






HEAL 2025 Conference

“Weaving Diverse Knowledges into Climate
Action for Better Health Outcomes”



HEAL

Healthy Environments And Lives (HEAL) 2025 – Conference Scientific Committee and Awards Review Panel

Name	Bio
 Associate Professor Alex Larcombe Telethon Kids Institute	Associate Professor Alex Larcombe is Head of the Respiratory Environmental Health team at the Telethon Kids Institute and a Senior Research Fellow at the Wal-yan Respiratory Research Centre. He is also an Associate Professor in the School of Population Health at Curtin University. His research investigates the physiological and developmental impacts of early-life exposure to environmental insults—including allergens, respiratory viruses, pollutants (e.g. tobacco smoke, e-cigarettes, diesel exhaust), and climate change. He develops models of respiratory dysfunction to identify disease mechanisms and conducts interventional studies aimed at improving lung health outcomes for children and families.
 Associate Professor Caitlyn Wyrwoll University of Western Australia	Dr. Caitlin Wyrwoll is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Human Sciences at the University of Western Australia. After completing her PhD at UWA, she undertook postdoctoral research at the Queen's Medical Research Institute in Edinburgh. She now leads her own research group at UWA. Her work uses preclinical and human data to explore how early life environments, including climate change, affect reproductive health—focusing on maternal health, pregnancy, and long-term outcomes for children and adults.
 Dr Cong Tuan Pham Griffith Institute	Dr Cong Tuan Pham is a Research Fellow at the Griffith Institute, School of Medicine and Dentistry, Griffith University. He contributes to the E-Dengue project, developing digital prediction tools for dengue prevention in Vietnam. With over 15 years of public health experience, his expertise spans global health security, climate change and health, occupational health, maternal and child health, and health promotion. He previously worked with FHI 360 on regional health and climate initiatives and lectured at Hanoi University of Public Health. Dr Pham holds a PhD in Public Health from Griffith University and teaches in the Master of Public Health program.



Dr Dharani Sabha
University of Canberra

Dr Dharani Sabha is the HEAL Senior Centre Coordinator at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. She brings a PhD and diverse experience in clean energy, research management, and strategic leadership. At HEAL, she leads centre operations, supports research translation, and coordinates national initiatives including the Health Impact Forum, Future Leaders School, and Community of Practice. At ANU, she held different positions including impact and engagement officer and program manager of the ANU Zero-Carbon Energy for the Asia-Pacific initiative. She was a senior scientist at Nanyang Technological University and at ARENA she worked as a knowledge sharing officer for R&D projects and other large scale renewable energy projects deployed across Australia. Her work bridges science, research translation, and stakeholder engagement for sustainable, equitable futures.



Dr Enembe Okokon
University of Canberra

Dr Enembe Okokon is a Research Fellow in Environmental and Occupational Health at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. A Nigerian physician, he holds a PhD in Environmental Epidemiology and an MSc in Environmental Health Risk Assessment from the University of Eastern Finland. His research focuses on air pollution, noise epidemiology, and climate-related health risks in urban populations. He has held academic and clinical roles in Nigeria and Finland, including at the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. His expertise includes exposure assessment, statistical modelling, and research synthesis.



Professor Erica Donner
University of South Australia

Professor Erica Donner is an environmental scientist specializing in chemical and microbiological risk assessment, particularly in wastewater, recycled water, irrigation, food systems, and wildlife habitats. Her research explores how pollution drives antimicrobial resistance (AMR) by linking chemical selective pressure to microbial ecology. She is Director of Industry Partnerships, co-leads the One Health Science stream for the OUTBREAK consortium, and is a Chief Investigator in the international JPI AMR WAWES network.



Dr Gopika Indu
University of Canberra

Gopika Indu is a Research Fellow at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra, specialising in climate change, air quality, and public health. Her previous work focused on indoor air quality in rural Indian households using biomass fuels, physico-chemical characterisation of pollutants and the development of air pollution control technologies. She has advanced research on solar energy adoption to improve health, energy security, and air quality in rural communities. Currently, she leads projects on climate adaptation to wildfire smoke in Southeast Asia and Australia, with interests spanning air pollution, clean energy systems, and sustainable public health solutions in a changing climate.



Dr Hira Fatima
University of Canberra

Dr Hira Fatima is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. She specialises in climate change and health, environmental epidemiology, and maternal and child health. Her research focuses on the health impacts of extreme weather, air pollution, and environmental stressors, using advanced statistical and geospatial methods. She holds a PhD in Public Health from the University of Adelaide and collaborates with interdisciplinary teams to inform evidence-based interventions and climate adaptation strategies. Dr Fatima is committed to promoting health equity and resilience in vulnerable populations through policy-relevant research and community-engaged solutions.



