

EPHEA CONFERENCE REPORT 2022

STRENGTH THROUGH ADVERSITY

the future of Higher Education equity,
diversity and inclusion

27 NOVEMBER - 30 NOVEMBER 2022



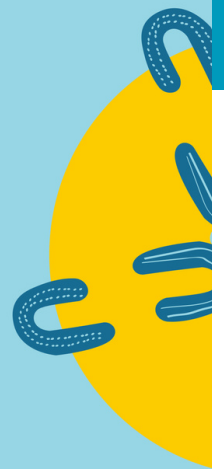
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Introduction

In 2022, the Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA) biennial Conference was held at Kambri at ANU and hosted in collaboration with The University of Canberra (UC), The Australian National University (ANU), and the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Canberra.

The conference theme ***Strength through adversity: the future of Higher Education equity, diversity and inclusion*** aimed to position equity in a strength-based model, whereby institutions recognise the rich knowledge, experiences, and skills that diversity and enabling activities can empower. The conference highlighted the outstanding work of equity practitioners across the sector, as well as celebrated the achievements of staff and students who have leveraged their experience to achieve excellence.

Hosting the EPHEA 2022 conference with our fellow University partners was a true testament to working together to demonstrate our deep commitment and dedication to equity within our own institutions and the larger community.

The 2022 EPHEA conference program reflected the existing successful model that had been executed in the past with inspiring keynote speakers, a wide range of cutting-edge workshops, meaningful networking opportunities and exciting social and cultural events. Sub-themes spanned a broad range of topics, including:

- Diverse genders, sexes, and sexuality,
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, Māori, Pacific Islander, First Nations and First Peoples,
- Intersectionality,
- Disability, ability, accessibility, and mental health,
- Refugee and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and;
- Support for vulnerable students



The 2022 Conference was managed by Jason Thomas Events. The program and conference handbook are available at <https://epheaconference.com.au/>

For more information about the 2022 conference, please contact:

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Sarah Walker

Conference Co-Chair
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EQUITY PRACTITIONERS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION
AUSTRALASIA

The 'Strength through Adversity' Committee

Laurie Poretti (CO-Chair) | University of Canberra
Sarah Walker (Co-Chair) | Australian National University
Hollie Speer | University of Canberra
Dr Lara Drew | University of Canberra
Daniel O'Neill | Charles Darwin University
Therese Canty | University of Canberra
Steffi Linton | University of Canberra
Sarah Smith | University of Wollongong
Lily Sheridan | University of Wollongong
Lesley Cioccarelli | Canberra Institute of Technology
Nicola Cull | Australian Catholic University
Kimberley Ann Pangilinan | Western Sydney University
Ripley Stevens | Australian National University
Sonal Singh | University of Technology Sydney
Tom Arthur | University of New South Wales, Canberra
Ash Dowling | Australian National University
Isabel Osuna-Gatty | Centre for Disability Studies
Gary Kerridge | Centre for Disability Studies



Executive Committee

EPHEA (Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia) is the professional incorporated association for equity practitioners who work in tertiary education throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific region. Equity practitioners play an essential role in tertiary education to develop and implement student and/or staff engagement, access and success programs, manage organisational responsibilities under anti-discrimination legislation, promote cultural change within institutions, and foster an environment which values and respects diversity.

EPHEA is run by a committed volunteer Executive Committee made up of equity practitioners from across Australia and New Zealand. The committee structure is guided by the EPHEA Constitution. In 2022, the EPHEA Executive consisted of the following members:

Kylie Austin | President

University of Wollongong, NSW
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Bronwyn Williams | Public Officer

Western Sydney University, NSW
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Verity Firth | Vice-President

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Jimzeena LeCerf | Membership Officer

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Katherine Munyard | Communications Coordinator

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Amber Elliot | Secretary

Monash University, VIC
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Attendance



200 Conference delegates registered for the 2022 'Strength through adversity' EPHEA conference.

Representation included delegates from Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

- Higher and Further Education Institutions: 33
- Private enterprise: 1
- Government Agencies: 3
- Community service or non-for-profit organisations: 2

A full list of registrants is included in Appendix A

Sponsorship



Sponsorship was sought via a direct approach through committee institutions and institution partners, as well as local organisations. A standard sponsorship proposal was disseminated to EPHEA chapter institution DVCs via a mailing list.

