

EMERITUS

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War on willows

Larger role for alumni suggested

Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Young has received some 150 responses from ANU staff and students to the draft *Strategic Plan ANU by 2020* which was released on June 10.

The responses have been submitted from individuals, groups, Schools and Colleges and were "overwhelmingly positive with the directions, tone and target-driven approach well received," the Vice Chancellor said.

"This input will be invaluable in shaping the final version of the Plan, which will be released in due course. I would like to thank staff and students for engaging in the process in such a positive way" he added.

One of the elements is identified as making more use of alumni by building on their roles as leaders and mentors in a wide range of fields.

Summary of major themes

Many comments were associated with items which were more operational, rather than strategic.

A number of responses raised suggestions for new activities which the University could consider. These will help inform our operational planning. Other responses

commented on the balance of the various elements of the plan. Importantly, the balance between research and education seems to have been well received.

There are, however, a number of consistent themes in the feedback which will help guide the development of the final version of the Plan.

1. Research training and Higher Degree by Research Students (HDR)

- o Increase the visibility of research training as a core activity.

2. Leadership role

- o Increase the visibility of the leadership role of ANU as the national university, not just in public policy but in leadership of academic disciplines (national research networks, hosting discipline/professional organisations, journals etc).

3. Commercialisation / innovation / knowledge transfer

- o Increasing the visibility of knowledge transfer, with industry, government and non profit organisations.

4. Public policy

- o Distinguish between being a leading contributor in public policy debate, and developing public policy (which is a function of APS and Government)
- o Distinguish between public policy as a

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discipline, and the contribution of a wide range of disciplines into public policy debate.

- o Understand the importance of close interaction between researchers and policy oriented institutions including the Commonwealth government.
- o Increase the understanding of national and international research needs of policy-oriented institutions.
- o Need to measure leadership and impact of public policy contributions and recognising it within the University (for example, in promotions).
- o Public policy may also relate to non-government (eg health NGOs).

5. General staff

- o Need to increase the visibility of general staff and their role in achieving ANU core objectives.

6. Equity / social inclusion

- o Increase the visibility in the plan of social inclusion (including equity and Indigenous targets).

7. Sustainability

- o Increase the visibility of the University's commitment to sustainability.

8. Role of alumni

- o Broaden the role of Alumni beyond fundraising to build on their roles as leaders and mentors in a wide range of fields.

9. Editorial points

- o In some cases changing 'will' to 'will continue' to acknowledge current levels of activity.
- o Ordering of document will convey a message (eg people before infrastructure).

Some areas for debate included:

- Whether the goals should be for 'all academic staff' to be 'research active' or whether it would be more appropriate to aim for the 'overwhelming majority' of our staff to be 'research intensive'.
- There were comments both for and against using ERA as a measure of research excellence.

A number of points were made about implementing the plan, and highlighting areas of special interest to those providing the feedback. This valuable input will help shape the final version of the Plan.

The Vice Chancellor, Ian Young, has circulated a revised version of the Executive Structure following feed-back from staff. He writes:

On 3 June 2011 I sent an email to all staff advising of changes I wished to make to the Executive Structure of the University and seeking feedback on the proposals. A number of responses were received, the vast majority commenting positively on the proposed changes. Some raised valuable comments about operational implications as a result of the proposed changes. These comments have helped shape my final decisions. Organisational charts showing the new portfolios can be found at:

<http://www.anu.edu.au/staff/structure/>

The major changes from the previous version are:

Pro Vice Chancellor (International & Outreach)

A number of responses indicated that domestic and international recruiting are integrated and hence it would be strategically better to keep these together. Therefore it was decided that all student recruiting should become the responsibility of this position.

In an uncapped domestic undergraduate environment, international and domestic student recruitment will progressively become much more aligned and hence this grouping has operational logic.

As a result of this change, it has also been decided that the Marketing Office should move into this same area, thus providing alignment of central marketing with recruitment activities. Due to these changes, this executive position has been renamed PVC (International & Outreach).

Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Students)

It was always intended that the Centre for Educational Development and Academic

Method would report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Students). An examination of the work load in this portfolio once the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) is in place indicates that it will be possible for the Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Students) to take direct responsibility for CEDAM. As such, the University will not continue with the process of searching for a Director of CEDAM, this position will be filled by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Students).

