

## Social Justice, Inclusion and Diversity in Education (SJIDE) research focus area

*The Social Justice, Inclusion and Diversity in Education (SJIDE) Research Focus Area (RFA) undertakes research and scholarly engagement with social justice in education within the broad themes of equity, diversity, inclusion, opportunity, regionality and wellbeing in formal education as well as non-formal education settings. Educational issues relating to learners from a diverse range of ethnicities, genders, classes, cultures, sexual identities and orientations, geographical locations, ages and abilities are the core of this RFA.*



## SJIDE Virtual Conventicle<sup>1</sup> 2021

### Research sharing event

### Forging new pathways: Social Justice Inclusion, Diversity and Education

**Program: Friday 16 July 2021**

Reserve your ticket through [Eventbrite](#)

Enquiries to:

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<sup>1</sup> “**Conventicle** comes to us from Latin *conventiculum* and ultimately from *convenire*, meaning ‘to assemble.’ *Conventiculum* means ‘place of assembly’ (it was applied in particular to Roman Christian meetinghouses) or simply ‘assembly.’ The English ‘conventicle’ also originally meant ‘assembly.’ It then developed an application to illegal meetings, which, in turn, led to the arrival of a sense describing secret meetings for worship in a religion proscribed by law. And finally, “conventicle” developed a sense of ‘meetinghouse,’ echoing the earlier use of ‘conventiculum.” Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conventicle>

## Program

### 10.00 am Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Participants

Dr Amy Cloughton, Conventicle Convenor

10.05 am Presentation 1

Convenor: Dr. Amy Cloughton

### ***Slipping backwards? Human rights and inclusion in contemporary Australian Education***

Assoc Prof Jenene Burke, School of Education, Mt Helen Campus, Federation University Australia

10.35 am Panel discussion

Convenor: Dr Amy Cloughton; Assoc Prof Jenene Burke

### ***Forging new pathways: Social Justice Inclusion, Diversity and Education***

Dr Genée Marks, Lecturer in Education School of Education, Deakin University

Adjunct Associate Prof Margaret Plunkett, School of Education, Federation University Australia

### 11.15 am Break

11.30 am Presentation 2

Convenor: Ana Larson

### ***Parents who teach: Exploring a unique perspective of advocacy and expertise***

Dr Amy Cloughton, Deb Robertson, Dr Sara Weuffen & Kylie Nice, School of Education, Mt Helen Campus, Federation University Australia

12.00 am Video Presentation 1

Convenor: Deb Robertson

### ***A glimpse into the multi-dimensionality of stuttering (Video presentation)***

Dr Grant Meredith, School of Engineering, Information Technology & Physical Sciences, Mt Helen Campus, Federation University Australia

12.15 am Presentation 3

Convenor: Dr Catherine Oxworth

### ***“Having the Conversation” with teachers with impairments in professional roles***

Gerry Skene, School of Education, Mt Helen Campus, Federation University Australia

### 12.45 pm Break for lunch and informal conversation

01.30 pm Presentation 4

Convenor: Dr. Cheryl Glowrey

### ***Social equity, multiple discourses and COVID-19***

Ana Larsen & Dr Sue Emmett, School of Access Education, Central Queensland University & School of Education, Berwick Campus, Federation University Australia

02.00 pm Presentation 5

Convenor: Deb Robertson

### ***Impact of COVID-19 on children in education in India***

Anjali Rana & Dr Rachel Daniel, School of Education, Gippsland Campus & Berwick Campus, Federation University Australia

02.30 pm Soapbox and open mic session

Convenor: Mick Barrow

### Soapbox 1. ***Pre-Service Teachers thoughts on rural disadvantage***

Ana Larsen, School of Access Education, Central Queensland University

Soapbox 2. (open mic)

Soapbox 3. (open mic)

