

INTERNATIONAL **LIFE COURSE** CONFERENCE 2025 A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE



Life Course Centre

ARC Centre of Excellence for Children
and Families over the Life Course

24-25 JULY 2025
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

Conference Sponsors

The Life Course Centre would like to thank our conference sponsors and collaborators, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), and the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC). Their support helps us deliver an event that explores innovative and emerging strategies, and sparks new ideas and partnerships to advance the future of the life course approach for addressing social disadvantage in Australia.



Centre Partners

The Life Course Centre would also like to thank our Centre Partners, who work with us to address social disadvantage over the life course for the benefit of Australians.

Australian Universities

- The University of Queensland
- The University of Western Australia
- The University of Melbourne
- The University of Sydney

National Partners

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- NSW Department of Customer Service
- Anglicare WA
- The Benevolent Society
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Brotherhood of St. Laurence
- Goodstart Early Learning
- National Growth Areas Alliance
- Minderoo Foundation

International Partners

- Auckland University of Technology
- Boston College
- University College Dublin
- University of Essex
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Wisconsin-Madison

A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

How can we break the cycle of deep and persistent disadvantage in Australia?

Using a life course approach, alongside a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data and methods, we will explore what it takes to answer this question.

Far more than a traditional academic conference, this event brings together collaborators from academia, government, and non-government organisations in Australia and internationally, with a clear focus on the future. Over two days we want to hear your ideas about future research priorities, methods, partnerships and infrastructure needed to make a difference for all Australians.

Help us develop a roadmap that outlines the agenda and strategy for finding a solution to social disadvantage in Australia.

Join the conversation

What are the priorities for breaking the cycle of disadvantage in Australia?



Whether it's through policy, research, service delivery or community-led initiatives, we want to hear your ideas.


During session breaks, visit our interactive workstations—facilitated by Life Course Centre members—to share your expertise. Explore, reflect, and contribute to a shared roadmap for the future of life course research.

Prefer a different way to share your thoughts?

Scan the QR code displayed at the end of each session to contribute throughout the day using a digital platform, or drop your ideas in our anonymous **feedback box**.

Together, let's shape the next stage of evidence and impact to drive meaningful change for Australians.

 Life Course Centre
 @lifecoursecentre.bsky.social

 **Free Wi-Fi**
NETWORK: BCEC Link
No password required

DAY ONE

Thursday, July 24, 2025

DAY ONE OVERVIEW

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	REGISTRATION
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	CONFERENCE OPENING AND WELCOME
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM	PLENARY KEYNOTE
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	MORNING TEA
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	PARALLEL SESSIONS
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	LUNCH
1:30 PM – 3:00 PM	PARALLEL SESSIONS
3:00 PM – 3:30 PM	AFTERNOON TEA
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM	PARALLEL SESSIONS
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	BREAK
6:00 PM – 6:30 PM	PRE-DINNER DRINKS
6:30 PM – 10:00 PM	CONFERENCE DINNER

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

REGISTRATION

HOUSEKEEPING

Free WI-FI

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Lanyards

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Photography and video

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Order of events

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Need help?

If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to a Life Course Centre Member wearing an orange "NEED HELP?" badge.

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

CONFERENCE OPENING

→ BOULEVARD AUDITORIUM

Welcome

Professor Janeen Baxter
Centre Director, ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course

Welcome to Country

Songwoman Maroochy Barambah
Songwoman and Law-woman of the Turrbal Tribe, Turrbal Dippil

Opening remarks

Professor Deborah Terry AC
Vice-Chancellor and President, The University of Queensland

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

PLENARY | KEYNOTE

→ BOULEVARD AUDITORIUM

PROFESSOR PATRICK MCGORRY AO

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

MORNING TEA

DAY ONE

Thursday, July 24, 2025

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM PARALLEL SESSIONS

→ ROOM B1

#gender

Achieving Gender Equality at Work and Home

This session investigates challenges to achieving gender equality at work and at home. It draws attention to the importance of changing family dynamics over the life course and differing institutional contexts. The session also examines policy making processes for achieving gender equality.