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Research Training) The Research Office will now report to the PVC(R&RT). In addition, the Research Student Development Centre (RSDC) and Statistical Consulting Unit will report to the PVC(R&RT).

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) The Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) will now report to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) position.

The other changes are as proposed in my email of 3 June.

Transition arrangements:
Professor Lawrence Cram will continue as Vice-President, assume the senior Deputy Vice Chancellor role and will transfer to the position of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) and Professor Mandy Thomas will transfer to the position of Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Research Training) from 1 August 2011. The units reporting to these portfolios will transfer on that same date.

Professor Elizabeth Deane will transfer to the position of Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Students) on 1 August, and all units reporting into the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) portfolio will report to Professor Deane until the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) is appointed.

Pro Vice Chancellor (International & Outreach) portfolio will not commence until this position is filled. In the interim, units which will eventually report to the PVC (I&O) will remain in their existing structures.

Professor Michael Cardew-Hall will also commence as Pro Vice Chancellor (Innovation & Advancement) on 1 August. Alumni & Development will merge on that date, reporting to Ms Joan Uhr. Other units reporting to the PVC (I&A) will also transfer on this date.

The Executive Search company Braithwaite Steiner Pretty has been engaged to undertake international searches for the DVC (A) and PVC (I&O) roles.

Implementation of changes below the level of the Executive will in many cases only involve a change in reporting lines and will also take place as outlined above. However, where the changes involve more extensive issues, a separate change management process will be undertaken with affected staff. This process will be initiated and co-ordinated by Human Resources.

ANU launches free database

As the cost of accessing academic journals soars, the Australian National University has launched a new free online database that allows anyone with an internet connection to read the latest scholarly work.

ANU joins an increasing number of academic institutions, such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, developing open access databases to make research available to those unable to pay high journal fees, which can run to \$US35 per article and millions of dollars a year for university library subscriptions.

"There's a growing movement around the world," said ANU Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian Young. "I think it is being driven by the funding agencies. For work which is funded from the public purse, there's a strong view that this sort of publicly funded research should be available generally to the public."

ANU's new [Digital Collections](#) facility makes around 400 theses, almost 4000 research papers and over 2000 images freely accessible to all. The university's [Open Access policy statement](#) describes access to scientific and cultural advancements as a human right.

Professor Young said traditional subscription-based academic journals play a valuable role in editing scholarly work and coordinating peer review processes but that copyright restrictions can stymie the sharing of knowledge.

“Because of the fact that, in many cases, people need to subscribe to journals to access material, it means there is a limited distribution for research outputs,” he said.

Dr Danny Kingsley, the ANU’s manager of scholarly communications and e-publishing and coordinator of the new database, said there was growing frustration among academics with ‘article processing fees’ charged by many journal publishers.

“There are some researchers who are paying hundreds, if not thousands to get their work published and then at the other end the reader still has to pay for it too. There’s a lot of money involved. Scholarly communication is big bucks,” she said.

And after a piece of scholarly work is accepted for publication, it can take years for the article to appear in print, she said. “The open access model is saying research should be freely available at the time of acceptance to anyone who has access to the internet, not six months later or a year later,” she said.

In what is known as the ‘Big Deal’, universities wanting subscriptions to top journals are often forced to sign up for expensive package deals that bundle less prestigious journals in as well, she said.

Around 90% of publishers allow work appearing in their journals to be archived on open access databases such as ANU’s new facility, but may place restrictions on when it can be shared, said Dr Kingsley.

For example, [Nature Publishing Group](#) will not allow the publisher’s PDF to be archived and only allows grant-giving agencies to archive work they funded six months after publication in a Nature Publishing Group journal.

The ANU Digital Collections facility uses open source software called [Dspace](#), widely

used by academic institutions with institutional repositories of scholarly work. Dr Kingsley said she hoped non-academics used the Digital Collections facility to read about the latest findings — so nurses could read about medical research and teachers about education research.

“The idea is that our research can go out and impact people in the field, policy makers can access the latest research,” she said.

