Introduction from the Director

The end of 2015 was very different from the beginning when the WWRG and the Business School co-hosted a Panel for International Women’s Day (IWD) optimistically entitled ‘Let’s not wait another 20 years!’ for gender equality. In 2014 there were still hopes that Australia’s policy focus on increasing labour force participation, particularly of women of childbearing age and older, would lead to policy innovations. This was to prove too hopeful in the light of the year’s developments which included an announcement to change the statutory paid parental leave (PPL) scheme. Introduced in 2011, this is one of the most successful initiatives in recent years to facilitate mothers’ workforce participation. The proposed cutbacks to the scheme (announced on Mothers’ Day 2015 and revised later in the year) were particularly surprising given the (then Abbott) Government’s election commitments to improve the scheme (see 2014 Annual Report).

In this volatile policy context, the work of the Women & Work Research Group (WWRG) has remained highly relevant. It has highlighted the research evidence the positive effect the PPL scheme has had on women’s workforce engagement and provided research on the likely adverse impacts of the cuts, contributing a sound academic basis for opposing the proposed alterations. I hope that 2016 may bring some positive changes, in research and policy formation regarding women and work.

The WWRG in 2015

As the leading academic research group on women and work in Australia, the WWRG also provides advice and consultancy to those in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors on many issues relating to women’s working lives. WWRG members are also involved in international academic research, currently a Worldwide Universities Network project on flexible careers over the life course. The WWRG has continued its popular seminar and workshop events as described below. It has provided a platform for the dissemination of evidence informed policy development in many areas relating to women, work and family, and its work continues to have a substantial impact in the policy arena. This is demonstrated by the many...
research reports and submissions prepared by members this year (see in other sections of the Annual Review) and by the frequency with which members are requested to provide comments to the media or give talks to employers, unions and professional groups. Parental leave and childcare provision have been the focus of much work this year, but other areas examined have included women’s retirement incomes and the impact on working women of the workplace relations system and proposed changes to it. The WWRG has also actively engaged on issues relating to working women experiencing domestic violence (see below).

The WWRG continues to strengthen its collaborations across faculties in the University and beyond. Within the University of Sydney the WWRG has a close working relationship with the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre, with the Gender and Cultural Studies Department (in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences) and with the US Studies Centre. Last year, I mentioned the significant University of Sydney grant to study women, work and care policy in the Asia-Pacific which the WWRG won with other colleagues from across the University. As planned, a research workshop was held with the grant, involving national and international leading and early career academics who had agreed to contribute to the proposed edited book of essays on women, work and care in the Asia-Pacific. The book, a first for drawing together contributions on this topic from developed and developing economies, will be published by Routledge in 2016.

Externally, the WWRG continues to work closely with the Work + Family Policy Roundtable (W+FPRRT) comprising 52 researchers from 16 universities and research institutions with expertise on work, care and family policy. The WWRG hosts the website for the W+FPRRT and made several submissions to Senate inquiries jointly with it this year. The WWRG’s close association with the W+FPRRT assists its policy and academic engagement. The WWRG maintains close links to other relevant research clusters in leading tertiary institutions such as the Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) at the University of Queensland and the Women in Economic and Social Research (WiSER) in the Curtin Business School. Additionally WWRG international orientation continues to grow. It has strong international links to Europe, the United States and Asia, with a significant number of associated members from overseas academic institutions. Excellent links include ones with a number of these including Manchester and Leeds Business Schools and Queen Mary, University of London in the UK, Michigan State University and MIT in the US, Stockholm University in Sweden and Delhi School of Economics, in India.

This year, the WWRG has engaged in further work around the rights at work of women experiencing domestic violence. Most women experiencing such violence are in paid employment. Enabling women to stay in their jobs assists them in avoiding being trapped in a violent relationship or leaving and falling into poverty. Awards and enterprise agreements are beginning to include paid domestic violence leave to help employees to manage the impact of the violence such as the need to attend medical and legal appointments. Clauses may also include a range of other measures for example creating an enforceable right for an employee experiencing domestic violence to seek flexible working arrangements and other workplace assistance which will keep them safe. The WWRG is delighted to be able to welcome as a Research Affiliate, Ludo McFerran who instigated and developed the concept of such clauses and their spread. Ludo is at the forefront of international networks promoting the recognition of rights at work for those experiencing domestic violence in international treaties.

