



## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Tides of Transformation: Pacific Pasts, Pacific Futures

The 6th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Pacific Studies

The Cairns Institute, James Cook University  
Cairns, North Queensland, Australia  
1-3 April, 2016

Through this interdisciplinary conference the Australian Association for Pacific Studies, in collaboration with the Cairns Institute, seeks to bring researchers together to share their knowledge and experience about critical dimensions of social and environmental transformation in the Pacific. The following panels have been submitted and accepted by the conference organising committee:

- Pan-Pacific Music of Protest
- Shifting Cultures, Shifting Languages: A Pacific Perspective
- Transference: Continuity in Time, Time in Continuity
- Possessing Paradise: Commodification and Desire in the Pacific
- Tourism, Culture and Heritage in the Pacific: Transformation or Marginalisation?
- Transforming Gender Relations in the Pacific
- Adaptation, Resilience and Changing Land and Marine-based Livelihood Systems in the Pacific
- Digital Transformations: Shifting Communication Spaces in the Pacific
- Pacific Legal Systems, Past, Present and Future
- Joining the Dots – Abandoned Histories
- Managing and Understanding the Role of Archaeological and Cultural Heritage in the Pacific
- The Interdisciplinary Panel on Climate Change
- Mobile Labour, Mobile Lives
- Aging in the Pacific: Intergenerational and Transnational Care
- TransOceanik: Creole Connections across the Pacific, the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans
- Through the Lens: Visualising Pacific Lives
- Emerging Research: Postgraduate Student Panel

We now warmly invite papers for these panels.

Paper abstracts should be 300 words or less and should be accompanied by the contact details of the presenters. Please email paper abstracts directly to the panel convenors (see list of panel abstracts and convenors)

**Deadline for submission: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015.** For general enquiries regarding the conference, please contact:

**Kalissa Alexeyeff** [k.alexeyeff@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:k.alexeyeff@unimelb.edu.au)

**THE CAIRNS  
INSTITUTE**

Research in  
tropical societies

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**The 6th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Pacific Studies**  
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**1-3 April, 2016**

We invite proposals for paper presentations in the following panels.

Proposals should be sent directly to the panel convenor/s and include title, abstract (150 words), followed by name and email address. Abstracts should be accompanied by a 100-word biography of the presenter/s.

Please note:

- Paper presenters will need to register to attend the conference
- Presenters should deliver papers for twenty (20) minutes, allowing ten (10) minutes for questions. Presenters who take longer than twenty (20) minutes will have a reduced question time.

### **Panel 1: Pan-Pacific Music of Protest**

Convenors:

Camellia Webb-Gannon (University of Western Sydney)  
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Michael Webb (University of Sydney)  
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The Pacific Islands region has long been a site of indigenous resistance to practices of colonialism, slavery, resource exploitation, cultural erosion, and political corruption. In the region dance, songs, and oral history remain strong cultural forms that bind communities together in unity of purpose, and are often employed effectively in resistance efforts. Genres of music employed in resistance efforts include the more recently absorbed styles of (conscious) Reggae, Hip Hop (Rap), and Gospel, but across the Pacific these also articulate with traditional or local 'folk' repertoires (*kaneka* in New Caledonia being one example). The decolonisation struggle in West Papua has inspired its own genre, and music videos supporting West Papuan independence produced by professional and amateur Pacific Islander musicians currently proliferate on YouTube and related music sharing platforms. Over the past decade indigenous music video in Australia has gained considerable momentum as a powerful medium for identity building that is capable of widely disseminating expressions of pride and protest. This panel seeks to explore themes that reverberate across the Pacific in relation to musics of resistance and struggle, and is interested in both shared and contrasting concerns, that is, in establishing the extent to which Pacific resistance musics are able to be usefully grouped together. It invites papers that:

- interrogate common tropes in such song and dance, including those of 'rupture', 'blackness' and 'indigeneity';
- compare local adaptations of music resistance genres;
- explore what the digital production and dissemination of such music adds to and (or) takes away from the efficacy of the music's advocacy;
- explore resistance musics and diaspora networks;
- link musical pasts and futures in resistance;
- pay attention to notions of Pacific regionalism(s) through music.