To access the new database, go to:
<https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/>

Reprinted from *The Conversation*

<http://theconversation.edu.au/>
Launched in March 2011, *The Conversation* is an independent source of information, analysis and commentary from the university and research sector. Its founding partners include:

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More funds for native title anthropologists

The Australian Government will provide an additional \$400,000 to the Native Title Anthropologist Grants Program for initiatives that will attract and retain anthropologists to native title work.

Attorney-General Robert McClelland said on July 6 that, “Anthropologists are vital to the successful operation of the native title system as Indigenous claimants rely on their expert evidence of connection to land to support applications.

“The additional funding provides a significant boost to the Grants Program and promotes training, professional development and support of anthropologists across the native title system.”

The grants will go to 14 Native Title Representative Bodies and Native Title

Service Providers who are located across Australia and to the University of Adelaide.

"The University of Adelaide will receive funding to develop and hold a meeting of national convenors on courses of native title anthropology to consider a national curriculum," he said.

Guide for researchers into NT's colourful past

A new guide to the historical records of the Northern Territory has been published by the National Archives of Australia, titled *Commonwealth Government Records about the Northern Territory*.

The Minister for Freedom of Information Brendan O'Connor says the release of "This guide captures the key archival records of the Territory. It includes records in both the National Archives and the Northern Territory Archives Service.

"Author Ted Ling, an historian and archivist, spent many long hours delving into the records and listing them to reveal the unique and rich history of the Territory.

His Honour Mr Tom Pauling AO QC, Administrator of the Northern Territory said, "The guide helps researchers open the door of discovery to a variety of topics of interest to Territorians, including Aboriginal people, customs, immigration and population, law and order, and Territory personalities.

"Surprisingly rich historical offerings are in the guide, including a brief but delightful account of the South Australian efforts to form a viable colony from 1863 to the late 1890s."

Publication of the guide in 2011 also marks the centenary of the acquisition of the Northern Territory by the Commonwealth Government in 1911.

Commonwealth Government Records about the Northern Territory will be given to Northern Territory organisations and can also be downloaded free of charge at naa.gov.au

Language learning in Indigenous communities

The role of Indigenous languages in *Closing the Gap* and improving outcomes for Indigenous communities is the subject of a new inquiry by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

The committee is seeking submissions to the inquiry by 19 August 2011.

The inquiry will examine the benefits of giving recognition to Indigenous languages, and how Indigenous languages can be used in education to improve competency in English. In addition, the inquiry will examine current maintenance and revitalisation programs for Indigenous languages.

This is the first parliamentary inquiry to examine the direct contribution that the learning of Indigenous languages can make to overcoming disadvantage and achieving competency in English language.

The Chair of the Committee Mr Shayne Neumann MP said on July 8, "Language is such an important part of a person's culture and identity. By examining how we can give attention and proper recognition to Indigenous languages in Australia, we are also walking the path of reconciliation by giving attention and proper recognition to Indigenous cultures and identities."

Mr Neumann added, "Our Committee's recent report into the over-representation of Indigenous youth in the criminal justice system, *Doing time – time for doing*, found that self-healing and connection to culture programs have been highly effective in getting people back on track. Additionally we found that Indigenous language interpreting and translating services were inadequate, particularly in remote communities."

"There seems to be a belief in Australia that we are a monolingual nation and that only Standard Australian English can benefit a person, both educationally and vocationally. If we look outside of Australia, the evidence is overwhelmingly to the contrary. The benefits of being able to speak multiple

languages are tangible, particularly in Europe. The Committee aims to look at what's working, as well as looking for innovative measures to improve competency in English in communities where English is a second language."

The Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Minister for the Arts have asked the Committee to inquire into and report on language learning in Indigenous communities. The Committee will broadly examine the benefits of giving attention and recognition to Indigenous languages, with a focus on:

- The contribution of Indigenous languages to Closing the Gap and strengthening Indigenous identity and culture
- The potential benefits of including Indigenous languages in early education and measures to improve English competency and education outcomes in Indigenous communities
- The effectiveness of current maintenance and revitalisation programs for Indigenous languages, and
- The effectiveness of the Commonwealth Government Indigenous languages policy in delivering its objectives and relevant policies of other Australian governments.

The Committee invites submissions to the inquiry by **19 August 2011**. For the full terms of reference and advice on making submissions see the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/atsia or contact the committee secretariat on **(02) 6277 4559**.