PLATINUM SPONSORS



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SILVER SPONSORS



UniSuper



Budget

Income

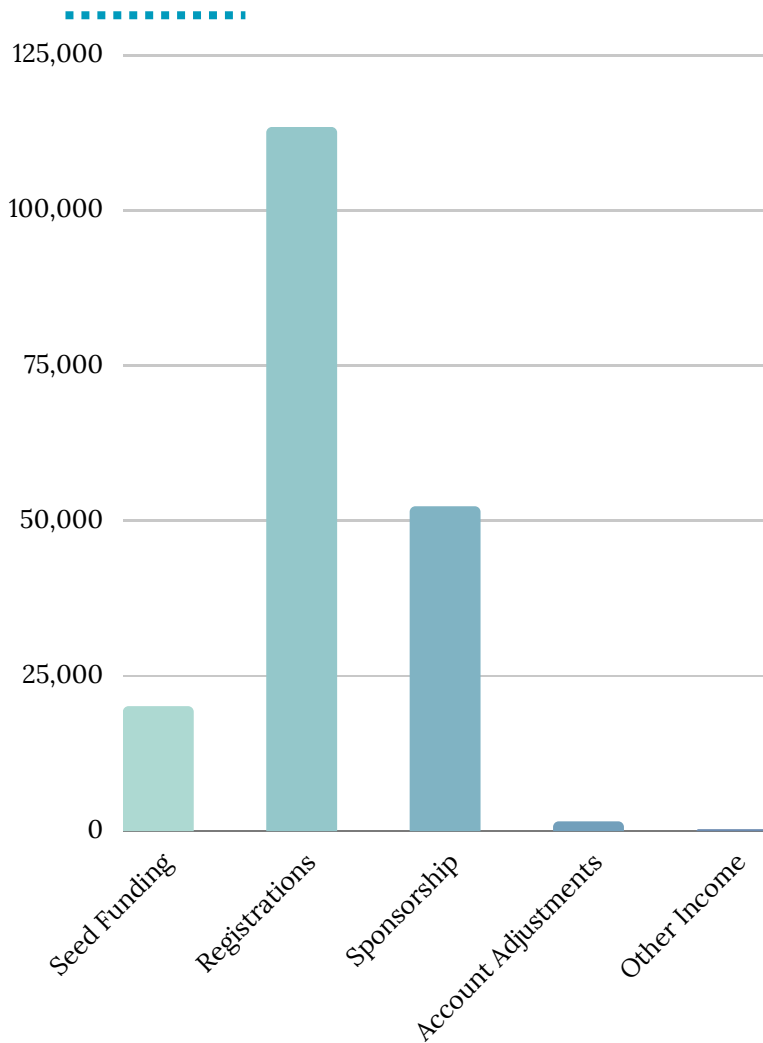


FIGURE 1. INCOME

A total of \$174,974.63 was raised as income including seed funding Sponsorship as listed here was inclusive of sponsorship packages and excluded in-kind support Account adjustments (over charged) Other income (account interest)

Expenditure

Total expenditure = \$121,113.26

Profit:

\$33,861.37

Final balance \$53,861.37
(- \$20,000 returned seed funding)

Program

The conference, '**Strength through Adversity**' sought to explore evidence-based practice through the following conference streams:

- Pre-Access and Widening Participation
- Access and Enabling
- Transition and Engagement
- Completion and Transition Out
- Co-Creators: Staff and Students Working in Partnership
- Staff and Workplace Development

Keynote Speakers

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The program consisted of 3 keynote speakers representing their expertise in areas related to the conference themes, and sharing their lived experience to engage and inspire a diverse audience.

Presenter	Topic
Meng Foon (he/him) <i>Race Relations Commissioner, New Zealand</i>	<i>"The importance of diversity and equity in communities: using language to highlight how race issues can be resolved to create a more harmonious future for Aotearoa"</i>
Dr Cathy Stone (she/her) <i>Conjoint A/Prof, University of Newcastle</i>	<i>"From the margins to the mainstream: the online learning rethink and its implications for enhancing student equity"</i>
Yenn Purkis (they/them) <i>Autistic author and advocate</i>	<i>"Autism and Education: a personal story"</i>

Program

Workshops

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To support the professional development of members, a range of workshops were selected. Given the 2019 feedback, and the current move to focus on workplace health & wellbeing, a specialised, featured, workshop was also selected by the Committee to provide a time of reflection and personal feedback to delegates.

