



M C K E L L   I N S T I T U T E

ANNUAL  
REVIEW

2020

# ABOUT THE MCKELL INSTITUTE

The McKell Institute is an independent, not-for-profit, public policy institute dedicated to developing practical policy ideas and contributing to public debate.

## SYDNEY

Michael Buckland CEO  
Danielle Asciak HEAD OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS  
Connor Wherrett POLICY OFFICER  
Alice Stafford ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

## MELBOURNE

Ryan Batchelor EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MCKELL VICTORIA  
James Pawluk EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUPERANNUATION  
& UNIVERSAL OWNERSHIP, MCKELL VICTORIA

## BRISBANE

Rachel Nolan EXECUTIVE CHAIR, MCKELL QUEENSLAND  
Marianna O’Gorman EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
MCKELL QUEENSLAND (maternity leave)

## ADELAIDE

Edward Cavanough DIRECTOR OF POLICY

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**“We need active social policy; active intervention. Cost of living is going up, wages are not going up.”**

**JOHN PODESTA**

FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF TO US PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON, COUNSELOR TO US PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AND CHAIR OF HILLARY CLINTON'S 2016 CAMPAIGN JOINED THE MCKELL INSTITUTE AND TANYA PLIBERSEK MP FOR AN IN CONVERSATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY ON 7 MARCH 2019.







FORMER CEO  
**SAM CROSBY**  
PICTURED WITH RBA  
GOVERNOR **PHILIP LOWE**  
AT AN EXECUTIVE  
BOARDROOM LUNCHEON.

## CHAIR'S STATEMENT

# Hon. Dr Craig Emerson

During the weirdest of years, as much of Australia shut down physically and went online, the McKell Institute continued to influence national and state government and opposition policy thinking. McKell produced major reports on immigration, the economic benefits of compulsory superannuation, junior pay rates, wage-cutting strategies in the mining industry, the desirability of universal childcare, the underpayment of wages in fruit picking, and many more.

McKell's first ever policy recommendation — a detailed plan to substitute stamp duty for land tax released in 2011 — was adopted by NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and the NSW Government in its 2020 budget.

And the arguments for universal childcare were picked up and adopted by Labor Leader Anthony Albanese in his 2020 budget reply.

Speakers at McKell functions included NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Treasurer Perrottet, Planning Minister Rob Stokes and Environment Minister Matt Kean, Victorian Treasurer Tim Pallas, Deputy Premier James Merlino, Energy and Environment Minister Lily D'Ambrosio, Transport Ministers Jacinta Allan and Jaala Pulford and Industry Minister Martin Pakula, Queensland Deputy Premier Steven Miles, Tourism Minister Kate Jones and Employment Minister Shannon Fentiman, as well as South Australian crossbench Senator Rex Patrick.

Former Chief of Staff to US President Bill Clinton and Chair of Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign John Podesta addressed a McKell Institute policy forum moderated by Tanya Plibersek.

Other speakers have included Productivity Commission Chair Michael Brennan, Treasury Secretary Steven Kennedy, Reserve Bank Governor Philip Lowe and Deputy Governor Guy Debelle and former head of the Greater Sydney Commission Lucy Turnbull.

Among the projects organised with union supporters of the McKell Institute were events with the TWU and a report on aviation in the post-COVID world, a report on wage underpayment in the blueberry industry with the AWU, the TWU and the SDA, and a report with Unions NSW on paid pandemic leave.

Social distancing requirements limited McKell's opportunities for official functions, but the Victorian branch was able to host Dr Don Russell in launching the superannuation report while KPMG hosted Anthony Albanese for a scene-setting speech ahead of the 2020 federal budget.

Adapting to the COVID-19 restrictions, McKell switched to online events, hosting Malcolm Turnbull, Chris Bowen, Jim Chalmers, Tanya Plibersek, Clare O'Neil, Jason Clare, Stephen Jones, Chris Minns and former US Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power.

The McKell Institute prides itself in producing high-quality reports and events designed to shape public policy in Australia. Its union and corporate sponsors cooperate in supporting McKell's work. We are very grateful for their ongoing support, especially in the challenging economic times caused by COVID-19.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to outgoing CEO, Sam Crosby, for his three e's — energy, enthusiasm and excellence. We couldn't have taken McKell to the level it now occupies without his service. Welcome, too, to Michael Buckland, who takes up the role from mid-January 2021.