Better language skills needed in skilled migration program

Almost 30,000 professionals entered Australia from 2009 to 2010 under the Government's Skilled Migration Program. All were considered to have skills of high value to the Australian economy, and more than a third spoke English as their first language.

At a hearing on July 6, the Joint Committee on Migration held a public hearing with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEEWR) Population and Migration Policy Branch to discuss the new requirements for higher language proficiency under the skilled migration selection process.

Under recent reforms, applicants must pass tougher written English tests in addition to holding high formal qualifications. Committee chair Ms Maria Vamvakinou said: "There is no doubt that English language proficiency enhances successful settlement, however it is also important that quality skilled visa applicants are not excluded because they lack English language excellence before entering the country."

Referring to DEEWR's submission, Ms Vamvakinou also observed: "Once skilled migrants gain a visa it is important to ensure their skills are utilised – at present only half of skilled graduate entrants work in a skilled occupation. This suggests targeted job matching services could better assist this group."

The Committee also discussed the potential for recognition of overseas and prior learning measures to assist the large percentage of migrants not working, though not officially unemployed, to gain employment and improve their English skills.

Further information about the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee's website www.aph.gov.au/mig or from the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4560.

Inquiry into suicide and self-harm in immigration detention

Commonwealth Ombudsman Allan Asher today confirmed his office would undertake an investigation into suicide and self-harm in Australian immigration detention facilities.

Earlier in the year, Mr Asher publicly raised concerns about the impact of long-term detention on the ongoing mental health of detainees, while more recently he witnessed

the deteriorating psychological health of detainees on Christmas Island.

'I was alarmed that in the week of June that I visited Christmas Island more than 30 incidents of self-harm by detainees held there were reported to the contracted health services provider, International Health and Medical Services (IHMS),' Mr Asher said.

'This reflects an upsurge in the number of incidents of self-harm and attempted suicide reported to IHMS across all immigration detention facilities.'

Since March 2011, Ombudsman staff have inspected the immigration detention facilities at Curtin, Leonora and Christmas Island. A significant issue of concern arising from each of these visits has related to the mental health and wellbeing of detainees.

More than 1,100 incidents of threatened or actual self-harm across all places of detention were reported in 2010-11, according to the latest information provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to the Ombudsman's office. Fifty-four incidents of self-harm were reported during the first week of July this year alone.

'My investigation will assess the extent of this tragic problem, examine the root causes, and consider practical steps that the Department and its service providers SERCO and IHMS should take to identify and manage those at risk of suicide and self-harm.

'The aim will be to produce evidence-based, expert-endorsed advice on guidelines and protocols for reducing and/or preventing the number of incidents that are occur in detainee communities.'

The investigation will consider:

- the extent of the problem, including relative to the incidence of suicide and self-harm in the broader Australian community;
- demographic information, including gender, age, country of origin,

urban/rural background, language, and length of time in detention of people who participate in suicidal or self-harming behaviours;

- potential determinants of this behaviour, including pre-existence of mental illnesses;
 - catalysts for suicidal ideation and self-harming behaviours, for example denial of visa applications, detention overcrowding, uncertainty about the future;
 - contagion issues and the impact of attempted or completed suicides and incidents of self-harm on the broader detention community;
 - prevention (such as screening for warning signs specific to populations, putting in place appropriate safety measures), intervention and postvention initiatives, including access to counselling and other health services;
 - detention facility guidelines and protocols;
 - the availability of appropriately qualified and professionally trained staff;
 - the nature and different types of detention facilities, access to means to self-harm or suicide, physical environments, risk assessments and mitigation strategies/measures.
- The Ombudsman hopes to be able to release the investigation findings by the end of 2011.

For more information access the Commonwealth Ombudsman's website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

Report on preventing youth suicide

Suicide accounts for the deaths of one quarter of men aged under 25 and also one in seven young women, according to a report by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing on youth suicide.

The report, released on July 4, emphasises the need for greater support of early intervention measures to reduce rates of youth suicide.