03.00 pm Open discussion and concluding comments

Convenor: Dr. Amy Cloughton

### 03.30 pm Conclusion

Assoc Prof Jenene Burke

**Presentation 1:** **Slipping backwards? Human rights and inclusion in contemporary Australian Education****Presenter:** Assoc Prof Jenene Burke, School of Education, Federation University Australia**Abstract:** Australia has a strong track record of assuring access to social justice and human rights for children in Australia. Despite this history and Australia's economic prosperity, some commentators have reported recently that Australia has regressed in areas of critical importance when it comes to equity for children and young people. Questions about how Australians 'value' children and young people have been raised. Inclusive education seems to have remained stagnant and associated challenges in Australian education affect children from several vulnerable groups in particular. Children's vulnerability can be categorised as social and educational and for children in these groups in Australia, the implications of social and economic disadvantage are more acute. These vulnerable groups include, but are not restricted to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, asylum seeker and refugee children, pre-schoolers and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This presentation examines the evidence from national census data, PISA results and OECD reports, as well as several recent reports on children's rights and related analysis and commentaries, to draw conclusions about whether access to children's rights, equity and inclusive education in Australia is slipping backwards.**Biography:** Associate Professor Jenene Burke is the Deputy Dean in the School of Education and Convenor of the SJIDE research focus area. Jenene is best known for her world-class research into playspaces as inclusive environments for children and their families. Along with this, she has broad interest in other areas of education which intersect with disability studies in education and inclusive education, as demonstrated in her research partnerships and activities, and in her publications. She is the President-elect of the World Federation of Associations for Teacher Education (WFATE) and leads the WFATE Research Development Group 'Disability Studies, Inclusion and Social Justice in Teacher Education'.**Email:** [js.burke@federation.edu.au](mailto:js.burke@federation.edu.au)**Presentation 2** **Parents who teach: Exploring a unique perspective of advocacy and expertise****Presenters:** Dr Amy Cloughton, Deb Robertson, Dr Sara Weuffen, Kylie Nice, School of Education, Federation University Australia**Abstract:** Parents who are teachers find themselves in a unique position when children enter the formal schooling sector. A parent who is a teacher finds themselves in a unique position when their child enters the formal schooling sector. A parent who is a teacher and a parent of a child with impairments face even greater tension. They inhabit a para-professional world of advocacy, expert, and, often, primary care provider, in ever interchanging combinations. Underpinned by an auto-ethnographic methodology, this presentation offers reflective vignettes from the authors to interrogate the inclusive nature of pedagogies used in regular school settings. All four authors are qualified teachers, and three of the authors are parents of children with diagnosed dis/ability. Drawing on disability studies as a theoretical perspective to explore authors' experiences as parents through the education journey, the authors focus on the social model of disability to draw a

distinction between disability and impairment. This is important to the authors, as an impairment is an inherent physiological aspect of an individual, whereas, disability is recognised through the restrictions constructed through the rules, expectations, and attitudes of society. This presentation offers unique insights into parent perceptions and representations of the experiences of children with disability at school. Addressing a resounding silence in the literature, this presentation offers the opportunity for reflective awareness of personal experiences of inclusive education in regular schools from the perspective of parents who are teachers. It offers up thematic analysis of the common challenges faced by students with a dis/ability and the subsequent multi-factorial parental challenges faced by mothers who are also teachers. Ultimately, while this presentation illuminates the common challenges of parent-teachers of children with dis/abilities, we also highlight the persistence and positivity they bring to the schooling experience. There is a clear strength-based focus on children's agency that shines through the shared experiences in this presentation.

Dr Amy Cloughton is a lecturer in Disability Studies in Education. Her research passions include inclusive education, play-based learning and disability studies. She is currently working on Nature Play and Teacher/ Parent research topics.

Deborah Robertson has used mixed methodology to explore issues around diversity and inclusive education and this has resulted in national and international conference presentations and publications in teacher education-based journals. Deborah is now applying this methodological approach to explore broader issues within teacher education.