National policy developments

As this review demonstrates, this has been a very active year for the WWRG. The opportunities for research in 2016 also look very promising with research on women’s workforce participation and women in non-traditional jobs being negotiated. I want to end by thanking those who assist so much in making our work possible within the University, the administrative staff in Work and Organisational Studies, the staff in the Business School web services, the staff at the Forum Restaurant in the Darlington Centre and last but not least the University Printing service.

Marian Baird
Director, The Women and Work Research Group
Professor of Gender and Employment Relations,
The University of Sydney Business School
Aims of the Women and Work Research Group

Our aims

- To provide a scholarly environment in which a community of enquiry on all aspects of women, work, employment, family and community is created.
- To provide the bridge between academic work and policy work so as to provide the research for the development of evidence informed policy in matters pertaining to women, work and family.
- To provide a focal point for collaboration with established and emerging scholars in the field, and with research centres with similar interests in Australia and internationally.
- To focus on women in leadership in business, the not-for-profit and public sectors.

Events in 2015

Visiting Scholars

The WWRG was fortunate to host three international visiting scholars in 2015. Professor Geraldine Healy from the United Kingdom visited in the early part of the year. Professor Healy is a regular visitor to the WWRG cementing ongoing strong links with the Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity (CRED), Queen Mary, University of London. She is Professor of Employment Relations, and has been involved in a large number of research projects, sponsored by the ESRC, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the European Commission and the British Trades Union Congress amongst others. Her research work and publications have covered the intersectional nature of discrimination and disadvantage, inequality regimes, individualism and collectivism, the gender pay gap and the gap between equality and diversity policies and practices.

Agnieszka Althaber PhD candidate Freie Universität Berlin, Researcher in the project group National Educational Panel Study (NEPS) at the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre, visited for several months, contributing to many WWRG activities. Her PhD research is examining the effects of occupational contexts and household characteristics on men’s transitions into part-time employment.

Finally, Dr Susan Milner visited. Susan is a Reader in European Politics, University of Bath. Her research interests lie in the field of employment relations and employment and social policy, at European Union level and in its member states. Her research into work-family policies and practices in western Europe includes examining fathers’ involvement in care.
Gender representation and the pay gap in business schools of UK ‘elite’ universities
Dr Geraldine Healy, Professor of Employment Relations & Director of the Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity (CRED), Queen Mary, University of London gave a presentation built on earlier work identifying the vertical and horizontal segregation in the academic labour market. It investigated the nature of gender segregation in Business Schools in UK elite universities and the consequences with respect to pay and promotion.

The Effects of Occupational Contexts and Household Characteristics on Men’s Transitions into Part-Time Employment.
In her seminar, Agnieszka Althaber PhD candidate Freie Universität Berlin and Researcher in the project group National Educational Panel Study (NEPS) at the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre explored men’s part time employment in Germany. She analysed the occupational characteristics and household constellations that may facilitate transitions into part-time employment for men.

The impact of the economic crisis in western Europe on work-life balance policies and trade unions’ capacity to shape workplace practices
Dr Susan Milner, Reader in European Politics, University of Bath, UK provided a comparative analysis of four European countries on how the economic crisis in western Europe has affected work-life balance policies and trade unions’ capacity to shape workplace practices. She suggested the economic crisis in Europe has crowded out bargaining agendas and made it more difficult to raise work-life balance and other gender-related issues. However, she also highlighted opportunities for union agency on these issues.

Pay Equity in Australia: current developments and next steps
Dr Meg Smith, Associate Professor at the University of Western Sydney and Dr Carla Harris of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency presented this seminar. A/Professor Smith analysed the recent decision by the Fair Work Commission in the childcare workers’ equal remuneration claim highlighting how pay equity for women is both unresolved and highly contested. Dr Harris explored the key results from the 2014-15 data collected from large employers by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). In particular she covered the data on gender pay equity, including actions taken by employers and the (slow) changes over time.