Committee Chair Steve Georganas MP said “Regrettably, suicide still accounts for almost one quarter of all deaths among young men in Australia under the age of 25 years, and almost one in seven deaths among young women. However, evidence to the inquiry suggests that measures taken by successive governments have seen the rate of youth suicide decline since 1997.

“In undertaking this investigation, the Committee was keen to learn more about how reductions in the rate of youth suicide have been achieved, and to identify what else can be done to continue this downward trend.”

The Committee’s inquiry was informed by roundtable discussions with young people, and with a range of organisations which promote mental health, well-being and resilience among young people. In its report titled *‘Before it’s too late’*, the Committee has made a number of recommendations which broadly cover:

- increasing mental health literacy among young people to help them to better recognise when they need help, and to encourage them to seek that help;
- more training for professional staff that have regular contact with young people to assist them to better recognise early warning signs and make appropriate referrals;
- promotion of collaboration across governments and organisations to improve the availability and access to services for young people who are experiencing difficulties; and
- improvements to data collection, research and evaluation to inform best-practice.

Mr Georganas concluded “The courage shown by the young people who interacted with the Committee, sharing their experiences and discussing a range of complex and sensitive issues, exemplifies a level of resilience and determination that we need to encourage and foster. I hope that the recommendations made in the report will enhance collaboration and improve access to services to combat one of the major causes of death among young Australians.”

Copies of the report are available at the Committee’s website at:
<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/youthsuicide/report.htm>

A right to privacy in Australia

The Federal Government is seeking the views of the public on introducing a right to privacy in Australia.

The Minister for Privacy Brendan O’Connor said on July 21 that a public issues paper will be issued soon, canvassing the prospect of introducing a statutory cause of action for serious invasions of privacy.

“Right now there is no general right to privacy in Australia, and that means there’s no certainty for anyone wanting to sue for an invasion of their privacy,” Mr O’Connor said.

“The News of the World scandal and other recent mass breaches of privacy, both at home and abroad, have put the spotlight on whether there should be such a right.”

“This Government strongly believes in the principle of freedom of expression and also the right to privacy. Any changes to our laws will have to strike a balance between the two ideals.”

“We know that privacy is a growing concern for everyday Australians – whether it is in our dealings with individuals, businesses, government agencies or the media,” he said.

“Privacy is emerging as a defining issue of the modern era, especially as new technology provides more opportunities for communication, but also new challenges to privacy.”

“I’m keen to hear from everyone with a stake in the privacy debate – that includes individuals, businesses and of course the media,” Mr O’Connor said.

The Australian Law Reform Commission’s 2008 report into privacy laws made 295 recommendations for changes to privacy regulation and policy, including a proposal to introduce a statutory cause of action for serious breaches of privacy.

It is important to note that there are laws in place to deal with criminal offending related to privacy breaches, for example the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act outlaws phone tapping and other misuse of communications services.

An issues paper will be issued soon and a period of public consultation will follow.

Overseas-trained doctors and GP training examined

The inquiry into Overseas Trained Doctors being conducted by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing has attracted 151 submissions including some concerned with medical education from the Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils and from the Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges.

Discussion has centred on educational, training and support opportunities available to International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who wish to work in Australia in general practice.

According to chair of the Committee, Steve Georganas, "General practice is the cornerstone of the Australian health care system and central to the delivery of primary health care services to Australian communities.

"Ways to remove impediments and promote pathways for IMGs to achieve full Australian qualification, particularly in regional areas, without lowering the necessary standards required by colleges and regulatory bodies will be also be explored.

Mr Georganas comments, "For many people living in regional and rural communities, general practitioners often provide the only locally available medical services."

To access submissions, go to the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/haa

Wilde about Murdoch

Breathless hyperbole accompanies much of the media's frenzy on topics that have surfaced time and again. Admittedly time and place make a difference as do some of the circumstances involved but often there is a repeated theme in the tide of events.

Take the Murdoch fracas. Here's Oscar Wilde on journalistic invasion of privacy in the late 19th century, quoted in *Oscar Wilde: Nothing ... Except My Genius* compiled by Alastair Rolfe and published in 1997 by Penguin Classics.