Associate Professor Itismita
Mohanty
University of Canberra

Associate Professor Itismita Mohanty is a health economist at the Health Research Institute and an affiliate of the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. She holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Sydney and has over 15 years of experience in health services research, policy evaluation, and advanced statistical modelling. Her work spans Australia and India, focusing on public health systems, access to care, and socioeconomic determinants of health. She collaborates with government, industry, and community partners, and serves as a consultant to Geoscience Australia on disaster risk modelling. Her research informs policy and contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



Mr Jonathan Ward,
University of Canberra

Mr Jonathan Ward is the Research Services Manager for the Faculty of Health at the University of Canberra, supporting research development and strategic partnerships across the HEAL Global Research Centre. With a background in photonics engineering and chemistry, he brings over seven years of experience in health research management, business development, and stakeholder engagement. Jonathan has held roles at the Australian National University and contributes to national advisory groups, including the NHMRC-MRFF Consumer Advisory Group. He is committed to inclusive innovation and evidence-based service delivery, and is an active member of the LGBTQIA+ and disability communities.



Dr Jingyi Shao
University of Canberra

Jingyi is a research fellow in Environmental Health and Climate Risk Assessment in Faculty of Health, University of Canberra. She is a member of the Healthy Environments and Lives (HEAL) National Research Network. Her PhD research focused on the long-term effects of early life exposure to fire smoke emissions on children's health. She is currently participating in a project evaluating the impacts of active travel infrastructures on travel habits, public health and the environment. Her research interests are bushfires, extreme weather, air pollution and public health under the context of climate change.



Dr Kinley Wangdi
University of Canberra

Dr Kinley Wangdi is a medically trained spatial epidemiologist and NHMRC Emerging Leadership Fellow at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. With over 15 years of experience in clinical practice and public health research, his work focuses on climate-sensitive infectious and chronic diseases, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. He applies Bayesian and spatial methodologies to study disease transmission and environmental health impacts. Dr Wangdi has collaborated with WHO, DFAT, and APMEN, and led projects across Bhutan, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. He has authored over 125 publications and actively translates research into policy through regional health ministries.



Ms Kris Vine

University Centre for Rural Health

Kris Vine BSc/BA (USyd) MPH (UNSW) is a Research Fellow at the University Centre for Rural Health with a background in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care (PHC) service delivery and research. A non-Indigenous ally, Kris is currently working as the project manager for the Healing Country project, an Aboriginal-led project developing digital data-story maps and supporting communities design and implement local climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. She has worked across sectors in Indigenous primary health care and social justice, including with not-for-profits and Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations. She is a PhD candidate with the University of Sydney looking at community-led evaluation approaches to improve the overall health and wellbeing outcomes of Aboriginal communities and Country in response to local climate challenges



Ms Lindsay Morgan

University of Canberra

Lindsay is the Knowledge Exchange Coordinator at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra, where she aims to translate the outcomes and impacts of the HEAL Network's research to governments, organisations and the general public. For the last 15 years she has worked for the Australian Federal Government in their Research Division and holds a Bachelor's degree in Biology, with Honours, from the Australian National University.



Dr Luise Kazda

University of Canberra |
Sydney School of Public Health

Luise is an early career Research Fellow in the Health Systems Resilience and Sustainability Theme of the HEAL National Research Network and at the Sydney School of Public Health. She is a member of Wiser Healthcare and of Asthma Australia's National Implementation Committee for Quality and Sustainable Asthma-care Roadmap. Her research explores ways to make health systems more sustainable whilst improving quality of care and reducing harms. Luise investigates approaches to decarbonise healthcare through "green care" (low carbon alternatives) and "lean care" (reducing low value care), specifically in areas of clinical carbon hotspots.



Dr Manoj Bhatta
Menzies School of Health
Research

Manoj Bhatta is a HEAL Postdoctoral Researcher at the Menzies School of Health Research in Alice Springs. He is part of the HEAL Rural and Remote Health Theme and the NT Communities of Practice. He has a multidisciplinary background, conducting socio-ecological research using mixed-method research approaches, with a current focus on climate change and environmental health. His research examines the health impacts of climate change on remote populations and involves working collaboratively with remote communities to co-design innovative adaptation and mitigation solutions.



Dr Mira Cooper
University of South Australia

Mira Cooper is a Research Associate in UniSA STEM, University of South Australia. Her research focuses on environmental microbiology and environmental health, with a particular interest in water quality. She is currently undertaking an NHMRC-funded postdoctoral fellowship with the Healthy Environments and Lives (HEAL) network, where she works on rainwater and wastewater projects. Mira has a strong background in environmental health, having worked with the Victorian Department of Health on the statewide SARS-CoV-2 wastewater surveillance program. She completed her PhD at Flinders University, where she investigated human zoonotic parasites, advocating for One Health and environmental health approaches to improve disease control and prevention.