## OUTGOING CEO STATEMENT

## Sam Crosby

When Peter Bentley first described his plan for a “think tank” over ten years ago I was beyond pessimistic. I couldn’t understand what possible role it could play in the policy debate. Australia’s think tank scene at the time was uninspiring — struggling for relevance, funds, and attention. Some eleven years later, and seven as the CEO, I see how wrong I was! My time at McKell has without a doubt been the most fulfilling part of my career thus far.

I have seen the McKell Institute emerge as a leader in the now thriving ecosystem of think tanks within Australia’s political landscape. The Institute has grown immensely — it now operates in three states; each with their own boards, members, and executive directors. We work cooperatively with political parties, bureaucracies and independent agencies to grapple with the biggest challenges in the country. And most importantly, we’ve had a real impact on policy.

The McKell Institute’s agenda is based upon the premise that Australian policy is in need of a truly thoughtful source of leadership; capable of providing innovative yet practical solutions to seemingly intractable problems. We have done just that. Tax reform, infrastructure, insecure work, wages, superannuation, environmental policy — McKell has claimed a pivotal role in major policy debates. Our policy recommendations continue to be adopted into government budgets at the state and federal level, by parties across the political spectrum.

In the past two years alone, we have released over 30 research pieces and hosted more than 60 events — 13 of which took place virtually as McKell transitioned online during the pandemic. Our social media footprint has also increased enormously in my time, as our impressions can be tracked to millions of people across the globe.



Above all, I’m extremely proud of the team we’ve built — our staff have been the secret to much of our success. I’m pleased they’ll be remaining to help develop McKell through its next phase. I’m also excited to be handing over the leadership to my good friend Michael Buckland.

Michael has exciting plans to grow and strengthen the McKell Institute from here. I can’t predict what the future holds — especially in these uncertain times. Our previous business plans and mission statements have consistently underestimated the growth we’ve ended up achieving and our ability to navigate the worst recession in our lifetimes is a testament to McKell’s strength.

What I am certain of is that with McKell’s special combination of members, staff, and leadership the future is very bright.

## CEO STATEMENT

## Michael Buckland

Australians mobilised on an unprecedented scale to respond to crises in 2020. They showed that when confronted with significant challenges we are capable of rising to the occasion.

It is tempting to think that the challenges we face will end with the pandemic or its associated recession.

It will take years to rebuild businesses and to drive the productivity growth necessary to deliver rewarding dignified work. It will take decades for government budgets to fully recover. And we are only beginning to understand the changing nature of the ways we live and work.

Never have big ideas been more important.

Big ideas are exactly what has been delivered by the McKell Institute under the leadership of outgoing CEO Sam Crosby.

Sam and the McKell Institute have been integral to some of Australia’s most significant policy discussions in housing affordability, taxation reform, superannuation and industrial relations.

The signs of Sam’s McKell are everywhere.

They are in the childcare reforms proposed by Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese and in the removal of stamp duty under the guidance of NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet.

McKell has come of age under Sam and now takes its place among the most influential think tanks in Australia.

From this foundation, we will only grow.

As we embark on the next stage of the McKell Institute under new leadership, the support, passion and commitment of the Board of Directors are invaluable. Thank you.

In particular, the insights from our Chair, Dr Craig Emerson, will continue to lead policy debates, as they have done for decades. His advice and



guidance have been an enormous support to me and our team.

Thank you also to our community of supporters, researchers and contributors who continue to make the McKell Institute possible.

The future of the McKell Institute is in leading progressive policy reform even as many governments may become tempted to retreat from big ideas to save budgets or to reassure an anxious public.

We will continue to identify and anticipate the challenges of the future. We will continue to develop innovative and practical solutions to complex problems.

Our robust research will continue to inform key decisions. Our people will continue to advocate for fair, evidence-based policy.

Our dedicated team across four states is more than up for the challenge. I look forward to joining them, and you, from January 2021.