Equally, papers addressing specific case studies in indigenous music resistance in the Pacific and Australia are welcome.

## **Panel 2: Shifting Cultures, Shifting Languages: A Pacific perspective**

Convenors:

Distinguished Professor Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald (Language and Culture Research Centre, JCU)  
[Alexandra.Aikhenvald@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Alexandra.Aikhenvald@jcu.edu.au)

Professor R. M. W. Dixon (Language and Culture Research Centre, JCU)  
[Robert.Dixon@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Robert.Dixon@jcu.edu.au)

A fundamental question in understanding language dynamics is how cultural changes in the modern world affect linguistic expression, and the structure of languages. Linguistic globalization results in the spread of major languages, such as English or Tok Pisin, and the impending language shift which affects minority languages. Traditional authority structures undergo transformations. Under the impact of westernised societies, classificatory kinship systems are modified. The introduction of market economy affects patterns of customary exchange. New concepts go together with new ways of talking about things. The impact of language contact can be reflected in the increase of loan words. Numerous Oceanic and Papuan languages from Papua New Guinea have a substantial number of lexical loans from Tok Pisin; or an existing word can develop new meanings in new environments: for instance, the Manambu of the East Sepik consistently use the verb 'stand' in the meaning of 'stand' in an election. The Panel will offer a discussion of ways in which shifts and changes in the cultural environment accompany linguistic changes in minority languages. Our special focus is on investigating the impact of societal changes on kinship systems and patterns of interaction. We will also focus on determining the role of human agency in promoting, or slowing down, language change sensitive to change in cultural patterns and social relationships.

## **Panel 3: Transference: Continuity In Time, Time In Continuity**

Convenor: Ann Fuata [a.a.fuata@gmail.com](mailto:a.a.fuata@gmail.com)

This interdisciplinary panel will investigate themes of place, spatiality and temporality in diasporic art practices. The aim of this panel is to begin a discourse around how transitional notions of an *after death state*, are used as a framework and/or a means to an end in arts practice. It will explore themes of death, memory, mourning and transfer through artistic, cultural, social and philosophical dimensions based on each guest speaker's field of practice. This discussion will be propositional in nature. Areas of exploration throughout this panel may include, but are not limited to: the ritualised body in ephemeral art practices (Latai Funaki Taumoepeau, Artist); notations on shifting methodologies of contemporary collections management (Sana Balai, Collections Manager, Curator); delving into the underworld of ritualistic death, dying and rebirth processes; and sonic transference of intangible heritage.

## **Panel 4: Possessing Paradise: Commodification and Desire in the Pacific**

Convenors:

Kalissa Alexeyeff (The University of Melbourne)  
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Siobhan McDonnell (The Australian National University)  
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Geir Henning Presterudstuen (The University of Western Sydney)  
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This panel proposes a critical re-examination of the trope of 'Paradise'. This trope has a long global history encompassing colonial imaginings, missionary and travel narratives and 'Paradise' continues to influence narratives of place and landscape in the Pacific for both indigenous groups and others. Recent work has noted the inseparability of 'Paradise' from structures of inequality. For instance, Sharae Deckard in *Paradise Discourse, Imperialism and Globalization: Exploiting Eden* (2010), explores how images of natural bounty and abundance fuelled colonial fantasies of labour-free profit and accumulation of wealth and most importantly, served to obscure exploitative material relations such as slavery and land alienation. While attention has been paid to the instrumental potency of 'Paradise' for the 'West', it is often implicitly assumed that local engagement amounts to simple rejection or dismissal of 'Paradise'. In contrast we suggest that 'Paradise' is both an imaginary that frames engagement in the Pacific by outsiders as well as a complex and often contradictory landscape utilized in indigenous articulations of home and belonging. We invite interdisciplinary papers that explore the relation between paradise and the history of colonization and its continuation in late capitalism through tourism and development discourses as well as cultural imaginaries such as the postcolonial 'exotic' or the longings of diasporic populations.