Seminars
The WWRG held five academic seminars in 2015 by Australian and international scholars. Three were presented by the scholars visiting the WWRG demonstrating the WWRG’s international links, as did the workshop described in the next section bringing Swedish and Australian scholars together. The first and two last seminars were public, drawing up to 60 participants each; the two others were internal academic events. More information on these events including the presentations can be found on the WWRG webpage at sydney.edu.au/business/research/wwrg.

International Women’s Day 2015 seminar – Taking a hard look at flexible working: who benefits and how? Professor Marian Baird and A/Professor Rae Cooper, University of Sydney Business School discussed their research on how formal right to request policies translate to practice within two large employers in Australia. Information, implementation and implications were the focus of the presentation. The study revealed extensive lack of detailed policy knowledge by managers and employees at the same time as there exists a generalised overall awareness of a right to request. A tendency for requests to be dealt with informally also exists despite increased regulation at the national and workplace levels. Together these trends effectively grant line managers increased power to approve or reject FWA requests.

The impact of the economic crisis in western Europe on work-life balance policies and trade unions’ capacity to shape workplace practices
Dr Susan Milner, University of Bath, international scholar visiting the WWRG

Pay Equity in Australia: current developments and next steps
Dr Marie Coleman, Marian Baird and other guests at ‘Pay Equity in Australia: current developments and next steps’

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Workshops
Gender work and organisation in health and aged care: Australian and Swedish perspectives
This workshop was co-hosted by the WWRG and the Faculty of Health Sciences, the University of Sydney and Umeå University Sweden. This high level invitation only event brought together Australian and Swedish researchers who reported on their recent investigations of health care and aged care as gendered industries, workplaces, institutions and domains of ‘informal’ care, with a range of policymakers from Government and the non-government sectors.

Panel debate
WWRG in conjunction with the Business School hosted an IWD Panel ‘Let’s not wait another 20 years! For gender equality.’ This highly successful event marked International Women’s Day 2015. It included Amanda Mostyn, Group Executive Human Resources at the ASX, Price Waterhouse Cooper’s Director of Indigenous Consulting, Nareen Young, NSW District Court Judge Robyn Tupman and Professor Marian Baird, WWRG Director and Associate Professor Rae Cooper Deputy Director WWRG for the Business School. The topic was why progress towards gender equality has gone backwards in some areas and stalled in others. With over 100 attendees, the event was a resounding success and extensively covered in the media.

Farewell
A farewell event for Australia’s outgoing Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, was hosted at Women’s College. This event was attended by the Dean of the Business School and members from across business and academia, focusing on academics who had worked with the Commissioner. It provided an unusual and intimate forum where Elizabeth and others engaged in debate about the state of gender equality in Australia today.

WWRG members’ meetings
In keeping with the constitution it adopted in 2014, the WWRG held its second successful AGM in April 2015. The 2015 General Meeting was held in November. At both, an update of activities for the year and plans for the rest of it were discussed. Minutes of Annual General and other General Meetings are publicly available on the WWRG website.
Activities in 2015: external engagement and collaboration

Significant contributions to policy debates on women and work in 2015 were made by WWRG members, in particular in the area of women, work and care.

In keeping with its strong engagement with the business, not-for-profit and policy-making communities, WWRG members have fulfilled many speaking engagements to policy makers in the private and public sectors. A selection of the main ones are listed below.

Industry
- A presentation on women and work and unions in Australia to the ACTU
- A presentation to the Women in Male Dominated Industries and Occupations Conference
- A presentation on how domestic violence impacts on women at work at UTS
- The provision of training sessions to trade unions on negotiating arrangements to assist women experiencing domestic violence at work
- A presentation to the conference to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Anne Summers’ important history of Australian feminism ‘Damned Whores and God’s Police.’

