

## Quarterly Newsletter - April 2025



---

### In this newsletter:

- [Message from the Director](#)
  - [CERC Announcements](#)
  - [Celebrating CERC staff and members](#)
  - [Current Projects](#)
  - [Completed Projects](#)
  - [CERC Staff and Member Publication Updates](#)
- 

## Message from the Director

Dear External partners and CERC members,

We hope that you had a safe and happy Easter break, enjoying time with family and friends. CERC would like to welcome new members to the Centre. We are looking forward to working collaboratively with you in the near future.

CERC has a number of new projects pending which we hope will be successful so that we can continue to work with a variety of external partners to share learnings and to improve the lives of individuals and communities. I would like to commend the CERC research fellows and team members on their

outstanding dedication to our current projects which have produced some amazing results. Of particular note is the completion of the 1000 women national survey exploring topics that affect rural women around the country.

We are looking forward to continuing the innovative work that we are doing to build evaluation and research capacity, to support early career researchers and students, while showcasing the expertise of Federation Universities staff.

For a media release about supporting innovative research and evaluation, click the link: [Supporting innovative research and evaluation - Federation University Australia](#)

Professor Joanne Porter leads a multidisciplinary team of researchers and evaluators, working on projects with industry partners, government departments, agencies and community groups to shift thinking in evaluation research by empowering communities to grow through evidence-based innovation.



*Professor Joanne Porter*

---

Images not loading? [Download a copy of our newsletter from our website](#)

## CERC Announcements

### **Innovation Breakfast Series - Voices of the Regions: Insights from a Nation-Wide Study**

On 19 March 2025, Professor Joanne Porter was the Keynote Speaker for the Morwell Innovation Breakfast Series event with the title 'Voices of the Regions: Insights from a Nation-Wide Study'. In this event, the initial results of the 1000 Rural Women Survey conducted in partnership with CheekyMac Productions were presented.

[CheekyMac](#) is a local production company creating a video documentary regarding the lived experiences of 1000 rural women living in rural areas across Australia. To inform this documentary, CheekyMac are working with the Collaborative Evaluation & Research Centre (CERC) at Federation University, to conduct a survey of 1000 women across regional, rural, and remote areas of Australia, exploring a variety of topics such as gender inequality, rurality, employment, childcare, tall poppy syndrome, and gender bias.

The project aims to better understand how regional, rural and remote women experience these topics, including the benefits, barriers and areas for improvement. This study hopes to more broadly capture the essence of being a woman living in a rural environment.

A national validated survey was distributed within Australia based on Australian Bureau of Statistics population density data, and the aim of capturing a broad sample of 1000 women's experiences from across the country has been reached. The next step is data analysis and drawing conclusions.

Presentation and panel discussion about this project can be viewed [here](#), upon the access request.

If you would like to learn more about this project, please read the Media Release: [Research aims to shed light on challenges faced by rural women](#)



*Professor Joanna Porter presenting at the event*



*Professor Joanna Porter (far right) with Danielle McAlpine Johnson (far left) and Jewel Burchell-Robins (in the middle)*

### **Walhalla Goldfields Railway Evaluation**

CERC members have been busy over January, February and Easter Holidays riding the Walhalla Goldfields Railway and seeking feedback from patrons and volunteers about their experience working on and travelling this beautiful and historic rail journey. More than 750 visitor surveys have been completed so far, and twenty-seven follow-up interviews have been undertaken.

Information gathered will be used to understand the challenges and successes of operating a steam tourist train and assist in informing future development of this important Gippsland tourist attraction.

To learn more about this project, you can visit [the CERC website.](#)





*CERC team at Walhalla Station*

### **International students' visit from Indonesia**

CERC supported the visit of 10 international university students from Indonesia. The students were studying a variety of degrees from Dentistry, population health, accounting and management. CERC arranged and funded two field trips for the students with Professor Joanne Porter providing expertise, commentary and mentorship to the students as they were given an opportunity to be immersed in two current CERC projects. On the 31st of January, the students enjoyed a visit to Walhalla, riding on the heritage railway, visiting the historical post office and township, lunch at the local hotel, then a tour of the Walhalla Long tunnel. This was a wonderful way for the students to learn about rural and remote communities and the importance of tourism in the region. The students enjoyed their visit to Warrigunya, which had its grand opening on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February. Warrigunya is a housing solution for Aboriginal men post-incarceration at Fullum Correctional Facility. The students were able to participate in a traditional smoking ceremony and were able to speak with Aboriginal elders.



