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MEDIA RELEASE

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SHAPE Futures:

A new network for early and mid-career researchers in the humanities, arts and social sciences

Launching today, the SHAPE Futures Network is an exciting initiative to strengthen the humanities, arts and social sciences in Australia by fostering a peer network, promoting opportunities, and giving a national voice to Early- and Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs).

“This initiative will help to promote and strengthen the SHAPE disciplines in Australia”, said SHAPE Futures Chair, Associate Professor Melissa Day. “SHAPE – Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts for People and Environment – is a new framing for our disciplines, initially developed by the British Academy to provide a more outcomes-focused alternative to HASS (Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences).”

Established with the support of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, SHAPE Futures will advocate for EMCRs in the humanities, arts and social sciences within and beyond the academy.

“It is exciting that the new Federal Government has signalled the high value it places on research for our nation across SHAPE and STEM,” said Associate Professor Day. ‘Our Network sees the role of SHAPE as critical to Australia’s strategic engagement with the communities that shape us at local, regional and global levels. It’s also vital to the future prosperity and equity of the nation.’”

SHAPE Futures is open to any academic or professional researcher in the early- or middle stage of their careers (typically up to 15 years post-PhD, excluding career interruptions). The term ‘researcher’ is interpreted broadly, and the Network firmly welcomes anyone who identifies as a researcher to become a member. Many EMCRs work in industry, in local, state or federal government, NGOs, and in the community. The SHAPE Futures Network encourages these researchers to participate in our newly formed community alongside EMCRs located in universities.



The SHAPE Network website – www.shapefutures.com.au – introduces the Network and provides useful resources and ways to get in involved.

“As we launch the Network, a crucial part of our work will be to better understand the EMCRs we represent,” said Associate Professor Day. “To do this, and learn about what Australian EMCRs are most concerned about, we are also launching the EMCR survey. This will help to build understanding of the needs of this diverse group and we will use the data collected to develop strategies for EMCR representation, advocacy, opportunities and network-building.”

Interested parties are encouraged to complete the survey and to circulate widely among their own networks. The survey is available [here](#), and can also be accessed through our website.

The first SHAPE Futures Executive Committee includes EMCRs from diverse disciplines working across Australia.

Chairperson: Associate Professor Melissa Day, The University of Queensland

Deputy Chairpersons: Dr Sarah Midford, La Trobe University
Dr Tristan Moss, Griffith University

Secretary: Dr Raihan Ismail, The Australian National University

Membership Coordinator: Professor Muireann Irish, The University of Sydney

Media & Communication Coordinators: Dr Maria Dahm, The Australian National University
Dr Michelle Tye, The University of New South Wales

Professional Bodies Liaison: Dr Georgia Stannard, National Trust of Australia

Ordinary Members: Dr Rebecca Ananian-Welsh, The University of Queensland
Dr Tully Barnett, Flinders University
Dr Elizabeth Flynn, RMIT
Dr Elise Klein, The Australian National University
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