## Panel 5: Tourism, Culture and Heritage in the Pacific: Transformation or Marginalisation?

Convenors:

Dr. Joseph Cheer (Monash University, Melbourne)

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Professor Marcus Stephenson (University of the South Pacific, Fiji)

[Stephenson\\_m@usp.ac.fj](mailto:Stephenson_m@usp.ac.fj)

The practice of combining tourism, culture and heritage toward macro and micro economic development imperatives in Pacific island countries (PICs) is firmly entrenched (Pratt and Harrison, 2015). This is in keeping with much analysis that hoists economic imperatives above the social, cultural and environmental imposts of such perspectives. In recognising the potential advantages of a tourism-driven development agenda, policy makers, international development agencies and community leaders largely embrace the monetisation of culture and heritage (Cheer, Reeves and Laing, 2013). This includes the deployment of traditional culture, customary land and diverse heritages toward tourism product development (Cheer and Reeves, 2015). However, increasingly the discourse at a local and grassroots level is punctuated by questions concerning the veracity of the tourism-driven growth agenda (Cheer, 2015; Scheyvens and Russell, 2012). This is mirrored by developments at a global scale in other less developing contexts that suggests the overall benefit of tourism at a local level is unconvincing (Saarinen and Rogerson, 2013). And as Pratt (2015) outlines, whether tourism-driven growth is or isn't the best course of action for PIC's is dependent on a range of factors, especially sector policy and planning. This panel seeks contributions from scholars actively examining the local-level impact of tourism-driven development. In particular, papers that interrogate the broad range of impacts including economic and non-economic impacts at a local level are sought. Finally, there is potential for papers in this panel to be developed into an edited volume that has already been proposed by a leading scholarly press.

### References

- Cheer, J. M., & Reeves, K. J. (2015). Colonial heritage and tourism: ethnic landscape perspectives. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 1-16.
- Cheer, J. M. (2015). After the cyclone: why relying on tourism isn't in Vanuatu's interests, *The Conversation*, 15 April, <https://theconversation.com/after-the-cyclone-why-relying-on-tourism-isnt-in-vanuatus-interests-39874>.
- Cheer, J. M., Reeves, K. J., & Laing, J. H. (2013). Tourism and Traditional Culture: Land Diving in Vanuatu. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 43, 435-455.
- Pratt, S., & Harrison, D. (2015). *Tourism in Pacific Islands: Current Issues and Future Challenges*: Routledge.
- Pratt, S. (2015). The economic impact of tourism in SIDS. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 52, 148-160.
- Saarinen, J., & Rogerson, C. M. (2013). Tourism and the Millennium Development Goals: perspectives beyond 2015. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(1), 23-30.
- Scheyvens, R., & Russell, M. (2012). Tourism and poverty alleviation in Fiji: comparing the impacts of small- and large-scale tourism enterprises. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20(3), 417-436.

## Panel 6: Transforming Gender Relations in the Pacific

Convenor: Professor Helen Lee (La Trobe University) [h.lee@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:h.lee@latrobe.edu.au)

The aim of this panel is to explore how gender roles and relations are transforming in the contemporary Pacific. A wide range of issues have been in the spotlight in recent years, ranging from gender violence, to the impact of mobile phones and ready access to pornography, to the role of women in leadership. To what extent are these new issues that are influenced by factors such as capitalism, globalisation, and transnationalism, and to what extent can they be understood in light of early research on gender relations? Does that early work on 'sexual antagonism' in PNG, or the focus on the role of sisters vs wives in Western Polynesia, give us any insights into the current state of gender politics in the Pacific? The impact of globalised discourses of human rights and feminism, the rise of Pasifika 'cosmopolitans' and the continuing power of the churches and chiefly hierarchies make for a fascinating mix of influences that invite further exploration. Papers are invited that seek to examine the complexities of gender in the Pacific past, present and future.

