Network  
Woodside Energy  
Youth Pride Network, YACWA

# ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE EVENTS

## CONFERENCE RECEPTION

*Thursday 27 September*

The Conference Reception, sponsored by the University of Queensland (UQ), was held in the Creative Quarter at Curtin University and was MC'd by local personality Famous Sharron. Michelle Rogers, co-convenor of the Conference, introduced Dr Dino Willox from UQ to say a few words on behalf of the sponsor.

Highlights of the evening included two performances of spoken word and poetry by Patrick Kain and Jax Jacki Brown. There was much laughter and enjoyment as conversations from the day's sessions continued into the early evening. For more photographs from the reception, please go to [Famous Sharron's Facebook page](#) or see [Conference Reception](#) photos on Flickr.





## ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE EVENTS





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### CURTIN ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS LECTURE

*Presented by: The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG*

*Friday 28 September 2018*

The Conference ended proceedings with the Curtin Annual Human Rights Lecture, presented by The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG, which was held in the Elizabeth Jolley Theatre at Curtin University. Four hundred people were in attendance, including many people who had attended the two day Ally Conference. Professor Baden Offord was the MC for the evening. Noongar elder, Marie Taylor, gave a warm and humorous Welcome to Country, followed by the Gay and Lesbian Singers of Western Australia choir who sang rousing renditions of 'Titanium' by David Guetta and 'Born this Way' by Lady Gaga. After an introduction by the Vice Chancellor of Curtin University, Professor Deborah Terry, Michael Kirby gave an excellent lecture titled, 'Beyond Marriage Equality & Skin Curling'. The video of the lecture can be found on the Centre for Human Rights Education [Videos webpage](#) and a full text version of the lecture can also be found on the [Conference Resources](#) webpage.





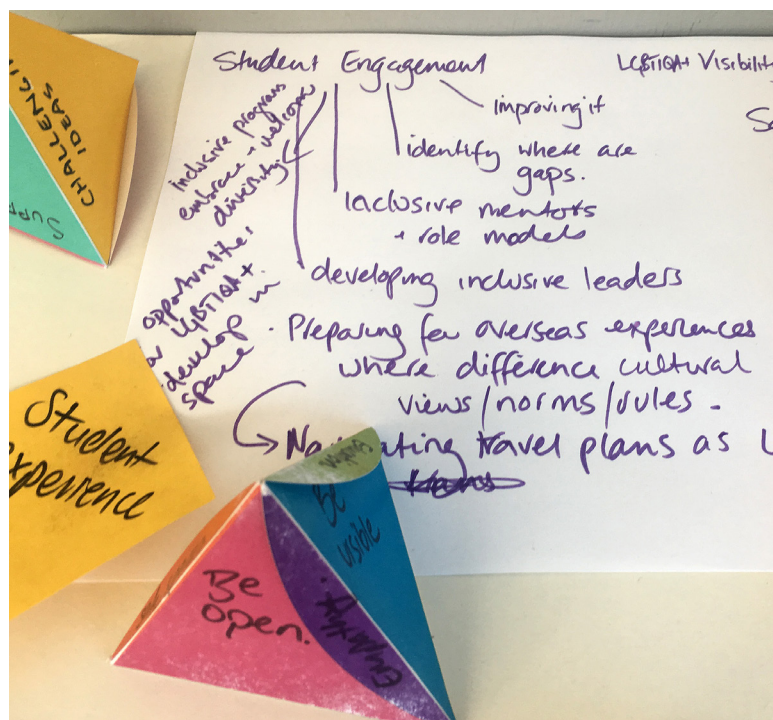
## ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE EVENTS





## FUTURE OF THE ALLY NETWORK

- Pooling resources and standardising surveys to get a comparative picture across universities.
- Looking at ideas around student life on campus, events and visible spaces.
- Sharing ideas and research. Connecting with other institutions and sharing the outcomes of surveys so we learn about the impacts that programs are having.
- More ways of sharing beyond conferences, getting word out about what's out there and going on, even within a university.
- Using technology to make visible and share.
- Impact beyond universities. Beyond reaching out to rural communities, creating programs with (not just for) communities.
- Ways of evaluating student experiences and incorporating their ideas so students have agency in this space.
- Of course, funding, and connecting people making a difference with people in power to create change.



# CONFERENCE CLOSING

## MOTION AND RATIONALE

As a final ending discussion to the Ally Conference 2018, Baden Offord and Michelle Rogers, along with activist Rodney Croome AM, put together a motion and rationale that were read to all those in attendance at the final session. The Motion was carried by the Conference delegates with a unanimous show of hands.

### Motion

- That this conference resolves to establish a national coordinating body for Ally programs.
- That a subcommittee be established to develop options for the structure, role, funding and name of a national coordinating body.
- That the subcommittee will include a representative from each state and territory if possible and will be convened by a representative from the state hosting the next Ally Conference.
- That the subcommittee will report at the next Ally Conference with time allotted for discussion and decision-making.

### Rationale

Ally programs have contributed greatly to on-campus inclusion and equity for LGBTIQ+ people, but there may be ways for us to improve Ally programs to make them more effective. There are also challenges regarding inclusion, respect and freedom of speech faced by many universities. A national coordinating body could support us in improving our work and helping with the challenges we face.

## NEXT CONFERENCE

The University of Queensland has tentatively agreed to host the next Australian Ally Conference, in cooperation with universities in Queensland.



# THANKS

The Conference organisers are grateful to all the people – Curtin staff, volunteers, speakers, chairs and delegates – and organisations who made the 2018 Conference possible and such a wonderful success.

**In addition to the Conference Organising Committee, we would particularly like to thank the following people at Curtin University:**

Matthew Taylor, Jovana Lazovic and Erica Stewart at Curtin Careers, Employment and Leadership Team for their development of the Conference Program. Thanks also go to Darshil Shah and Julie Howell from Curtin Careers for their vital assistance.

Sharyn Gharakhanian and Madison Wales from the Curtin Humanities Marketing team for their advice and assistance.

Krishan Shah at Curtin Volunteers! for their assistance with sourcing our wonderful team of volunteers, and Hayley Davis for her coordination of volunteers over the two days of the Conference.

Kim Muirden and Trish Ransfield from the Curtin Faculty of Science and Engineering for their invaluable assistance in the week of the Conference.

Stephanie Sik and Marissa Williams from the Curtin School of Media, Creative Arts and Social Enquiry for their invaluable assistance in the week of and leading up to the Conference.



# THANKS

Kind thanks go to our Conference Sponsors, Media Sponsors and Associate Sponsors for their generous support.

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