Additionally, the ACTU had informal consultations with the WWRG on its application to include in modern awards an enforceable right to part-time work after parental leave (as opposed to a non-enforceable right to request flexible working as exists at present in the Fair Work Act 2009).

Government
- A presentation on the high profile WWRG and Employment Research Australia ‘Advancing Women’ report on women in leadership in the NSW public service for the NSW Public Service Commission to the NSW Department of Trade and Investment
- A presentation on women and leadership in Australia to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Membership of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Data Reporting Reference Group
- Membership of the AHRC Advisory Panel on Age Discrimination and Workforce Participation Prevalence Study.

International and other academic links
Within Australia, the WWRG has close links with the Work + Family Policy Roundtable and the Women in Economic and Social Research (WISER) in Curtin Business School. It also has a strong international orientation to Europe, the United States and Asia as demonstrated by the following projects.

- Flexible Careers International Research Network: WWRG Director Marian Baird and Deputy Director Rae Cooper are participating and co-convening this high profile Network bringing together University of Sydney academics, with those from Leeds Business School, Bristol Law School, Middlesex Business School, Auckland Law School, MIT and Michigan State University. It has won a significant grant from the Worldwide Universities Network and will meet in Sydney in 2016. Members are editing a special issue in the prestigious journal, Human Relations on flexible careers.
- Collaboration on a Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant ‘Gender, Migration and the Work of Care: Comparative Perspectives’ led by the University of Toronto
- Collaboration with the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, on women, work and care in the Indian economy
- The WWRG has a member of the academic network, DV@WorkNet an international network of researchers examining the impact of domestic violence on the workplace
- The WWRG has developed close links with the Work and Care Network in Africa
- The WWRG contributed to MAMPU: teaching women in leadership in East Asia as part of the Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction (MAMPU) Program, sponsored by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and delivered by the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre: sydney.edu.au/southeast-asia-centre/

University contributions
- The WWRG director contributed a keynote speech at the Academic Forum for Pacific Women on ‘The Gender Agenda’. This was a high-level gathering of women leaders from the Pacific to discuss women in leadership, organised by the Sydney Medical School
- Women in leadership in the US and Australia. The WWRG undertook a joint project with the US Studies Centre on ‘Women, work and leadership: outcomes and levers to enable gender equality in careers and leadership’.

- Marie Coleman & guests at WWRG end of year function ‘Pay Equity in Australia: current developments and next steps’
WWRG research and submissions on women and work

Research Projects
- WWRG Analysis of the Impact of the Government’s proposed changes to Paid Parental Leave prepared by Professor Marian Baird & Dr Andreea Constantin for the YWCA & Fair Agenda
- WWRG Report with analysis of MYEFO proposed changes to Paid Parental Leave (revised Government proposals in late 2015) prepared by Professor Marian Baird & Dr Andreea Constantin for Fair Agenda
- An evaluation of the Women at Sydney – Actively sponsoring culturally and linguistically diverse female leadership program. This important program aims to accelerate the leadership careers of culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander female professional and academic staff at the University of Sydney.

Policy Submissions
The WWRG has submitted five submissions this year to Government consultations on policy issues of crucial importance to women at work, which also contribute to maintaining its external profile.
- WWRG submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs on the Fairer Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Amendment Bill. The Bill contained substantial reductions to the availability of Government funded PPL
- Joint W+FPRt & WWRG submission on the Childcare Assistance Package 2015, Regulation Impact Statement
- Joint W+FPRt & WWRG submission on the Issues Papers from the Productivity Commission on Australia’s Workplace Relations Framework
- Joint W+FPRt & WWRG submission on the Productivity Commission Draft Report on Australia’s Workplace Relations Framework
- WWRG submission to the Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into Economic Security for Women in Retirement.