*International students from Indonesia in Walhalla*

## **Remote Health solutions for isolated Far East Gippsland Communities**

CERC has recently published the article titled "*Remote health solutions in Far East Gippsland: a mixed-methods, co-designed evaluation of health service availability in isolated communities*" in the journal *Rural and Remote Health*. The paper presents the findings from the project. Working in partnership with the Deddick Valley Isolated Community Group and in collaboration with the Errinundra to Snowy Community Recovery Committee, CERC evaluated and validated existing data and new information in support of an appropriate health service model for the Errinundra to Snowy District of Far East Gippsland.

Citation: Porter J.E., Simic, M.R., Cruz, N., Prokopiv, V. & McIlroy, E. (2025). Remote health solutions in Far East Gippsland: a mixed-methods, co-designed evaluation of health service availability in isolated communities. *Rural and Remote Health*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.22605/RRH8506>

[Building Healthy and Resilient Communities Through Service Equity Project Report](#)

[Media Release](#) about the article and project

## **Professional Development Sessions**

CERC has offered many professional development online sessions during the past several months. Many of these sessions have been recorded. If you have not been able to attend any of the sessions below and would like to view the recording, please contact the team via the CERC email address - [cerc@federation.edu.au](mailto:cerc@federation.edu.au).

- Introduction to Covidence

- Grant Budget and Funding Forms
- Quantitative Report Writing
- Ethical participant recruitment, IP and sharing data
- Infographics - CANVA - info session
- Mentimeter workshop
- Virtual Reality and Pain
- Research Integrity Presentation
- Developing International Research Collaboration
- Publishing with Open Access
- Bibliometric analysis

## **Seed Grants**

In June each year, CERC aims to provide members with an opportunity to apply for a Seed Grant to the value of \$5000. The purpose of the Seed Grant is to stimulate research projects that may enhance early-career researchers' portfolios, benefit communities we work with and meet the values of CERC. The Seed Grants are aimed at early-career researchers. Funds can be used for open-access publication, dissemination, research assistance, data collection and analysis, or the purchase of research-related equipment.

If you are interested in applying for a Seed Grant this year, please submit your application by emailing Joanne Porter at [cerc@federation.edu.au](mailto:cerc@federation.edu.au). The closing date is Friday, the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, to commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 till 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026. The Seed Grant template can be found [here](#). If you would like a Word version of this document, please email to [cerc@federation.edu.au](mailto:cerc@federation.edu.au) for a copy.

## **Staff Updates**

- *Dr Megan Simic*

We're excited to share that Dr Megan Simic has returned from maternity leave! Megan is now working two days a week, and we're thrilled to have her back on the team. Please join us in welcoming her as she settles back into her role!

- *Dr Anju Sreeram*

Dr Anju Sreeram will be joining the CERC team from the 5<sup>th</sup> of May till the end of the year in a secondment position from the Institute of Health and Wellbeing. Anju has expertise in Mental health research and mixed-methods. She will be a welcome addition to the CERC team over the next 8 months.





*Dr Anju Sreeram*

## **Celebrating CERC staff and members**

### **HDR news/success**

#### **Graduation**

- *Dr Megan Simic*



*Dr Megan Simic receiving the PhD Certificate during the graduation ceremony*

- *Dr Maryam Ghasemi*



*Dr Maryam Ghasemi with Professor Wendy Cross*

### **Successful Confirmation of Candidature (CoC)**

*Darren Thomas*

- **Project title:** Exploring the Development, Implementation and Effectiveness of Secondary School Sports Academies.

*Sahaya Jesto*

- **Project title:** Developing and co-designing a novel education intervention to enhance nurses' knowledge, attitudes, and perceived experiences in managing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia in aged mental health and aged care settings: A mixed methods study

*Danielle Noble*

- **Project title:** Registered Nurses perceptions of new graduates nurses being workplace ready.