Professor Nanthi Bolan
University of Western
Australia

Professor Nanthi Bolan is a soil scientist at the University of Western Australia, specialising in environmental chemistry, soil health, and contamination remediation. With a PhD in Soil Science from UWA, he has held academic leadership roles in New Zealand and Australia, including Dean of Graduate Studies at UniSA and Program Leader at CRC CARE. His research spans nutrient cycling, soil amendments, greenhouse gas emissions, and sustainable agriculture. A Fellow of multiple soil science societies, he has published over 450 papers and received awards for research excellence and supervision. He leads the Food, Soil & Water Security theme within the HEAL Network.



Professor Nasser Bhageri
University of Canberra

Professor Nasser Bagheri is Director of the Visual and Decision Analytics (VIDEA) and Geo-Health Labs at the University of Canberra, and a leading expert in spatial epidemiology and health services research. His work focuses on chronic disease risk assessment—particularly dementia, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and mental health—using big data and spatial modelling. He has developed decision-support tools for complex health systems and led the Integrated Atlas of Dementia Care in the ACT. A recipient of an ARC DECRA Fellowship, Professor Bagheri's research informs policy through mapping health care ecosystems and quantifying the impact of lifestyle and built environments on health.



Dr Nigel Goodman
University of Canberra

Dr. Nigel Goodman is a Senior Research Fellow in Air Quality and Health at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. An expert in reducing exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollution, he is a member of the HEAL National Research Network and Centre for Safe Air. His research addresses the health impacts of air pollution linked to environmental change and is supported by NESP, NHMRC, state governments, and philanthropic agencies.



Dr Paire Somboonsin
University of Canberra

Dr Paire Somboonsin is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. Her research focuses on the health impacts of environmental risk factors, particularly pollution-related mortality and morbidity in the Asia-Pacific region. With a background in sociology, anthropology, and demography, she specialises in quantitative analysis and demographic modelling. Paire holds a PhD in Demography from the Australian National University, where she also contributed to research on air pollution and public health. Her work aims to inform policy and improve population health through data-driven insights into climate change, environmental health, and social equity.



Dr Paul Barnes
Griffith University

Dr Paul Barnes is a HEAL Senior Research, Policy and Practice Fellow at the Centre for Environment & Population Health, School of Medicine and Dentistry. With over 28 years of experience in emergency and risk management across academia and government, his expertise spans disaster risk reduction, institutional resilience to climate impacts, asymmetric threat assessment (One Health and biosecurity), and national all-hazards risk strategies. He holds a degree in Environmental Health Sciences and a PhD focused on risk and occupational health & safety in the Queensland Fire & Rescue Service. His work bridges policy, practice, and research for resilient systems.



Professor Priya Rajagopalan
RMIT

Professor Priya Rajagopalan is Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) in the School of Property, Construction and Project Management at RMIT University, and Director of the Post Carbon Research Centre. A building scientist with expertise in energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality, and urban climatology, she leads multidisciplinary research on sustainable built environments and climate adaptation. Her work spans building performance simulation, urban heat island mitigation, and citizen science in microclimate monitoring. She teaches in the Master of Energy Efficient and Sustainable Building program and is President of the Architectural Science Association (ANZAScA).



Dr Rishu Thakur
Menzies School of Health
Research

Rishu Thakur is a postdoctoral researcher with the Climate Change Research Team at Menzies School of Health Research in Central Australia. She has a background in soil microbiology and environmental health, with expertise in soil-plant-microbe interactions and the role of soil rhizobacteria in improving crop resilience. Her current research focuses on monitoring environmental health using low-cost sensors and citizen science approaches to improve climate resilience in remote Australia.



Ro coordinates the HRI's flagship Master of Public Health program. She has significant experience and expertise at the interface between health, biodiversity, environmental sustainability, and food production, often referred to as One Health, Planetary Health and, or Ecological Public Health. Her research focuses on evidence synthesis for policy, education and addressing barriers to implementation of place-based solutions. Current activities include coordinating

Associate Professor Ro
McFarlane
University of Canberra



Ms Sharna Motlap
Charles Darwin University

Health within the Nexus Assessment for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and addressing healthy and sustainable food system transition as co-lead of the Future of Food in the Capital Region network.