Grants/tenders
- The Director and WWRG member, Dr Andreea Constantin were commissioned to provide the two PPL reports described under Research Projects above, by Fair Agenda and YWCA Australia (for the first) and by Fair Agenda (for the second)
- The WWRG won an internal tender for the evaluation of the Women at Sydney – Actively sponsoring culturally and linguistically diverse female leadership program, described under Research Projects above
- The WWRG is involved in a grant application by a consortium of several universities to the ARC for a Centre of Research Excellence on Population Ageing
- The Director and WWRG member Dr Jyotirmoyee Bhattacharjya have submitted a Discovery Grant application to the ARC. This proposes using a choice modelling survey to look at workplaces in the procurement industry from the perspective of women workers and their employers to identify the factors of which a good workplace comprises from each viewpoint
- As a member of the DV@WorkNet, the WWRG has submitted with Canadian partners for an international grant to work in this area.

WWRG media engagement: website, social and other media

The WWRG has continued to be active in the ‘Twittersphere’ by actively contributing material for the Business School’s twitter account on gender and through the Deputy Director, Associate Rae Cooper’s twitter account (@RaeCooperII). The WWRG continues to maintain its informative website which showcases the WWRG, the Business School and the University as a whole. It is unique in Australia and a much used resource.

The WWRG Director has been much reported in the media in 2015, in particular on the proposed reductions to the Government PPL scheme, including in the US Huffington Post. She has also been quoted on many other gender issues in all the major news outlets, for example in the Australian when addressing the conference to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Anne Summers’ important history of Australian feminism ‘Damned Whores and God’s Police.’ Another significant contribution was to ABC Radio’s Life Matters programme on the positive impacts on children of their mothers’ returning to the workforce. There was also a strong media presence on gender by other WWRG members including the Deputy Director in particular on flexible working.
### Membership of the WWRG

#### New Members
The WWRG welcomed 10 new University members in 2015:
- Ms Kyla Cassells, Doctoral Candidate, Graduate School of Government/Social and Political Sciences
- Ms Sarah Fletcher, Director, Careers Services, Careers and Employability Office/Business School
- Dr Anya Johnson, Lecturer, WOS/Business School
- Dr Margaret Matanda, A/Professor, Business Education
- Ms Josette Moffat, Senior Manager, Talent & Organisational Development/Human Resources
- Dr Sabina Nielsen, Professor, International Business/Business School
- Ms Sally Hanna Osborne, Doctoral candidate, WOS/Business School
- Ms Anmol Saini, MBA Student, Business School
- Dr Sandra van der Laan, A/Professor, Accounting/Business School
- Dr Archana Voola, Postdoctoral Fellow, Education and Social Work

#### University of Sydney and Business School Membership
The Business School and the University of Sydney members numbered 52 in 2016. Members are included in a dedicated page on the WWRG website which contains links to member homepages with publication lists. Membership continues to expand across the University beyond the Business School, testifying to the WWRG’s growing recognition and relevance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Discipline/Faculty, University of Sydney</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Marian Baird</td>
<td>Professor/Director</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Rae Cooper</td>
<td>Associate Professor/Deputy Director</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Raja Alsaffar</td>
<td>Masters Student</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Cornelia Beck</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Accounting/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Jyotirmoyee Bhattacharjya</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Institute of Transport &amp; Logistics Studies/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Kyla Cassells</td>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>Graduate School of Government/Social and Political Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Vlasta Chiang Soto</td>
<td>Student Adviser</td>
<td>Student Information/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Andreia Constantini</td>
<td>Research Associate</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Teresa Davis</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Marketing/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Maryanne Duggan</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Bradon Eleem</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Susan Ellicott-Darke</td>
<td>Editor/Project Officer</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Teaching/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Sarah Fletcher</td>
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<td>Careers and Employability Office/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Meraliah Foley</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Michele Ford</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Sydney Southeast Asia Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Fiona Giles</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>Letters, Media/Arts and Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Dimitria Grousis</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Catherine Hardy</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>BIS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Alexandra Heron</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Elizabeth Hill</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>PE/Arts and Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Suzanne Jamieson</td>
<td>Honorary Associate Professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Anya Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr David Johnstone</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Finance/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Jim Kitay</td>
<td>Honorary Associate Professor</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Angela Knox</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Renee Kramer</td>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
<td>BSRU/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Fiona Krautil</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Equity &amp; Diversity Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Amanda Lacy</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
<td>Centre for Research on Computer Supported Learning and Cognition/Education and Social Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Russell Lansbury</td>
<td>Emeritus Professor</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Jane Le</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>WOS/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Margaret Matanda</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Business Education/Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Susan McGrath-Champ</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
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<td>Talent &amp; Organisational Development/Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Maree Murray</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Wingara Mura Leadership Program /Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services)</td>
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Additionally, in 2015 the WWRG has developed close links within the University with:
- the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre (SSSEA)
- the US Studies Centre
- the Equity and Diversity Unit.