**THE MCKELL INSTITUTE QUEENSLAND**  
HOSTED CHRISTMAS DRINKS  
AT QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT,  
EXECUTIVE CHAIR HON. RACHEL  
NOLAN WAS JOINED BY GUEST  
SPEAKERS TOURISM MINISTER HON  
STIRLING HINCHLIFFE MP AND  
SHADOW ENVIRONMENT MINISTER  
SAM O'CONNOR MP. 2 DECEMBER 2020

## EXECUTIVE CHAIR, THE MCKELL INSTITUTE QUEENSLAND STATEMENT

### Hon. Rachel Nolan

Since its establishment in 2018, the Queensland branch of The McKell Institute has quickly set about establishing itself as a leading source of considered yet cutting edge public policy thought.

Nationally, the Institute was created in 2011. It is proudly progressive, based on values which seek to bring Australians together. Our work focuses on economic policy; fairness and wage justice, as well as policies which will improve the state of our environment and the liveability of our cities.



We are practical, devoted not just to the expression of aspirational goals but on the mechanisms through which positive change can actually be made by good governments and their supporters.

While Australia now has a range of public policy think tanks spanning the political spectrum, none has the same level of commitment to Queensland as the McKell Institute. Our Queensland based operation; executive, board and fellows, mean we are well placed to understand the unique nature of this state; its diverse economy, its regional variations and its location close to Asia and as the jump-off point for the Pacific.

In two years of operation, McKell Queensland has played host to a number of leading intellectuals and decision makers from the key figures in Queensland Government, to senior Commonwealth public servants, University administrators and authors.

Our rapidly growing body of research has influenced the public debate and contributed to real change. We brought attention to wage theft, the opportunity of active transport, the economic inequalities exposed by COVID-19, the level of food insecurity in North Queensland and the imperative to reduce plastic waste on the Great Barrier Reef.

Our work is made possible by our members; unions and some of the state's leading corporations.

In an often heated civic space, the McKell Institute is unusual in its ability to bring parties together, to have intelligent considered and thought provoking conversations and to produce a body of work that contributes to the betterment of Queensland and Australia.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE MCKELL INSTITUTE VICTORIA

## Ryan Batchelor

2020 was a year like no other, and a challenging one for all Victorians.

The impacts of the global pandemic on our community have been felt acutely here in Melbourne, where a world leading public health response to the second wave of COVID-19 infection changed all of our lives — introducing previously unfathomable concepts like lockdowns and masks — and disrupted the way we do our business. It was no different for the Mckell Institute.

I commenced as the Executive Director of the Mckell Institute Victoria in August 2020, just as our second lockdown began. It was a sobering time, and one that afforded the opportunity for deeper thinking about the implications of this pandemic on our community and economy, and how our recovery must address the underlying fault lines of inequality, lack of access to decent services, and insecure work. The recovery can't just paper over these cracks and snap back to the way things were. Our recovery is an opportunity to build a better future.

Our Federation has many strengths, and an often unremarked upon benefit to our public policy community and is the ability of our state governments to innovate, adapt and learn from their similar yet different circumstances. One of the many lessons from this pandemic has been how important the high-quality delivery of government services is to our collective health and wellbeing. For State Governments service delivery is core business, and innovation in policy development and service delivery is a vital element of success. The Mckell Institute is uniquely placed in Australia's progressive think tanks to draw upon knowledge and networks across Australia's three biggest States, and help spread the word on public policy successes.

During the year our in-person events program in Melbourne has been necessarily curtailed by COVID, however we have held some very successful online events — including a two-part series on the future of work — and will use these opportunities to learn how to deliver a more dynamic events series in 2021.

Our research agenda in 2020 has focused heavily on the implications of COVID-19 — on the aviation industry, superannuation, women at work, and insecure work. This focus will continue over the coming year.

As we entered 2020, Victoria was Australia's economic powerhouse. During 2020 our state has been hit the hardest by the pandemic and its economic shocks. Our focus on 2021 will be leading voices in the debate on how Victoria rebuilds and recovers. It is clear that our State will be roaring back and once again the leading edge of public policy, infrastructure delivery, and social reform. Here at the Mckell Institute Victoria we look forward to help shape that agenda.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUPERANNUATION &amp; UNIVERSAL OWNERSHIP, THE MCKELL INSTITUTE VICTORIA

## James Pawluk



For Mckell Institute Victoria, the last two years have been a period of focus and chance, culminating in the successful carve-out of the Institute's focus on superannuation policy and responsible investment practices and the transition to new leadership of the state division under Ryan Batchelor.