*Jamie Borg*

- **Project title:** Wheeled mobility device stability on public buses using a semi-active containment system.

*Pritimoy Das*



- **Project title:** Common mental health issues experienced by migrants in Australia: a mixed method study.

*Parul Parul*

- **Project title:** Investigating substance use disorders and psychological intervention.

### **PhD Submission for Examination**

*Bonnie Watt (Das Vas)*

- **Project title:** Improving inclusion on the Bus: The Better Transport Insensitivity for All Passengers (Better Trip) project.

*Hafiz Haris Ahmad*

- **Project title:** The Immunogenic and Cognitive Impact of the Use of Probiotic Among Children in Australian Childcare Centres: A Double-Blind Randomised Controlled Trial.

### **Conference acceptance and presentations**

*Christine Trotman*

- presented at the 8th Global Public Health Conference, GLOBEHEAL 2025, and was awarded for Best Student Presentation, Bangkok, Thailand.

*Dr Emma Siesmaa*

- accepted for oral presentation at VIC/TAS 2025 Regional Conference, Melbourne, Australia.

*Natalie Bransgrove*

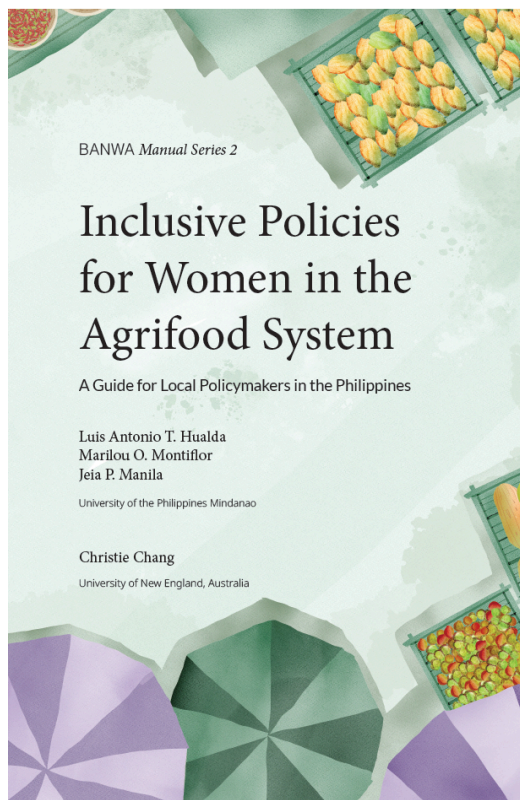
- accepted for oral presentation at an online Webinar with the Australian College of Nursing.

### **Other Achievements**

- *Luis Antonio T. Hualda*

Luis Hualda, a CERC Research fellow, has recently published a book, "Inclusive Policies for Women in the Agrifood System". The book was a result of

the research project “Enabling Inclusive Policies to Enhance Women’s Roles in Developing Resilient Food and Agriculture Systems in the Philippines”, conducted between September 2020 to August 2021. The project was implemented in partnership with the University of New England and funded by the Australian Centre of International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) under the Alumni Research Support Facility (ARSF).



*The book "Inclusive Policies for Women in the Agrifood System" by Luis Antonio T. Hualda*

---

## [Current Projects](#)

### **Physical Literacy Enriched Environmental Design (PLEED) in the Latrobe Valley**

CERC, in partnership with the [Latrobe Health Assembly \(LHA\)](#) and the Physical Literacy Enriched Environmental Design (PLEED) group, aims to investigate how physical literacy enriched design can improve physical literacy outcomes in the Latrobe Valley. The collaborative action research and evaluation project will engage with key stakeholders and partners to support the influence of the design of local parks and play spaces in line with physical literacy enriched environment design criteria.

The Mathison Park in Churchill will be redesigned based on PLEED principles. The CERC team will work in partnership with [LHA](#) and PLEED group, [Latrobe](#)

[City Council \(LCC\)](#), Mathison Park Advisory Committee, and LCC Recreation Planning Team to collect and analyse data on park usage before and after the redesign.



---

## Creating Inclusive Work Environments through Leadership and Management Innovations

The Collaborative Evaluation & Research Centre (CERC), in partnership with the [Victorian Skills Authority \(VIC\)](#) and [Federation TAFE](#), aims to create inclusive work environments in the construction and manufacturing sectors by introducing leadership and management innovations. The output of this project is expected to contribute to addressing challenges in these sectors related to attraction, retention, and completion of apprenticeships.