"In England, journalism...is still a great factor, a really remarkable power. The tyranny that it proposes to exercise over people's private lives seems to me to be quite extraordinary. The fact is that the public have an insatiable curiosity to know everything except what is worth knowing. Journalism, conscious of this, and having tradesman-like habits, supplies their demands. In centuries before ours the public nailed the ears of journalists to the pump. That was quite hideous. In this century journalists have nailed their own ears to the keyhole. That is much worse."

The above quote was published as part of a letter to the editor of The Canberra Times from Ian Mathews on July 21, 2011.

If you have a literary quote from the past which aptly comments on a current topic, send it to the editor of *Emeritus*: ian.mathews7@bigpond.com

Wind in the willows

Willows are major environmental weeds of riverbank habitats across much of south-eastern Australia, as observers of Sullivan's Creek would know from years past.

They obstruct water flow, increase water temperature; change water chemistry and can displace native riverine plant species.

A CSIRO project looking at the reproductive ecology and dispersal ability of the most aggressive invasive species of willows in Australia is providing urgently needed

information to help land managers more efficiently control this weed. This research was collaboration between CSIRO and several Catchment Management Authorities in Victoria, the Australian National University and the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment.

The results are crucial for land managers as willow control is expensive, time consuming, and eradication can be unsuccessful because of the willows capacity to reinfest areas a short time after they have been removed.

CSIRO researcher Tara Hopley investigated the reproductive ecology and seed dispersal strategies of *Salix cinerea* or grey willow, which is a Weed of National Significance.

The study focused on three main problems: how willows are pollinated and how much seed they can make; how far willow pollen and seed can move across catchments; and, identifying trees and populations within catchments that are key seed 'donators'.

"We discovered that this species of willow is pollinated by both insects and wind, and that the average willow tree can make 330,000 seeds in a season," Ms Hopley said.

"That is about 25 million seeds generated each year by an average infestation along half a kilometre.

Genetic paternity tests and spatial analysis were used to determine how pollen and seeds are dispersed across a typical catchment.

"The results show that over half the pollen and seed is moving more than 15 kilometres between rivers. This high rate of spread suggests that land managers have to act urgently on control efforts across the whole catchment if long-term eradication is going to be effective," Ms Hopley said.

"We also found a small proportion of sites studied were producing a large proportion of the seed. In practical terms this means that clearing just 20 per cent of sites could see a 50 percent reduction in seed production."

The Director of the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research, CSIRO scientist Dr Andrew Young, said the research provides land managers with scientific information that make current willow removal efforts more efficient, saving money and time.

Canberra lab improving wheat yields

With the world's population set to reach 8.9 billion by 2050, CSIRO scientists are hunting down and exploiting a number of wheat's key genetic traits in a bid to substantially boost its grain yield.

Locating genes of agricultural importance within the complex wheat genome is challenging but possible using new equipment such as that being developed by the High Resolution Plant Phenomics Centre (HRPPC) in Canberra.

The rate of wheat-yield improvement achievable through conventional plant breeding and genetic engineering alone is not fast enough to compete with a rapidly growing global population, changing climates and decreasing water availability in the battle for accessible and affordable food and fuel.

"To avert future food security catastrophes we must accelerate the rate of wheat yield improvement," says the leader of a CSIRO wheat research team dedicated to crop adaptation and improvement, Dr Richard Richards.

"Scientists need to quickly identify the traits and management practices responsible for capturing key resources such as light, water and nutrients, and converting them to grain."

CSIRO's Dr Richard Poiré is studying *Brachypodium* – a type of grass similar in many ways to wheat – at the HRPPC to identify the function and location of the genes responsible for important traits such as shoot growth, biomass accumulation, photosynthesis and root growth. By studying a model plant and applying the findings to cereals, scientists can accelerate the breeding of next-generation food and biofuel crops.

Another member of the team, Dr Anton Wasson, is investigating root growth in Australian and Indian wheat crops.

His aim is to identify new wheat varieties with faster-growing, deeper root systems that can capture more water during flowering and grain development.

If successful, the research will enable wheat breeders to produce improved varieties for the water-limited environments of both Australia and India.

Crops and climate change

CSIRO scientists are investigating the potentially damaging effects climate change will have on Australia's agricultural crops and native plants as carbon dioxide concentrations, temperatures and rainfall patterns change.

