



Research in Engineering Education Symposium & Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference

5 – 8 December, 2021 - Perth, WA



WORKSHOP

Aboriginal Perspectives in Engineering Education Practice and Research – Understanding and Appreciating Relationships

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WORKSHOP MODE

Hybrid during Perth business hours

OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP

The Indigenous Perspectives space has drawn much interest from students, staff and faculty leaders alike. The Australian Council of Engineering Deans have recognised the importance of this in their position statement on Indigenous Perspectives in Engineering Education (ACED, 2018). Capacity in the engineering education community is slowly building around this topic (Kennedy, 2016, Prpic, 2018), but the fact remains that there are many more 'interested' people than there are 'experienced' people (Goldfinch, 2017). This creates the challenge for those who are experienced to provide support and advice to others. There is much good will, but converting good will into impact is an ongoing challenge. Frustrations often appear between the 'experienced' and the 'inexperienced', particularly around the issue of existing relationships others have built.

ACTIVITIES

We will explore the following topics, each from 'experienced' and 'inexperienced' perspectives:

1. The criticality of relationships with Aboriginal people and communities
2. The nature of relationships – different types, purposes, intents and what this enables in education and research
3. Scale and focus – Understanding what types of relationships can support large educational experiences, small immersive experiences, and research.
4. What are you asking for when you want to collaborate or initiate relationships?

TARGET AUDIENCE

Those who have experience running on country learning experiences and community driven student projects in engineering curricula, and those who are interested in doing so themselves.

OUTCOMES

Clearer perspective on the importance of relationships in this space and the range of types of engagement possible through different types of relationships. Participants will leave with an improved familiarity with the individuals working this space and how they can be supported in forming new relationships.

REFERENCES (OPTIONAL)

- ACED, 2018. *Position Statement: Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the engineering curriculum*. Australian Council of Engineering Deans Inc.
- Goldfinch, T., Prpic, J. K., Jolly, L., Leigh, E., & Kennedy, J. (2017). *Australian engineering educators' attitudes towards Aboriginal cultures and perspectives*. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 42(4), 429-444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2017.1328588>
- Kennedy, J., Goldfinch, T., Leigh, E., McCarthy, T., Prpic, J. K., & Dawes, L. (2016). *A Beginners Guide to Incorporating Aboriginal Perspectives into Engineering Curricula*. University of Wollongong.

Prpic, J.K. & Bell, D. (2018). *Designing an on-country engineering education experience in collaboration with the Gunditjmara community*. Proceedings of the 29th Annual Conference of the Australasian Association for Engineering Education, Hamilton, New Zealand: Engineers Australia, 2018: 18-23

KEYWORDS

Indigenous Perspectives, team building, communities of practice.

PRESENTERS' BACKGROUNDS

A/Professor Juliana Kaya Prpic is an educator and researcher at the University of Melbourne. Her work is exclusively focused on engaging with Aboriginal communities around Australia to collaboratively explore western engineering knowledge and Indigenous knowledge systems, and integrating Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing into the engineering curriculum.

<https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/profile/189827-juliana-prpic>

Dr Tom Goldfinch is Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) at the University of Sydney, and was President of the Australasian Association for Engineering Education from 2016-2018. His research interests are around preparing graduates for engineering practice with a focus on qualitative studies of the social and cultural aspects of engineering education and practice. Tom has published numerous papers and led several projects on the topic of Australian Indigenous Perspectives and Knowledges in engineering education and practice.

<https://sydney.edu.au/engineering/people/tom.goldfinch.php>