**Biography:**

Dr Sara Weuffen is a specialist of cross-cultural education, in particular, non-Indigenous Australian's engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Her work aims to critique dominant structures and ideologies, interrogate binary discourses, and push educational boundaries for emancipatory and success-orientated shared-learning outcomes and positive social progress

Kylie Nice has a strong commitment to understanding regional societies and communities and their needs and equity concerns around all facets of education. She has a strong commitment to exploring new teaching styles and delivery modes with consideration for equity across both the city and country. Kylie's interest in inclusive approaches for learners specifically with Autism Spectrum Disorder in early childhood and school environments.

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**Video  
Presentation 1****A glimpse into the multi-dimensionality of stuttering****Presenter:**

Dr Grant Meredith, School of Engineering, Information Technology & Physical Sciences, Federation University Australia

**Abstract:**

Often public perceptions of stuttering meander around a focus on the mechanics of speech and an attitude of "it cannot be that bad". But beyond the blocks, repetitions and prolonged sounds associated with the speech disorder are the diversity of its impact on an individual's quality of life from different angles and perspectives. This presentation will discuss a small selection of inter-connected peripheral findings from a survey of 102 Australian university students who stutter. During the course of this presentation there will be a focus on some interesting opinion paradoxes which when woven together present thought-

provoking narratives. This presentation will focus on the opinions of respondents in terms of their opinions of stuttering as being a “disability” or not. What emerges from this discussion is an alignment with a medical-orientated model of disability. We will then briefly consider the presented impacts on educational inclusion and attainment, access to healthcare and social anxiety.

**Biography:**

Grant is an academic within the School of Engineering, Information Technology and Physical Sciences and lectures in IT. He is a multidisciplinary researcher with interests in emerging technologies, educational equity and inclusion, and disability. He has presented keynote speeches internationally on topics of stuttering, research and educational experiences.

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**Presentation 3** “Having the Conversation” with teachers with impairments in professional roles

**Presenter:** Gerry Skene, School of Education, Federation University Australia

There appears to be a silence in the academic literature and policy space regarding the lived experience of teachers with impairments working in Australian education. In education settings, conversations with teachers with impairment about how they experience teaching and negotiate their working lives are likely to break down barriers and open gateways for inclusion of teachers with impairments in professional roles. Encouraging conversations with teachers with impairments, may be one step towards ‘unsilencing’ the advantages and challenges of having teachers with impairments in Australian education institutions.

**Abstract:** This presentation will discuss the topic of ‘having the conversation’ about impairment, drawing on preliminary evidence from the presenter’s PhD study into barriers and enablers for teachers with an impairment in Australian educational environments. This presentation employs a social model of disability lens, to examine the barriers and enablers for teachers with an impairment within Australian educational environments. Clandinin and Connelly’s Three-Dimensional Space Approach, employed as an analytical framework in the study, provides a foundational thematic platform for the illumination of conversations about impairment that, on the whole, have been perceived by the research participants as enabling conversations.

**Biography:** Gerry Skene is a PhD student in the School of Education at Federation University Australia. He is investigating, through narrative inquiry, the experiences of teachers who have identified as having an impairment. His study, through the lens of the social model of disability, seeks to recognise teachers with impairments as ‘culturally relevant educators’.

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**Presentation 4: Social equity, multiple discourses and COVID-19**

**Presenter:** Ana Larsen & Dr Sue Emmett, School of Access Education/Central Queensland University & Federation University Australia

**Abstract:** There are 6 official equity groups in the tertiary education sector in Australia. Those who fall within one of these groups are underrepresented in higher

education and less likely to complete their studies. Government policy and reports place high importance on improving social equity in higher education. Within this political context a number of different discourses have emerged in the literature. The authors have identified these as; meritocratic, economist or neo-liberal, social justice and human potential. This will be a 5-10 minute presentation introduces the audience to the discourses which are present within the literature around social equity in higher education. Following this short presentation, the audience will be invited to participate in a facilitated discussion about how COVID-19 may impact these discourses and how everyday practice can change or reinforce the discourses. This discussion should uncover some key insights and implications as we shape the future of social equity discourses in higher education.