The leadership and management innovations will be developed through a co-design process with stakeholders of the construction and manufacturing sectors, registered training organisations, employees and their associations, and the government. The innovations will be a package of leadership and management learning materials that will be delivered in formal learning settings.



## [Completed Projects](#)

### Regional Air mobility Surrogate Trials (RAST)

The **Regional air mobility Surrogate Trials (RAST)** being conducted in the Latrobe City region is exploring Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) regional applications.

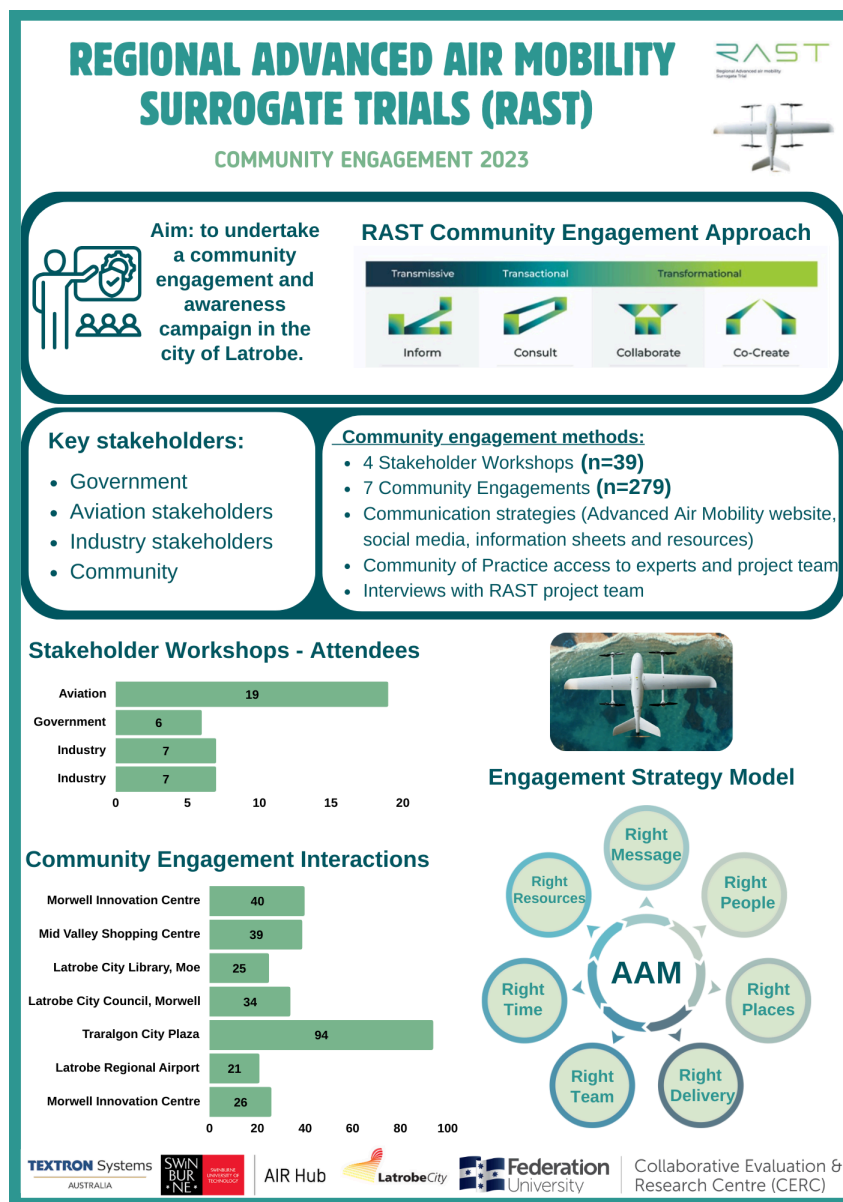
In partnership with [Latrobe City Council](#), [Aerostructures Innovation Research Hub \(AIR Hub\)](#), [Swinburne University of Technology](#), [Textron Systems Australia \(TSA\)](#) and [Invest Victoria](#), CERC was coordinating the community engagement aspect of the project. This included facilitating workshops and events within the Latrobe Valley, informing communities of the innovative Advanced Air Mobility opportunity and consulting with government, industry and aviation stakeholder networks, measuring impact, addressing concerns and answering questions.