Professor Laura Bernardi

University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Angela Jackson

Productivity Commission Commissioner, Productivity Commission

Dr Suri Li

The University of Queensland
Postdoctoral Fellow, Life Course Centre

Dr Leonora Risse

The University of Canberra
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Professor Guyonne Kalb

The University of Melbourne
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B2

#education

Contextual Factors in Educational Inequalities

This session brings together researchers, practitioners, and community organisations to explore the intersection of education, inequity, and student outcomes. Presentations will examine how economic disadvantage shapes students' educational experiences and outcomes, the role of schools and communities in improving attendance, and the broader impact of family, school, and community engagement on children and youth development.

Professor Annemaree Carroll

The University of Queensland

Professor Rebekah Levine Coley

Boston College, USA
Partner Investigator, Life Course Centre

Dr Kirsten Hancock

The Smith Family

Dr Tomasz Zajac

The University of Queensland
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Professor Wojtek Tomaszewski

The University of Queensland
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B3

#cognitive

The Cognitive Science of Disadvantage

Deep and persistent disadvantage has profound consequences for cognition. Specifically, socioeconomic disadvantage has been linked to people's attitudes towards risk, impatience, capacity for self-control, and tendency to engage deeply with some issues, while neglecting others. How can we prevent cognition from becoming a pathway through which disadvantage becomes deep and persistent?

Professor Thomas Dohmen

The University of Bonn, Germany

Dr Juliana Silva Gonçalves

The University of Sydney
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

Professor Agnieszka Tymula

The University of Sydney
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Dr Sarah C Dahmann

The University of Melbourne
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

LUNCH

join the conversation

Don't forget to visit our interactive workstations to explore, reflect, and contribute to a shared roadmap for the future of life course research.

DAY ONE

Thursday, July 24, 2025

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

PARALLEL SESSIONS

→ ROOM B1

#families

Towards a Better Future for Families and Children

The relationship between socioeconomic disadvantage and human development is complex. Children's life chances are shaped by not only their family circumstances, but also by the support available through schools, neighbourhoods, and the broader community. How can we work together to support a brighter future for children and their families?

Professor Sharon Goldfeld

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

Professor Ariel Kalil

University of Chicago, USA
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

Professor Alina Morawska

The University of Queensland
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Dr Nicolás Salamanca

The University of Melbourne
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B2

#work

The Future of Work

This session will examine the changing nature of work in Australia from the perspectives of public and private sector. It will examine trends in casualisation, real wages, changing work schedules, and AI and the implications for employment and welfare policy.

Professor John Buchanan

The University of Sydney

Professor Samuel Harvey

Professor, Executive Director and Chief Scientist, Black Dog Institute

Fiona Macgregor

CEO and Managing Director, TAL Australia Group

Professor Greg Marston

The University of Queensland

CHAIR

Professor Nick Glozier

The University of Sydney
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B3

#firstknowledges

Elevating First Nations Knowledges: Ethics, Methodologies, and Research Futures

This panel brings together First Nations and allied researchers to explore the ethical, methodological, and structural shifts needed to prioritise First Nations research in Australia. As national funding bodies increasingly recognise the importance of First Nations knowledge systems, this conversation urges researchers to reflect, adapt, and align. Panellists will share insights from diverse fields – including epidemiology, community engagement and First Nations knowledge leadership, to spotlight how research can meaningfully support First Nations sovereignty, self-determination, and intellectual leadership. We invite critical reflection on the responsibilities of all researchers and the structural changes required to embed First Nations priorities in the future of research practice.

Associate Professor Kalinda Griffiths

Flinders University

Professor Bruce Pascoe

The University of Melbourne

Roslyn Von Senden

University of the Sunshine Coast

Associate Professor Andrew Sporle

The University of Auckland, New Zealand
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

Professor Aaron Corn

The University of Melbourne

CHAIR

Brendan Kennedy

The University of Melbourne
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM

AFTERNOON TEA

join the conversation

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DAY ONE

Thursday, July 24, 2025

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM PARALLEL SESSIONS

→ ROOM B1

#systems

Complex Social Systems

To understand interdependent causes of social/behavioural phenomena, we need to adopt a complex systems approach. This session explores the interaction of different social/behavioural factors and what role they play in specific outcomes.