On the research front our 2019 report *Ending Wage Theft* contributed practical recommendations for the comprehensive eradication of underpayment in Australia's workplaces. The need to tackle all aspects of this endemic cancer has only become more important as the 'race to the bottom' dynamics threatens our economic comeback.

Meanwhile, this year's major report on the *Economic Benefits of Universal Superannuation* serves as a reminder of what's at stake in the 'super wars' that are now taking place. The report's focus on the positive contribution of superannuation funds are making as long-term investors instigated our decision to expand our research program to look at how Australia can better nurture and capitalise on this growing pool of patient capital.

In 2021 this will see us explore in greater depth the role that superannuation funds play as 'universal owners' — that is investors whose diversified portfolios cannot escape the negative externalities caused by individual assets and at the same time can share in the positive externalities they might generate.

Like others, we took our events program online as the COVID-19 pandemic limited our ability to engage with members face-to-face. Personal highlights of mine were our roundtable on aviation to launch our report calling for a National Aviation Plan in response to COVID-19 and our series on insecure work and underemployment with Clare O'Neil MP.

Even as the direct health impacts of the pandemic hopefully begin to subside, we know the ongoing economic and social ripple effects will require new ideas and fresh thinking. Our accumulating body of work provides a foundation for making a strong contribution and we look forward to collaborating with our members and the wider community in this endeavour.



# Key Events 2020

## FEBRUARY

**Jim Betts, Secretary NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment** kicked off the Growth Series for the year.  
*HOSTED BY STOCKLAND*

In his capacity as **Chair of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, Andrew Wilson, Professor and Director of the Menzies Centre for Health Policy** and **Co-Director of the NHMRC Partnership Centre** addressed the Health Policy Series.  
*HOSTED BY PFIZER*

## MARCH

**Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese** launched a report on Wage Cutting Strategies in the Mining Industry.  
*HOSTED BY THE CFMEU MINING AND ENERGY DIVISION IN MACKAY*

**'Economic Benefits of Universal Superannuation: How Superannuation Works for All of Us'** was launched by Dr Don Russell, Chair of Australian Super. Dr Russell was joined by Geoff Sanders, Partner at Allens and HESTA's Head of Impact, Mary Delahunty.  
*HOSTED BY ALLENS*

## APRIL

**Chris Bowen, Shadow Minister for Health** addressed the Health members on the early impact of COVID. The McKell Institute's Digital Event Series.

## MAY

**Former PM Malcolm Turnbull** in conversation on his memoir *A Bigger Picture*. The McKell Institute's Digital Event series.

**Shadow Federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers** on the coronavirus crisis, its economic consequences and what

reconstruction will look like for Australia. The McKell Institute's Digital Event series.

**How to Reset NSW's Economy post COVID: An Economic Roundtable.** The McKell Institute's Digital Event Series.

## JUNE

**'Australian Aviation after COVID-19: The Urgent Need for an Australian Aviation Plan'** online report launch with McKell Institute Victoria's James Pawluk, **CEO of Tourism & Transport Forum Australia Margo Osmond, National**

**Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union Michael Kaine** and **former QLD Minister for Transport the Hon. Paul Lucas.** The McKell Institute's Digital Event Series.  
*CO-HOSTED BY TWUSUPER*

**How to Reset Queensland's Economy post COVID: An Economic Roundtable.** The McKell Institute's Digital Event series.

**Shadow Assistant Treasurer and Shadow Minister for Financial Services Stephen Jones** addressed the implications of COVID on the superannuation sector

and what role super will play in future economic and financial crises. The McKell Institute's Digital Event Series.

**Part 1: In Conversation with Clare O'Neil, Shadow Minister for Innovation, Technology and the Future of Work** on the impact of COVID, insecure work and women. The McKell Institute's Digital Event Series.  
*CO-HOSTED BY HESTA*

**Ambassador Samantha Power, US Ambassador to the United Nations** (under President Obama) in conversation on her

memoir, *The Education of an Idealist*. The McKell Institute's Digital Event series.