## **Panel 7: Adaptation, Resilience and Changing Land and Marine-based Livelihood Systems in the Pacific**

Convenors:

Gina Koczberski (Curtin University)

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Simon Foale (James Cook University)

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The majority of rural villagers in the South Pacific continue to rely heavily on agriculture and marine resources for subsistence and as a primary source of cash income. Over the last two decades subsistence food production and commercial agriculture and fisheries have come under both short and long-term pressures due to growing market integration, modernisation processes and labour migration. At the same time, many areas are experiencing increasing resource and population pressures, environmental stresses and resource disputes. This panel seeks papers that examine how rural people/communities are responding to and adapting their land and marine-based livelihood systems and management practices to the challenges and opportunities arising from social, economic, environmental and demographic shifts. Papers are invited that focus on one or more of the following broad areas:

- Modifications of local agricultural and fisheries production.
- Influence of place-based processes on household decision-making and livelihood choices.
- The ability of poor villagers to cope with and adapt to pressures on their livelihood systems.
- How local meanings and values, identity and social relations come under scrutiny in the context of change.
- Examine and critically explore definitions of resilience, vulnerability and adaptive capacity.
- Critically examine the notion of biodiversity in relation to Western-scientific and 'Pacific' conceptions of the ecological processes underpinning agricultural and fishery production.
- Examine local understandings and experiences of resilience and vulnerability.
- Assess the sustainability of subsistence and commercial agricultural and fishery production.

## **Panel 8: Digital Transformations: Shifting Communication Spaces in the Pacific**

Convenors:

Assoc. Professor Evangelia Papoutsaki (UNITEC, NZ)

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Assoc. Professor Heather Horst (RMIT, Australia)

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This panel invites papers that examine how digital media and technologies are being integrated into everyday life in the Pacific, their impact on the wellbeing of Pacific peoples and their contribution to social and environmental transformation in the region. Digital media and technologies have come to play an increasingly important role in social, economic and communicative activities in the Pacific Islands. Like the region, media and communication in the Pacific are characterised by diversity and complexity that are shaped by factors such as culture, languages, geography, populations, history, politics, transnational networks, infrastructures and policies. Media industries in some countries include private, government and community media, across radio, newspaper and TV platforms. In other countries mass media industries are comprised only of government funded media. These histories of media ownership are increasingly shaped by the expansion of digital infrastructure such as fibre and undersea cables, public wifi initiatives, the growth in mobile telecommunications and the availability of 'small' media such as DVDs, apps, social media and flash drives. These, in turn, have increased the circulation of content between families, individuals and communities. In this panel, we invite papers that seek to explore the diverse communicative ecologies of the islands and the complexities of new digital media technologies in the region. Papers may explore the integration of particular digital media technologies and their affordances as well as their use in communicating climate change, health and other important Pacific issues as well as the practices of education, journalism, governance, advocacy and activism. Full papers will be used to develop a proposal for a journal special issue or an online publication with ePress.



## **Panel 9: Pacific Legal Systems, Past, Present and Future**

Convenor: Professor Jennifer Corrin (The University of Queensland) [j.corrin@law.uq.edu.au](mailto:j.corrin@law.uq.edu.au)

At independence, the preambles of many Pacific constitutions gave lip service to traditional values, and the enacting provisions afforded recognition to indigenous customary laws. However, rules for the application of those laws in the State system were often left to be provided in the future. Since that time, Pacific countries have taken diverse approaches to fulfilling this mandate. Generally, little guidance on the complex questions arising from the interaction of the State legal system and customary laws has been given.

This Panel invites papers examining the mode and extent of recognition of indigenous customary laws by the State in the Pacific and the devices introduced for applying that law in the State system. Contributors to the Panel are encouraged to explore the tensions which have arisen from the interaction between the State legal system and indigenous customary systems, and to put forward suggestions for addressing those issues.