For more information about RAST, please visit the links below:

[RAST Advanced Air Mobility Website](#)

[Drone trial moves closer to take off news article](#)

[ABC Victoria radio interview on Advanced Air Mobility](#)



*Project infographic*

---

## CERC Staff and Member Publication Updates

### CERC Publications:

CERC has recently had a number of papers published in a range of academic journals:

**Porter, J.E.** Dabkowski, E. Smith, W. Fernando, A. Seaward, L. (2025). An analysis of systemic incident investigation methodologies applied in serious injury or fatality events: A rapid systematic review. *Public Health in Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhip.2025.100598>

**Porter J.E., Simic, M.R.,** Cruz, N., Prokopiv, V. & McIlroy, E. (2025). Remote health solutions in Far East Gippsland: a mixed-methods, co-designed evaluation of health service availability in isolated communities. *Rural and Remote Health*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.22605/RRH8506>

**de Vent, K., Porter, J. E., & Larkins, J.** (2025). Factors Associated with Length of Stay and Readmission Rates for Older Hospital in the Home Patients: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Aging and Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08982643251329425>

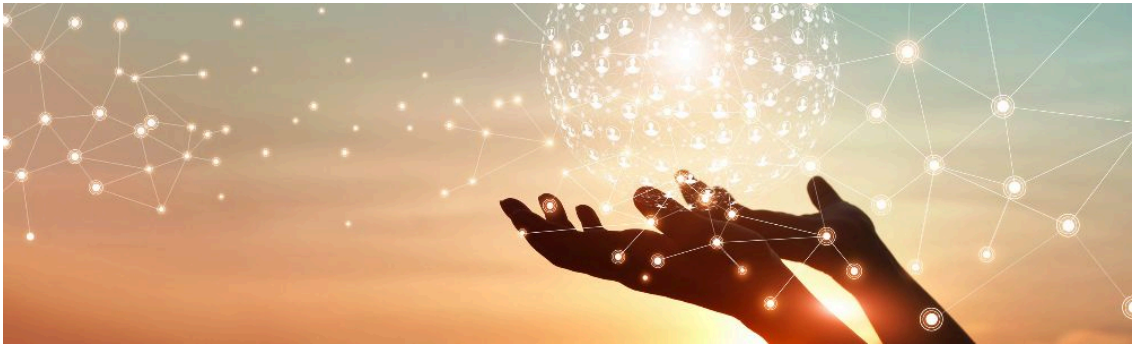
### CERC Staff Publications:

**Simic, M.R.,** Porter, J. E., Peck, B. & Mesagno, C. (2024). It's only a matter of time. Lessons learnt and recommendations from COVID-19 to inform emergency nursing for future pandemics: An integrated literature review. *Australasian Emergency Care*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.auec.2024.10.004>

**View our Publications**

---





**Become a CERC member**

## **About us**

The Collaborative Evaluation & Research Centre (CERC) works in partnership to build evaluation capacity, research and expertise. CERC understands the value of listening to the community and has the ability to deliver timely, rigorous and sustainable evaluations tailored to the needs of a wide variety of organisations. CERC provides training, workshops and mentoring to build capacity to enable organisations to conduct meaningful evaluations.

**Visit our website**

---

**Contact us:**

Email: [cerc@federation.edu.au](mailto:cerc@federation.edu.au)

Phone: +61 03 5122 6508

**Our mailing address is:**

Collaborative Evaluation & Research Centre

Federation University, Gippsland Campus

PO Box 3191

Gippsland Mail Centre VIC 3841

CRICOS Provider No. 00103D | RTO Code 4909

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

**Federation University Australia** acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where its campuses are located, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations Peoples.

This message and its contents are confidential. If you received this message in error, do not use or rely upon it. Instead, please inform the sender and delete it.

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

CERC · Federation Uni Gippsland · 33 Northways Rd · CHURCHILL, VIC 3842 · Australia

