

THE WOMEN RESEARCHERS NETWORK  
PRESENTS

# Engagement = Empowerment

Friday 26th of October  
Storey Hall  
RMIT University

#WRNsymposium18



Keynote

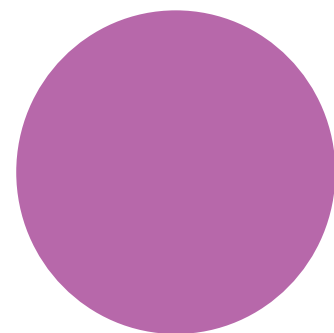


The **Women Researchers' Network** held their annual symposium at RMIT University, inviting research and academic staff to participate in a day filled with networking opportunities and a range of presentations from highly-regarded guest speakers.

The focus of 2018 was 'Engagement = Empowerment', encouraging attendees to continue advocating for change and to foster supportive environments for women researchers. The audience was delighted to hear inspiring words from Rebecca Scott, CEO and co-founder of STREAT - a social enterprise that addresses youth homelessness through hospitality projects. She delivered a powerful talk centred around the idea that disbelief creates a range of emotions - anger, wonder and awe - that drives the desire to fix the "broken things" in the world. Rebecca endorsed that the "hairline fractures", the side-projects and the "work in the cracks" that women are continually doing are needed to lead change and discovery.

Women's rights advocate Faduma Musse sat down with Dr Margaret Heffernan OAM to share inspirational insight on the need to empower women and develop leaders in the community. Faduma has spent years working with government, business, community groups and health agencies to stand against female genital mutilation and shift entrenched cultural values. She left us with the reminder that "change can be slow, but patience is the most important factor in engaging with the community."

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***"Be Seen, Be Heard, Be Equitable"***  
***— Professor Lisa Farrell***  
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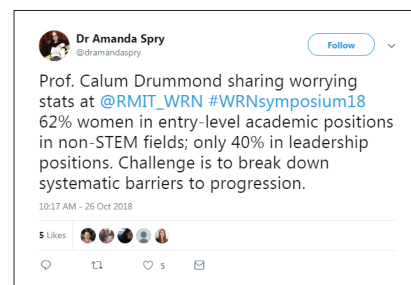


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***"If you say it enough, you'll start believing it. So will everyone else."***  
***— Dr Kate Fox***  
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Dr Leonora Risse and Professor Lisa Farrell each highlighted the need for women to be a voice - to use perspective, personal values, wisdom and experiences to shape a range of life outcomes. Following, Associate Professor Madhu Bhaskaran challenged the audience throughout her talk to work hard, rely on teams effectively and to “say yes to everything, so that you know what to say no to later.”

A panel of accomplished women researchers later discussed Impact Realities, drawing on experiences in their respective fields to share anecdotes, practical advice and encouraging words. Each panel member presented their thoughts on ‘impact’, covering areas of change, community, conversation, difference, connection and relationships.

Rounding out a fantastic line-up of guest speakers, Professor Karen Becker from the University of the Sunshine Coast delivered a brilliant keynote speech that reminded us to empower colleagues, students, community and ourselves, as it has the ability to create strong, controlled and uplifted people.



# Empowered people, empower people.



**Assoc Prof Angela Dobebe**

*Chair, WRN Steering Committee*



**Rebecca Scott**

*Co-founder & CEO of STREAT*



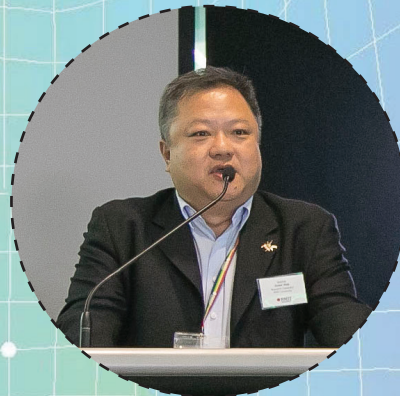
**Prof Karen Becker**

*Deputy Head (Research & Engagement)  
& Discipline Lead for Management &  
HRM in the USC Business School*



**Prof Calum Drummond**

*Deputy Vice-Chancellor, R&I and  
Vice-President*



**Prof Swee Mak**

*Associate Deputy Vice-  
Chancellor, Research Capability*

## THANK YOU

The Women Researcher's Network would like to thank everyone who was involved with organising and assisting the 2018 Annual Symposium. Everyone's contributions created a very successful and memorable day.

\* The WRN extends its thanks to A/Prof Angela Dobebe (Chair, WRN Steering Committee), Prof Swee Mak (Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Capability), Prof Calum Drummond (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation and Vice-President); our keynote speakers, Rebecca Scott and Prof Karen Becker; our guest speakers, Faduma Musse, Prof Lisa Farrell, A/Prof Madhu Bhaskaran, and Dr Leonora Risse; our panelists, Dr Jenny Kennedy, Prof Supriya Singh, Dr Annie Delaney, A/Prof Anne Harris, Dr Kate Fox and Dr Sam Grover; and our MCs, Dr Jessica Danaher, Dr Ella Chorazy, A/Prof Sylvia Urban, Dr Stayci Taylor, Dr Margaret Heffernan OAM and Prof Matt Duckham.

\*\* We also thank Mukti Australia, Mission Catering and Ms Penelope Lee from HerPlace Museum; Dr Amanda Spry for her official tweets; and finally, the WRN team, Michelle Ginnivan, Alice Boland, Valarie Serrao, Lucy Ryan, Zach Edwards, Kenneth Hendrix, Razzif Sharil and Chahat Vohra.

\*\*\* Congratulations to Aditi Upadhyay for winning the poster competition and to Emma Kerr for winning the business card draw!