International Members
- Agnieszka Althaber PhD candidate, Freie Universitat Berlin
- Professor Lotte Bailyn (Emerita), MIT, USA
- Professor Peter Berg, Michigan State University, USA
- Professor John Budd, University of Minnesota, USA
- Dr Lisa Dancaster, University of Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa
- Professor Linda Dickens, Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, UK
- Professor Judy Fudge, Kent Law School, University of Kent, UK
- Professor Bernard Fusulier, Louvain University, Belgium
- Professor Lonnie Golden, Pennsylvania State, Abington, USA
- Professor Geraldine Healy, Queen Mary, University of London, UK
- Ms Ariane Hegewisch, Study Director, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, Washington DC, USA
- Professor Susan Himmelweit (Emeritus), Faculty of Social Sciences, the Open University, UK
- Dr Jean Jenkins, Senior Lecturer in HRM, Cardiff Business School, Wales
- Professor Suzan Lewis, Middlesex University, UK
- A/Professor Annick Masselot, Canterbury University Law Department, New Zealand
- Professor Ruth Milkm, CUNY, USA
- Dr Susan Milner, Reader in European Politics, University of Bath, UK
- Dr Pamela Robinson, Lecturer in Comparative Employment Relations, Department of Strategic and International Business, Birmingham University, UK
- Professor Jill Rubery, Manchester Business School, UK
- Professor Jennifer Tomlinson, Leeds University Business School, UK
- Professor Mark Stuart, Director, Centre for Employment Relations Innovation and Change, Leeds University, UK
- Professor Leah Vosko, Canada Research Chair in the Political Economy of Gender and Work, York University, Canada
- Professor Sue Yeandle, Director of the Centre for International Research on Care Labour and Equalities (CIRCLE), the University of Sheffield, UK

Mailing list
In 2015 the WWRG had over 550 people on its mailing list locally and internationally, comprising academics, policymakers, members of community organisations, union officials, industry representatives and business.
The major ARC Discovery Grant to the Director and Deputy Director on ‘Flexibility for working parents in the ‘hybrid’ fair work system’ concluded this year.

Its results have been widely disseminated (see journal articles below and the WWRG seminar above.)

With the University of Queensland and others, the WWRG Director won an ARC Linkage Grant (2013-2016), ‘Enhancing mothers’ engagement with the workforce in the preschool years’. Her work on this and the now completed Government funded evaluation of the Paid Parental Leave Scheme has resulted in a range of research outputs which have been disseminated within Australia and internationally (see journal articles and reports below.)

With colleagues from the Department of Political Economy, the China Studies Centre and the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre, the WWRG won a University funded SyRENS project in 2014. This resulted in an international two-day workshop early in 2015. An edited book on women, work and care in several Asia-Pacific countries is in press, resulting from this. A high-profile launch to disseminate this research will take place next year.

The major research outputs of WWRG members relating to women, work, care and community in 2015 include those below.

Book sections

Journal Article/s

Reports
- Baird M and Constantin A 2015 ‘Analysis of the impact of the Government’s Proposed Cuts to Paid Parental Leave’, Commissioned by Fair Agenda and YWCA Australia

Conference Papers
- Heron A 2015 ‘Eldercare and workplaces: Towards developing improved employer responses to employees’ eldercare responsibilities’, Australian Social Policy Conference, Sydney, Australia, 30th September 2015

Seminar Paper/s

PHD Students and Early Career Researchers
In 2015 the WWRG provided quality research and doctoral training opportunities as well as having a focus on supporting early career researchers. In 2015 there were six PhD students. Congratulations to Meraiah Foley and Lorraine Rivlin for completing their PhDs in 2015.