Associate Professor Kathryn Davidson

The University of Melbourne

Professor Frank Dignum

Umeå University, Sweden

Dr Rajith Vidanaarachchi

The University of Melbourne
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Professor Mark Stevenson

The University of Melbourne
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B2

#globalsouth

Life Course Health and Wellbeing in the Global South

This session focuses on human capital, climate change, and the health and wellbeing of women, children, and adults across the life course in the Global South. It will explore future directions for maternal and child health in the context of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and achievements; the impact of climate change on health and poverty over the life course; and the effects of maternal beliefs, mental health, and economic resources on human capital accumulation in early life. Future priorities and strategies for advancing maternal and child health in the Global South will also be presented and discussed.

Professor Shyamal Chowdhury

Australian National University
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

Dr Meghnath Dhimal

Nepal Health Research Council, Nepal

Dr Md Mehedi Hasan

The University of Queensland
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

Professor Simon Rosenbaum

University of New South Wales, Sydney

CHAIR

Professor Abdullah Mamun

The University of Queensland
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B3

#earlychildhood

Early Childhood Development Services

Early childhood education and care is a key government policy in redressing social inequity. In this session, future directions in measurement, policy and practice will be explored by the speakers.

Myra Geddes

Social Impact General Manager, Goodstart
Early Learning

Professor Jason Downer

University of Virginia, USA

Jacqueline Hrast

Acting Group Manager Children and Families,
Australian Government Department of Social
Services

Anne Maree Taney

The University of Queensland
PhD Student, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Professor Karen Thorpe

The University of Queensland
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

Q&A CO-CHAIR

Dr Vee (Victoria) Sullivan

Interim National Research Manager,
Goodstart Early Learning

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

BREAK

6:00 PM – 6:30 PM

PRE-DINNER DRINKS

→ BOULEVARD ROOM FOYER

6:30 PM – 10:00 PM

CONFERENCE
DINNER

→ BOULEVARD ROOM

Dinner speaker

Professor Sue Harrison

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and
Innovation), The University of Queensland

DAY TWO

Friday, July 25, 2025

DAY TWO OVERVIEW

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	REGISTRATION
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	PLENARY KEYNOTE
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	MORNING TEA
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	PARALLEL SESSIONS
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	LUNCH
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM	PARALLEL SESSIONS
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	AFTERNOON TEA
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	PLENARY PANEL
4:00 PM – 4:30 PM	CONFERENCE CLOSE

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

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9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

PLENARY | KEYNOTE

→ BOULEVARD AUDITORIUM

PROFESSOR TOM CALMA AO

CHAIR

Professor Deborah Cobb-Clark AO

The University of Sydney
Deputy Director and Chief Investigator,
Life Course Centre

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM

MORNING TEA

join the conversation

Don't forget to visit our interactive workstations to explore, reflect, and contribute to a shared roadmap for the future of life course research.

DAY TWO

Friday, July 25, 2025

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM PARALLEL SESSIONS

→ ROOM B1

#mentalhealth

Societal Trends in Mental Health and Wellbeing

Australia is facing a mental health crisis. More than 40% of Australians experience mental illness at some stage in their lives, with more than half of these illnesses emerging before the age of 14. There is increasing concern about rising rates of depression and anxiety amongst adolescents, with suicide a leading cause of death amongst young Australians. This session examines these trends and explores what can be done to improve support services and outcomes.

Professor Nick Haslam

The University of Melbourne

Professor Nick Glozier

The University of Sydney
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

Professor Arnstein Mykletun

University of Tromsø, Norway

CHAIR

Professor Stefanie Schurer

The University of Sydney
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B2

#housing

Housing Precarity

This session will take an international look at forms of housing precarity, including its impacts on families, and look at what different societies are doing to address the needs of people excluded from existing housing systems.

Professor Juha Kaakinen

Tampere University, Finland

Dr Kate Raynor

Director, Centre for Equitable Housing,
Per Capita

Associate Professor Sergi Vidal

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

CHAIR

Professor Cameron Parsell

The University of Queensland
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B3

#data

Data Infrastructure for the Future

This session explores the evolving landscape of data infrastructure and its role in advancing social science research and policy. Academics, research bodies, and government agencies will discuss innovations in data collection, integration, and accessibility, as well as challenges related to privacy, governance, and ethical use. The session will highlight emerging technologies (including AI) and collaborative approaches that enhance data-driven decision-making for the future.