"We're facing an urgent need to develop new crop varieties for anticipated conditions in 20 to 50 years," said a team leader in the climate-ready cereals project at CSIRO, Dr Jairo Palta.

The results of Dr Palta's study into how different wheat traits perform under predicted future climate conditions will enable wheat breeders to select traits that maximise growth and quality.

Dr Robert Godfree is investigating how native and invasive plant communities will respond to climate change.

"Grasses are an important component of healthy agricultural ecosystems yet there is relatively little data on how they will respond to climate change," he said.

Preliminary results are encouraging and the efficient, versatile and inexpensive experiment design developed by Dr Godfree and his team is now being adopted by a number of colleagues in Australia and overseas.

The iconic Australian wattle (*Acacia*) may also feel the effects of a changing climate.

Dr Joe Miller and his CSIRO colleagues are modelling the predicted distribution of *Acacia* species around Australia using

climate variables such as temperature, available water and solar energy, soil type and topographic elevation.

"Once we understand what climate variables are intrinsically tied to wattle habitats we can predict where these habitats will move to in the future," Dr Miller said.

CSIRO to lead international research centre

CSIRO's Dr Neal Wai Poi will lead the development of a major new international mining and mineral processing research centre based in Santiago, Chile.

Developed by CSIRO in collaboration with the University of Chile and leading industry and research partners, the Chile International Centre of Excellence in Mining and Mineral Processing will tackle key challenges that both the Australian and Chilean mining industries face.

"Australia and Chile have many common current and future challenges that their mining industries need to address. These include processing lower-grade ores, improving water and energy efficiency in remote operations, and deeper open-cut and underground operations," Dr Wai Poi said.

"The Centre of Excellence will have extensive benefits for Australia, including creating new bilateral business opportunities for service companies, improving the efficiency and competitiveness of the industry and advancing scientific research."

Dr Wai Poi said the Centre will provide both countries with a unique opportunity to build a world-leading partnership. Collaboration to address these common challenges will be beneficial for both nations.

"The Centre will facilitate great benefits for Chile, allowing faster access to new and existing technologies in the mining sector, building new and improved technologies and strengthening local capacity to build the services sector through partnership with industry," Dr Wai Poi said.

Dr Wai Poi brings with him a strong network of industry and research contacts in the international mining and mineral resources community and a wealth of knowledge in negotiating large-scale, multi-organisational and multi-national projects.

"I'm excited and honoured to take on this role as Director of CSIRO's first international Centre of Excellence. I hope the Centre will confirm CSIRO's reputation as a global leader in science, technology and innovation," Dr Wai Poi said.

Shortly after joining CSIRO in 2009 as a research leader, Dr Wai Poi was appointed Acting Director of the Light Metals Flagship. He previously worked with Corus Aluminium Voerde GmbH in Germany coordinating its involvement in several European Union projects (ALU-2000 and NOVEM), with Simonsen AS in Hong Kong and Australia, and with Rio Tinto Aluminium Technology in Australia.

The Centre of Excellence will be co-funded by the Chilean Government and is supported by CICITEM, the University of Antofagasto and leading industry partners including BHP Billiton Codelco, Anglo American Chile, Antofagasta Minerals and Xstrata Copper as well as local Australian companies.

European Union's academic events

The European Union: Still an Elite Project?
This presentation by Professor Luca Verzichelli, Italian Politics and Public Policy Analysis, and Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Siena, will present an overview of the current state of the 'Europeanness' among top decision makers in European countries. ANU Centre for European Studies, 1 Liversidge Street (Bldg 67C), Canberra. RSVP: europe@anu.edu.au . Thursday 4 August 2011, 11:00am – 12:30pm.

The ANU Centre for European Studies invites applications for the ANU Summer Research Scholarships. The scholarships provide promising students with experience of research work. Applications open 1 August 2011, and close 31 August 2011. For further information about the scholarship

see: <http://cass.anu.edu.au/scholarships/srs>
.For enquiries regarding supervision of Europe-related projects contact: europe@anu.edu.au

Voiceless's annual Animal Law Lecture Series returns 1–15 August 2011 with leading European Union policy advisor Peter Stevenson, international guest lecturer. Peter will be sharing his experience in lobbying for legislative change to improve conditions for farm animals, including the leading role he played in winning the EU bans on veal crates, battery cages and sow stalls as well as a new status for animals in EU law as sentient beings. Join the Voiceless team to hear Peter as he shares 'Reflections from the European Union'. 2 August 2011, 6.15pm – 7.30pm (doors open from 6pm) at the **Law Theatre, ANU College of Law, Fellows Road, Australian National University**.