Meraiah Foley: Mothers in Company: Exploring the lived experiences of self-employed working mothers in Australia
Women with young children are significantly more likely to be self-employed than other female workers in Australia, at least for a period of their lives. This study applies a theoretically-informed thematic analysis to the career narratives of 60 self-employed mothers to answer the central research question: what motivates some women to become self-employed after motherhood? Drawing on the predominant push-pull theory of entrepreneurship, and the sociological literature examining the work-family nexus,
this study proposes that women fall into four motivational categories based on the extent to which self-employment is a proactive or reactive response, grounded in the women’s preferences for career, family, or both. These categories are: family-focused entrepreneurs (n=5), who are pulled into self-employment by their desire to provide exclusive, home-based maternal care for their young children, while supplementing the household income; career-focused entrepreneurs (n=4), who choose self-employment purposefully and deliberately, motivated by a desire for professional autonomy, career advancement, financial gain, or status; opt-in entrepreneurs (n=16), who choose self-employment voluntarily, motivated mainly by a desire to create meaningful, rewarding work that does not impinge on family life; and forced-out entrepreneurs (n=35), who perceive themselves as pressed or pushed into entrepreneurship by gendered barriers within organisations and society, or other structural constraints.

This study finds that women’s motivations for becoming self-employed after motherhood are heterogeneous, and do not fit a single, family-driven narrative. However, for a majority of women, the transition to self-employment is motivated by a complex interplay between their preferences for career and family, in a context of constraint rather than choice.

Mihajla Gavin:
The Strategic Response of the New South Wales Teachers’ Federation in Times of Neoliberalism: The Case of Teachers’ Work and Conditions

Alexandra Heron:
Organisational responses to employees’ elder care responsibilities

Lorraine Rivlin:

The Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) provides that it is unlawful to discriminate at work against a person because of their carers’ responsibilities. The Anti-Discrimination Board (‘ADB’) administers the legislation and together with the NSW Tribunal is responsible for a two-stage enforcement process. This thesis evaluates the legislation’s effectiveness during its first decade where more than 550 carers’ complaints were lodged but only 12 reached a Tribunal hearing. A realist ‘Law in Action’ theoretical lens is employed, including empirical research of all carers’ complaints lodged, to explain how the legislation has been applied in practice. It was argued that the Tribunal has applied the legislation technically and narrowly, with only two complaints upheld and inadequate compensation the remedy. Its decisions emphasise a hostile adversarial process where accommodation of responsibilities is an unlikely and impractical remedy. In contrast, it is argued that the ADB has taken a more purposive policy-driven approach. Key findings include that: 73% of all complaints came from female worker-carers and 26% from males; overall carers’ complaints had a 54% settlement rate, much higher than the average settlement rate of 30% for complaints lodged on all grounds over the same period. Of the 54% settled, 31% (that is of all complaints) achieved some form of accommodation and 23% settled for some other remedy. Of all complaints 11% involved a potentially systemic outcome such as a policy change.

Adequately funded discrimination agencies can exercise a crucial role through their education and complaint functions to encourage compliance with the law; prevent discrimination; achieve reasonable accommodation of responsibilities; and provide an informal, accessible, free and relatively timely complaints mechanism.

Sally Hanna Osborne:
The Workplace Health and Safety of Women Paramedics

To celebrate International Women’s Day, in March 2016 the WWRG plans to hold a symposium on ‘An international treaty against gender-based violence at work? How Australian policies can influence the debate’ by Ludo McFerran WWRG Research Affiliate and Jane Hodges, formerly Director of the Gender Equality Bureau of the International Labour Organisation.

The WWRG will also host seminars by WWRG members on Changes in employment status & attitudes towards gender roles in the labour market by Dr Andreea Constantin and on Mothers in Company: Exploring the lived experiences of self-employed working mothers in Australia, by Dr Meraiah Foley.