Seb Dunne

Data Integration Strategy, Australian Institute
of Health and Welfare

Jenny Fewster

Director, HASS and Indigenous Research Data
Commons, Australian Research Data Commons

Professor David Grusky

Stanford University, USA

Dr Chris Hatherly

CEO, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

Dr Luke Hendrickson

Program Manager Data Integration Services,
Statistical Production and Digital Services Division,
Australian Bureau of Statistics

CHAIR

Professor Wojtek Tomaszewski

The University of Queensland
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

DISCUSSANT/FACILITATOR

Professor Francis Mitrou

The Kids Research Institute Australia
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

LUNCH

join the
conversation

Don't forget to visit our interactive workstations to explore, reflect, and contribute to a shared roadmap for the future of life course research.

DAY TWO

Friday, July 25, 2025

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

PARALLEL SESSIONS

→ ROOM B1

#place

Place-based Disadvantage and Opportunities to Intervene

There are strong spatial patterns to disadvantage across Australia. We need to explore the elements of place-based disadvantage in order to inform policies to improve outcomes.

Professor Hayley Christian AM

The Kids Research Institute Australia
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

Bronwen Clark

CEO, National Growth Areas Alliance

Professor Stephanie Pincetl

University of California-Los Angeles, USA

Professor Mark Stevenson

The University of Melbourne
Chief Investigator, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Dr Sangeetha Chandrashekeran

The University of Melbourne
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

→ ROOM B2

#disability

Disability Research and Policy: What does the next decade look like?

This session explores key issues, challenges, and opportunities related to disability research and policy over the next decade, including reform of the NDIS and broader disability supports, inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schooling, the rise of the neurodiversity movement, demands for research and policy to be disability-led, and the advent of the National Disability Data Asset and National Disability Research Partnership.

Dr Cherry Baylousis

Director of Policy and Advocacy,
Disability Advocacy Network Australia

Professor Helen Dickinson

Professor of Public Service Research,
University of New South Wales, Canberra

Professor Jennifer Smith-Merry

The University of Sydney
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

Dr Elizabeth Stratton

The University of Sydney
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Dr Martin O'Flaherty

The University of Queensland

→ ROOM B3

#technology

Exploiting the Power of New Technologies

New technologies, including in artificial intelligence, are changing the way that social science research is being conducted. How can we harness these new opportunities to improve our understanding and targeting of social policy?

Professor Michael Haugh

The University of Queensland

Dr Ruihong Qiu

The University of Queensland
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

Varun Satish

Princeton University, USA

Professor Rhema Vaithianathan

Auckland University of Technology,
New Zealand
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

CHAIR

Professor Mark Western

The University of Queensland
Associate Investigator, Life Course Centre

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM

AFTERNOON TEA

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

PLENARY PANEL

→ BOULEVARD AUDITORIUM

Equal Futures

#equalfutures

How can Australia successfully navigate social, economic, environmental, and political turbulence in a globalised world?

Dr Ros Baxter

CEO, Goodstart Early Learning

Dr Nicole Bieske

Director, Social Policy and Research
Centre, Brotherhood of St. Laurence

Emi Hall

Director of Operations, Foundations for
Tomorrow

Professor Jacqui True

The University of Melbourne
Director, Australian Research Council
Centre of Excellence for the Elimination
of Violence against Women

CHAIR

Associate Professor Alyssa Milton

The University of Sydney
Research Fellow, Life Course Centre

4:00 PM - 4:30 PM

CONFERENCE
CLOSE

We acknowledge the
Traditional Custodians of the
lands on which we work and
live across Australia. We pay
our respects to Elders past and
present and recognise their
continued connections to land,
sea and community.

The Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Children and Families
over the Life Course (Life Course Centre) is administered by The University of Queensland
and has nodes at The University of Sydney, The University of Melbourne
and The University of Western Australia.



Australian Government
Australian Research Council



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