Presenter	Topic
Kemi Nekvapil	<i>"Owning Your Power"</i>
Converge	<i>"Difficult Conversations"</i>
Dr Paul Collis, Jen Crawford & Andi Stapp-Gaunt	<i>"Story Ground: Engaging the Higher Education Community through Indigenous Story Practices and Creative Writing"</i>
Rizwan Khan & Ravinth Prasad	<i>"Designing for Equity - The Human Centred Design Process in Action"</i>
A/Prof Nadine Zacharias & Melissa Lowe	<i>"An institutional HEPPP Evaluation framework modelled on the SEHEEF: what we have learnt in the first 12 months"</i>
Robin Ladwig, A/Prof Cate Thomas & Dr Merryn McKinnon	<i>"'I basically win minority bingo': An intersectional perspective on gender diversity"</i>
David Eckstein, Edward Osano & Deborah Boswell	<i>"Employability development for university students with disability. Cross-institutional workshop to consider institutional issues and choices in the development of University partnerships with DES provider"</i>

Program

Parallel Sessions, Posters & Panels

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Consistent with the conference themes, 57 presentations and 2 poster presentations were delivered. Presentations and poster submissions were called for through an application process, and selected after blind peer review of abstracts by at least two members of the Organising Committee. In the case of any discrepancy in reviewing consensus, a third reviewer with expertise in the given area was called upon for final assessment.

The 2022 conference also had the opportunity to showcase the student experience by incorporating a facilitated student panel.

Social Program and Events

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Induction Session for new Equity Practitioners

Marie Reay, Kambri Precinct

Sunday 27th

Welcome Reception

National Film and Sound Archive

Sunday 27th

Conference Gala Dinner Dinner

National Portrait Gallery

Tuesday 29th

EPHEA AGM

Marie Reay, Kambri Precinct

Wednesday 30th

Evaluation

Feedback was collected through a post-conference survey, which was emailed to all conference delegates immediately after the conference and two reminders in the week following the conference. There were 73 respondents. Feedback for what delegates 'liked about the conference' are thematically represented in the word cloud below - the larger the word, the more frequently it was used.

Key takeaways:

- When asked what delegates would rate the conference (out of 10) responses ranged between 7 - 10
 - 12.3% rated 7/10
 - 31.5% rated 8/10
 - **34.2% rated 9/10**
 - 17.8% rated 10/10
- **68%** of respondents said they were '**extremely likely**' to recommend this conference to a colleague
 - 25% moderately likely
- **61.1%** of respondents said the conference was '**extremely organised**'
 - 30.6% moderately organised
- **Over 70%** of delegates said the conference staff were '**extremely helpful**'



Recommendations

Following feedback from the attendees, the following recommendations have been developed to help inform the 2024 planning:

1. Logistics and Communication

- Central noticeboard in the conference venue for important info each day (i.e., cancelled sessions, what not to miss, social event reminders)
- Consider alternative means of communications with essential information leading up to the event – at a busy time in the year emails can get clogged or ignored
- A secure room to store equipment, technology, and any personal items for delegates/conference team

2. Programming

- More time between conference sessions to network and reflect
- Continuation of the student panel or similar session to showcase the student voice
- Shorter conference days to be more inclusive of flexible working hours and mindful of cognitive load
- Consider more frequent breaks for delegates to process information and reset before the next session
- Maintaining a wellbeing focus in the workshop streams/keynotes
- Closed captioning is essential; live translations would be most ideal as software was not adequate
- Increase the representation and voice of First Nations people

Recommendations

3. Catering

- 2022 opted for meat free catering in line with 2019 feedback and suggestions to move to a 'greener' conference. Feedback from 2022 suggests increasing variety of all foods (not strictly vegetarian) but having more vegan options for dietary requirements

4. Miscellaneous

- As well as acknowledging lifetime achievements, consider additional categories to celebrate the diversity of the EPHEA network. Suggestions include awards celebrating Indigenous achievement, a new/rookie category to highlight and commend the work of young people in the network
- Have presentation/workshop slides made available online after the conference
- Opportunities for dissemination of Conference Presentations/Papers - Explore Student Success Journal submissions, and others

Appendix A

List of Registrants

Email	First Name	Last Name	Ticket	Position	Organisation	Welcome Reception	Conference Dinner
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