## AUGUST

**Maia Schweizer, CEO of Clean Co** on building Queensland's renewable energy future.  
*HOSTED BY ALLENS*

**Queensland Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Dr Steven Miles** on the coronavirus crisis and its implications for the future design of hospitals and health services.  
*HOSTED BY LENDLEASE*

**Matt Kean, NSW Minister for Energy and Environment**

joined us for an intimate discussion on the future of renewable energy and the ways the NSW Government will accelerate innovation and development of technologies that support the transition.

## SEPTEMBER

**Neil Scales, Director General of the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads**, on the future of mobility.  
*HOSTED BY STOCKLAND*





## SEPTEMBER CONTINUED

**Lucy Turnbull**, former Chief Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission and Lord Mayor of Sydney, on the transformation of cities, and technological and social innovation.

**The Annual Pre-Budget Address with Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese.**  
HOSTED BY KPMG

## OCTOBER

**Queensland Election: An Inside Look.** Hosted by Mckell Institute Victoria's Executive Director Ryan Batchelor, with a panel including Rachel Nolan, Executive Chair of the Mckell Institute Queensland and Graham Young, Executive Director of the Australian Institute for Progress. The Mckell Institute's Digital Event Series.

**Parliament House launch by Bicycle Queensland CEO Rebecca Randazzo** of the Mckell Queensland report *Riding the Revolution, a New Approach to Active Transport in South East Queensland*.

## NOVEMBER

**Part 2: In Conversation with Clare O'Neil, Shadow Minister for Innovation, Technology and the Future of Work** on the impact of COVID, insecure work and men. The Mckell Institute's Digital Event Series. CO-HOSTED BY TWUSUPER

**Professor Deborah Terry AO, Vice Chancellor of the University of Queensland** on education and skills for a changing economy.  
HOSTED BY TELSTRA

**Jason Clare, Shadow Minister for Regional Services, Territories & Local Government, Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness**, shared insights into Labor's housing and homelessness response to COVID-19, the shifting focus to recovery and potential impacts to communities.

**In Conversation with Paul Kelly and Troy Bramston – *The Truth of the Palace Letters*.** Helen Trinca from the Australian moderated the session.

**NSW Shadow Minister for Transport and Corrections Chris Minns** on priorities for recovery and the future of transport in the state.

**In Conversation with Tanya Plibersek and Jim Chalmers** on Tanya's recently published book *Upturn: A Better Normal after COVID-19*. The Mckell Institute's Digital Event Series.

## DECEMBER

**Christmas function with guest speakers Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe and LNP Shadow Environment Minister Sam O'Connor.**

**Elizabeth Koff, Secretary NSW Health** addressed the final executive lunch for the Health Policy Series.





# Key Events 2019

## FEBRUARY

**Michael Brennan, Chair** of the **Productivity Commission**.

HOSTED BY ALLENS

## MARCH

**Clare O'Neil** then **Shadow Minister for Financial Services**

addressed the Superannuation Series in Victoria.  
HOSTED BY HESTA

**Arthur Kopsias APM, NSW Police, John Stanton, CEO of the Communications**

**Alliance and Lizzie O'Shea from Digital Rights Watch**, for a policy forum on cybersecurity.

HOSTED BY GOOGLE.

**Chris Bowen** then **Shadow Treasurer of Australia** for an economic policy outlook for Qld.  
HOSTED BY DELOITTE

Former Chief of Staff to US President Bill Clinton, Counselor to US President Barack Obama and Chair of Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign, and founder of progressive think tank the Center for American

Progress, **John Podesta** addressed a McKell Institute Policy Forum. The conversation was moderated by **Tanya Plibersek MP, Shadow Minister for Education**.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHIFLEY RESEARCH CENTRE AND SYDNEY POLICY LAB, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY.

## APRIL

**Libby Lyons, Head of the Federal Workplace Gender Equality Agency** on best practice workplace policy to

promote equal pay and equal gender representation in company executives and boardrooms.