Ana Larsen is a PhD student at Federation University who works in enabling education at Central Queensland University. Her research interests are equity in higher education, transition studies and enabling education.

**Biography:**

Dr Sue Emmett has been extensively involved in early childhood education and the translation of research into the practical environment for over thirty years. Sue is currently working as Senior Lecturer in Education at FedUni where she coordinates and teaches in Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Programs. Her research interests include the well-being of children and educators including trauma informed practice in early childhood contexts.

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**Presentation 5: Impact of COVID-19 on children in Education in India****Presenter:**

Anjali Rana & Dr Rachel Daniel, School of Education, Federation University Australia

**Abstract:**

Due to COVID-19, there has been immense changes in education from traditional face-to-face to virtual learning in India. Social justice, inclusiveness and diversity in education has been compromised significantly due to the lack of accessibility to education for all. This has caused numerous violation/breaches of child rights and school students are facing further complications that go beyond the deferment of classes. The achievements of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030, 'Quality Education' (goal 4) and 'Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' (goal 16) have been set back due to COVID-19 exacerbating the inequalities in education. : According to data released by the United Nations, the school closures are keeping 90% of all students out of school and remote learning remains out of reach for at least 500 million students, deepening the digital divide. The pandemic has further highlighted concerns for the safety of children in India who are affected by school closures. The safety issues relate to children's experiences in virtual environments as well as in their homes and communities. In the virtual realm, there is risk to digital safety, unhealthy use of technology, online extortion, and exploitation through child pornography. On the other hand, reports of child abuse cases have increased significantly in the past year. There is a rising concern of violation of child rights. Due to lockdown, life stressors have impacted the most vulnerable excessively, which has subsequently led to a sharp increase in child sexual abuse cases. The shutdown of schools has hindered teachers, friends, and counsellors in detecting child abuse. Additionally, there are restricted childcare and child protection services leaving many children defenceless. Perpetrators of child abuse tend to be people who are known to the child and that leaves the child in a double-marginalized position. These changes in the society in India

have magnified the existing short- and long-term challenges faced by susceptible children. Some studies have concluded that these changed and traumatic events could have short- and long-term effects on children. The paper will explore various factors impacting the Indian education system that aims for quality education in the long run.

Anjali Rana is an international PhD candidate at Federation University Australia with a background in Education and Psychology. Her research particularly aims to inform and analyse policies and curriculum. Her current PhD study is focusing on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in initial Teacher Education Institutes in Australia and India.

**Biography:**

Dr Rachel Daniel coordinates the English and Academic Preparation (EAP) program at the Berwick Campus of Federation University Australia and lectures in Academic Writing. She has been teaching in Australian universities since 2008 and has taught for over a decade in a variety of undergraduate programs in the Middle East and Asia. Her research interests are in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL/ELICOS) and literacy and numeracy in transition into higher education. Her PhD examined the factors impacting on English as a lingua franca in India.

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**Soapbox 1:****Pre-Service Teachers thoughts on rural disadvantage****Presenter:**

Ana Larsen, School of Access Education, Central Queensland University

**Abstract:**

There is a plethora of literature which discusses rural schools as disadvantaged. Rural areas are known to have higher rates of students belonging to the 6 equity groups as defined by the Australian government. This includes an overrepresentation of low socio-economic and Indigenous students. This talk reports on a study which examines the views of Pre-Service Teachers (PST's) after completing a placement in a rural school. Their views were somewhat unexpected as, unlike the literature, they viewed metropolitan schools as having more diversity and disadvantaged students. The findings point to a need to forge new pathways as we reframe the metropolitan understandings of rural schools.

**Biography:**

Ana Larsen is a PhD student at Federation University who works in enabling education at Central Queensland University. Her research interests are equity in higher education, transition studies and enabling education.

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