Sharna is a proud Indigenous woman from the Mbabaram tribe of Queensland, and from Hammond Island of the Torres Strait. She is a nutritionist and Research Fellow at Northern Institute. Sharna has gained numerous awards including the New Colombo Plan scholarship. Sharna is currently completing a double degree studying a Master of Public Health and Master of Health Research with Menzies School of Health Research, where she was awarded the prestigious 'Menzies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Postgraduate Coursework Scholarship'. Her research interest includes nutrition, climate change, public health, and Indigenous health.



Prof Sotiris Vardoulakis
University of Canberra

Professor Sotiris Vardoulakis is Director of the HEAL Global Research Centre, HEAL National Research Network and Professor of Environmental Public Health at the University of Canberra. He has held senior roles at Public Health England, ANU, and the Institute of Occupational Medicine. He is also Honorary Professor at the University of Exeter and Adjunct Professor at IIT Madras. For over 25 years, he has advised governments and global organisations on climate change, air pollution, and public health, with research spanning environmental monitoring, modelling, epidemiology, and policy across multiple continents.



Associate Supriya Mathew
Menzies School of Health
Research

Supriya Mathew is an environmental health researcher leading the climate change research program at Menzies. She currently co-leads the Rural and Remote health theme and the Northern Territory Community of Practice of the HEAL National Research Network. Her research team focuses on improving climate resilience in remote Australia through citizen scientist-led research data collection, collation of lived experiences of residents of remote Australia and co-designing of adaptation and mitigation solutions with remote residents and stakeholders.



Dr Tapas Mazumder
Univeristy of Canberra

Dr Tapas Mazumder is a Research Fellow at the HEAL Global Research Centre and PhD candidate at the Health Research Institute, University of Canberra. He holds an MPH from BRAC University, Bangladesh, and has over six years of experience in public health research with BRAC University and icddr,b. His expertise spans health systems strengthening, RMNCAH, NCDs, eHealth, and climate-resilient health systems. Tapas has published over 18 peer-reviewed papers and contributed to national and international projects on maternal and child health, health equity, and COVID-19 response. He also teaches global health and is active in community engagement and policy translation.



Professor Thava Palanisami
University of Newcastle

A/Prof. Thava Palanisami is an Associate Professor at the University of Newcastle's School of Engineering. His research challenged the assumption that contaminants occur singly, showing that chemical mixtures—like PAHs and metals—are more toxic and bioavailable. He led Australia's first field-level implementation of a Risk-Based Land Management approach for contaminated sites, influencing national risk assessment and remediation practices.



Dr Timothy Chaston
University of Canberra

Dr Timothy Chaston is a Senior Research Fellow in Environmental Health Impact Assessment at the HEAL Global Research Centre, University of Canberra. His work focuses on modelling the public health impacts of environmental change, including current and future climate scenarios. He develops tools for tracking human health and vulnerability and contributes to policy development at the intersection of public health, social equity, and environmental health economics. Dr Chaston is a member of the International Network on Public Health and Environment Tracking (INPHET) and the Centre for Safe Air. His expertise includes scenario modelling, emissions analysis, and health impact assessments.



Dr Tom Swan
University of Sydney

Tom's scientific curiosity was sparked by the global threat of mosquitoes, leading him to work across cultures to develop innovative mosquito control strategies that reduce disease burden. His research has evolved to address broader challenges including soil, food, and water security, land rehabilitation, and sustainable agriculture. Tom is passionate about participatory action research, especially with Aboriginal and Indigenous communities, to drive meaningful change. He values interdisciplinary approaches, integrating ecology, entomology, and genomics to deliver practical solutions. His work bridges science, community engagement, and education to tackle pressing environmental and public health issues.



Associate Professor Veronica
Matthews
University of Sydney

Associate Professor Veronica Matthews is a health systems researcher from the Quandamooka community (Minjerribah/North Stradbroke Island), based at the University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney. She co-leads the CRE-STRIDE network, focusing on strengthening Indigenous health care systems through community-based participatory research, systems thinking, and quality improvement. With over 15 years of experience across policy, program delivery, and research, her work integrates environmental health, social and emotional wellbeing, and connection to Country. She holds a PhD in environmental toxicology and is a Wingara Mura Leadership Fellow. Her research champions Indigenous methodologies and self-governance for healthy Country and communities.



Mr Vincent Learnihan
University of Canberra

Mr Vincent Learnihan is a Senior Research Specialist at the Health Research Institute, University of Canberra, and a researcher with the HEAL Global Research Centre. His expertise lies in spatial epidemiology and the influence of urban environments on human health. He applies Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to study built environment factors, transportation, and public health outcomes. Vincent has led and contributed to large-scale research projects involving academic, government, and private stakeholders, including the National Liveability Study and ACT Health-funded spatial analyses of hospital separations. His work supports policy development through spatial modelling, liveability indicators, and health equity research.

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