## **Panel 10: Joining the Dots – Abandoned Histories**

Convenor: Jude Philp (Senior Curator, Macleay Museum, Sydney University) [jude.philp@sydney.edu.au](mailto:jude.philp@sydney.edu.au)

Sir William MacGregor, first Governor of British New Guinea, brought together around 13,000 objects that were eventually dispersed to 8 museums across the world, including the National Museum of Papua New Guinea. This collection is a version of a relatively common occurrence of the period: large-scale collecting for museum purposes. In the late 19th and early 20th century museum and academic institutions put resources towards large-scale expedition collecting as a way of increasing knowledge and holdings. At the same time governments in colonised places set up museums, expanding collections for International Exhibition and colonial use. As the 20th century wore on attention to the collecting moment/s waned and collections were dispersed and displaced. Focus was instead put to individual objects which were highlighted and scrutinised for their 'iconic' appearance, aesthetic characteristics and importance to singular cultural groups and individuals. Increasingly academics interested in material culture are looking beyond the single object and single cultural group to understand the 'whole' of large collections of objects. Such material shares a temporal range, and reflects a common experience of the colonised but often little else. In the multilingual southern Pacific region especially, such collections contain the material culture of many different linguistic and political groups. So how do we understand collections of over 10,000 objects? This session welcomes papers addressing the conceptual problems of this work such as - how to understand past local entrepreneurship within collections; futures for multi-cultural, multi-village collections in the wake of climate change; the implications of large-scale appropriation; typologies and assemblages; understanding colonial structures.

## **Panel 11: Managing and Understanding the Role of Archaeological and Cultural Heritage in the Pacific**

Convenors:

Leasiolagi Professor Malama Meleisea [m.meleisea@nus.edu.ws](mailto:m.meleisea@nus.edu.ws)

Lorena Sciusco [l.sciusco@nus.edu.ws](mailto:l.sciusco@nus.edu.ws)

Charles Parkinson [c.parkinson@nus.edu.ws](mailto:c.parkinson@nus.edu.ws)

Centre for Samoan Studies, National University of Samoa.

This panel discussion will focus on issues surrounding the practice of archaeological and cultural heritage management as it applies to the Pacific. We have a particular interest in how archaeology and cultural heritage are perceived as well as how they relate to and support contemporary issues of identity and ownership of the past. How are these used to contribute to the contemporary Pacific senses of identity (if at all) and how do we protect, manage and understand the tangible and intangible cultural heritage resources so that they are not lost to future generations in what is currently, something of a cultural heritage legislation vacuum? The session will also discuss how to manage and mitigate potentially significant conflicts between the pressing need to address valid, short term economic needs and the desire to manage development in a longer term, cultural heritage sustainable manner.

## Panel 12: The Interdisciplinary Panel on Climate Change

Convenors:

Dr Christine Pam (James Cook University)

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Dr Christian Reepmeyer (James Cook University)

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This panel brings together scholars with a research focus on climate change adaptation of communities past and present in the Pacific. Climate change has been a driver for social change throughout human past in the Pacific and understanding resilience of communities is ever more pressing with the new challenge of human induced global warming. However, investigation of responses of societies to climate change in the tropical Indo-Pacific is clouded by an absence of multidisciplinary research. Understanding the palaeo-environmental record has made significant advances in the last decade and archaeological research of past societies has shown that the ultimate response of human societies to environmental change is the abandonment of islands. This research might provide a baseline for theoretical frameworks as climate change has created in the past, and will create in the future, migrations and relocations of people; themes very much in the public view. Questions of migration as an adaptation strategy to climate change have been raised, yet 'climate refugee' and 'environmental migrant' are contested terms, debated among academics, in parliaments and international organisations, and by Pacific Islanders themselves. Climate change is being incorporated into explanations for migration by Pacific Islanders, yet many enact a strong determination to adapt and remain living in their communities. With this panel we would like to integrate archaeological, cultural, social, political, economic and historical perspectives to investigate the resilience of communities in the Pacific and the processes and factors involved in decisions to migrate as a response to climate change.