Building an Asia Pacific Community: Economic, Security and Socio-Political Dimensions - Seminar at the University of Sydney, 30 August 2011. This mini-symposium will consider regulatory and legal implications of the proposal by Australia's present Foreign Minister to go beyond existing mechanisms within the vibrant Asia-Pacific region to promote an "Asia Pacific community" entrenching better "habits of cooperation" in economic, security and socio-political affairs. More information at www.sydney.edu.au/law/events/ or law.events@sydney.edu.au

The Contemporary European Studies Association of Australia announces the 19th annual Europe Essay Competition 2011. Best essay by an undergraduate (2 - 3,000 words) and best essay by an honours or postgraduate student (4- 6,000 words). Send an electronic version of your essay to: cesaa@cesaa.org.au . Ensure the subject heading reads 'CESAA ESSAY COMP'. Closing Date Friday 21 October, 2011. Further information evan.thompson@monash.edu

Media, Communication and Democracy: Global and National Environments. Conference in Melbourne 1-2 September 2011. The EU Centre at RMIT University with the School of Media and

Communication (RMIT) and Media and Democracy in Eastern Europe Research Project (MDCEE) (University of Oxford, UK) invite you to attend the Centre's inaugural annual conference. Storey Hall at the city campus of RMIT University, Swanston Street, Melbourne. Inquiries to eucentre@rmit.edu.au or visit www.rmit.edu.au/eucentre

The EU's Biofuels Policy Road: *Driving Lessons for Australia?* Adrian Kay, Crawford School of Economics & Government, ANU. Tuesday 2 August 2011, 11:00am – 12:30pm. Is the EU able to deliver on the biofuels component of its climate change agenda? Drawing on a UK ESRC-funded research project on the three main biofuels markets (the EU, USA and Brazil), Adrian Kay will focus on the dynamics of biofuels markets and EU policies. ANU Centre for European Studies. RSVP: europe@anu.edu.au

Call for Papers: *European Dilemmas: Internal and External issues facing the European Union*, December 7-8, 2011, University of Waikato, New Zealand. This is a multidisciplinary conference to investigate the broad phenomena which currently impact greatly on the EU, whether internally or externally. In the first instance we are calling for abstracts from potential presenters. Abstracts of 300 words should be submitted online by 1 August 2011. Please go to www.eucnetwork.org.nz.

What's on at ANU

What's On at ANU is a fortnightly email for staff and students that aims to highlight many of the interesting, enlightening and engaging public lectures, seminars and events happening around the university.

All of these events are open to the public. Please check if reservations are needed.

For more information on any of the events listed, or to see a calendar of upcoming events, go to <http://billboard.anu.edu.au/events.asp>

Monthly get-together

Usually the ANUEF meets monthly on the **first Wednesday of every month** for members to get together informally. The Collegiality Lunches will run until the last one for 2011 in November. The meetings are held in the Molony Room. Members can bring their own lunch, or buy one from Caterina's next door. Drinks are available for a donation of \$2 and tea, coffee and juice are available. There is sometimes a theme for these lunches. Please come if you can. There is no need to RSVP

ANUEF diary dates

17 August - John Moses " *Other People's Wars or perceived raison d'etat: Historians debate Australian Involvement in the Great War of 1914-18*".

21 September - Sally Ninham *A Cohort of Pioneers, Australian postgraduates and American postgraduate degrees*

19 October - Ian Young, ANU Vice-Chancellor.

16 November - Adrian D'Hage *The Dangers of Religion and US Foreign Policy in the Middle East*

21 December Committee + ANUEF AGM + Christmas Party
<http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus>
<http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus/events/PastEvents.html>

More details can be found here: <http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus/events.html>

Your benefits

Check this web site for a list of benefits enjoyed by members.
<http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus/benefits.html>

Next ANUEF Newsletter out in September