## Panel 13: Mobile Labour, Mobile Lives

Convenor: Victoria Stead (Deakin University) [victoria.stead@deakin.edu.au](mailto:victoria.stead@deakin.edu.au)

The Pacific, as Epeli Hau'ofa and so many others have shown us, has always been a site of mobility and connection. At the same time, contemporary processes of regional and global change are transforming patterns and experiences of mobility. Labour mobility is becoming increasingly prominent across the region, with Pacific Islanders travelling between Pacific Island countries as well as to Australia and New Zealand, and further afield. Labour mobility, including seasonal labour mobility, is held up by commentators and politicians as key to economic prosperity and development. Labour mobility, though, is not only an economic phenomenon: it is also cultural and political, and it involves the movement not only of bodies but also of ideas, hopes, imaginings, and understandings. It connects people and places with long and sometimes difficult histories including, in places such as Queensland (where this panel will be held), histories of blackbirding and indentured labour. This panel seeks to explore the multiple dimensions of Pacific labour mobility. Questions to which papers might respond include, but need not be limited to:

- How can we best understand the possibilities and the challenges of labour mobility in the Pacific?
- How is labour mobility experienced by those who labour, by those who they encounter in their migrations, and/or by those they leave behind?
- What are the imaginative, cultural, and affective dimensions of Pacific labour mobility?
- How is labour mobility changing? And how do contemporary experiences of labour mobility intersect with past ones?
- What kind of *futures* do people hope their migrations—and their labour—will produce?
- How do gender, class, colonial and postcolonial dynamics inform experiences and patterns of labour mobility?
- How does mobility intersect with *place* when people migrate to work?

## Panel 14: Aging in the Pacific: Intergenerational and Transnational Care

Convenor: Michael Wood (James Cook University) [Michael.Wood@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Michael.Wood@jcu.edu.au)

The dramatic increase in human life expectancy over the past century has led to complex moral dilemmas as people grapple with how to imagine, plan for, and deal with later life. In this panel we focus on issues of caring for aging kin among Pacific peoples. We particularly invite papers that focus on *intergenerational* relationships involving reciprocal care relations and exchanges in different contexts. Case studies might include caring for aging kin in the context of the transnational dispersal of families. Other studies could focus on such matters as 'successful aging'; values of autonomy, interdependence and dependence; questions regarding care provision, nursing homes and respite facilities, inheritance, funeral and burial preferences; gendered care, and so on.

## **Panel 15: TransOceanik: Creole Connections across the Pacific, the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans**

Convenors:

Marie M'Balla-Ndi (James Cook University)

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Rosita Henry (James Cook University)

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This panel explores differences and commonalities in the social, cultural and political situations of peoples across the tropical belt of the three Oceans. The intention is to gain a better understanding of issues faced especially by 'creolised' communities in the island States and tropical regions of the three Oceans. We use the term 'creolised/creolisation' to refer to the 'mutual influence between/among two or several groups, creating an ongoing dynamic interchange of symbols and practices, eventually leading to new forms with varying degrees of stability' (Eriksen 2007: 172-173). We invite papers that focus on the influence of global powers across the three Oceans and the similarities and differences in colonial histories that relate to 'creolisation' processes.

## **Panel 16: Through the Lens: Visualising Pacific Lives**

Convenor: Dr. Daniela Vavrova (ALTAR, James Cook University) [daniela.vavrova@my.jcu.edu.au](mailto:daniela.vavrova@my.jcu.edu.au)

This panel, which is hosted by ALTAR (Anthropological Laboratory for Tropical Audiovisual Research) invites conference participants who are interested in film, ethnography, media, and imagination to present audiovisual work that focuses on Pacific lives and particularly on issues of social and environmental change. We especially encourage postgraduate students and early career researchers to present their work in progress. We do not have a specific theme, but simply wish to provide a forum for researchers, visual artists, filmmakers and others to discuss ethical, aesthetical, technical and theoretical issues that arise in the context of audiovisual research and practice.

## **Panel 17: Emerging Pacific Research: Postgraduate Student Panel**

Convenor: Andrew Keleva Faleatua (University of Sydney)

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Postgraduate students are invited to submit papers to any of the other panels, but this panel is particularly for students to present their current research projects in the form of short 5-10 minute presentations. Work could be presented in various creative ways instead of a paper – eg. the use of 'talking head' videos or digital posters.