HOSTED BY DLA PIPER

**Tim Pallas MP, Treasurer of Victoria** for a Pre-Budget Address.  
HOSTED BY PWC.

**RBA Governor Philip Lowe** addressed a boardroom lunch in Sydney on the recent developments in Australian and global economics.  
HOSTED BY ALLENS

## JUNE

**Dr Michael Mandel, Chief Economic Strategist** at the Progressive Policy Institute, a Washington DC-based think tank, delivered his research paper that focussed on ACCC's analysis of digital platforms.

HOSTED BY TWITTER

Head of **Essential Media, Peter Lewis** for a post-election debrief.

**Martin Pakula MP, Victorian Minister for Industry Support and Recovery, Minister for Trade, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, and Minister for Racing**.  
HOSTED BY DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

## JULY

Part 1 Queensland Climate & Energy Series: **Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Guy Debelle** on climate risk and monetary policy.  
HOSTED BY SUNCORP

Part 2 Queensland Climate & Energy Series: **QLD Director General of the Dept. of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy James Purtill** on the future of the energy sector in QLD and current challenges to the system.  
HOSTED BY ALLENS

Part 3 Queensland Climate & Energy Series: **Jacqui Walters, Chair of CleanCo** on the future

of renewable energy investment in QLD and how the new CleanCo authority will operate.  
HOSTED BY ALLENS

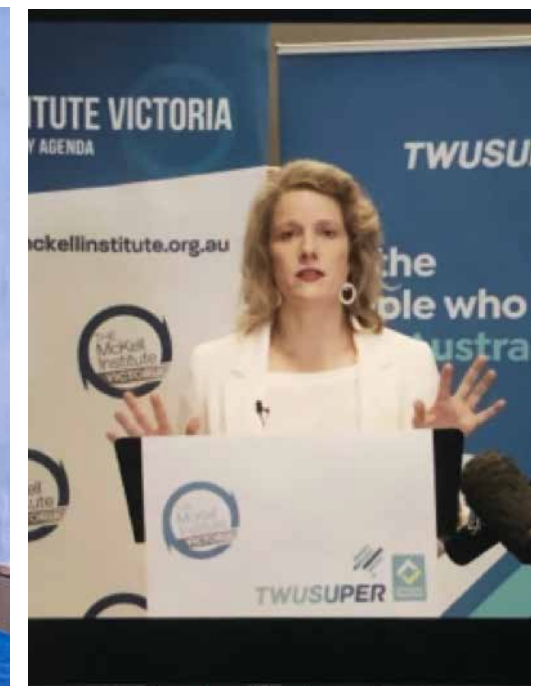
**Lily D'Ambrosio, Victorian Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Minister for Solar Homes** discussed the Andrews Labor government's policies for energy fairness.  
HOSTED BY DELOITTE

## AUGUST

**Jacinta Allan, Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure**.  
HOSTED BY STOCKLAND

The McKell Institute Victoria hosted Queensland **Senator Anthony Chisholm** and Townsville Mayor **Cr Jenny Hill** in an open forum to address Queensland's role in the last Federal election.  
HOSTED BY MAURICE BLACKBURN

**Kate Jones, QLD Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development, Minister for Commonwealth Games** on the future of Advance Queensland program.  
HOSTED BY TELSTRA





## AUGUST CONTINUED

President of the **Australian Human Rights Commission Emeritus Professor Rosalind Croucher AM** on the national conversation on Human Rights. *HOSTED BY MAURICE BLACKBURN*

**James Merlino, Deputy Premier of Victoria, Minister for Education and Emergency Services**, spoke about the Victorian Government's Education State Agenda, the critical importance of education to address future challenges and the

Australian-first initiative of funded kindergarten for every three-year-old child. *HOSTED BY PWC*

**Chief Executive of CSIRO, Dr Larry Marshall** discussed the role of creativity in harnessing disruption to solve the greatest challenges, and the importance of innovative science and technology to shape our future, economy, environment and society. *HOSTED BY GOOGLE*

## SEPTEMBER

Part 4 Queensland Climate & Energy Series: **Ian Learmonth, CEO of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation** to discuss future of clean energy investment in Qld and latest innovation and tech. *HOSTED BY DLA PIPER*

**Damien Miller, Assistant Secretary, Soft Power, Partnership and Research DFAT** addressed Australia's soft power development through arts and culture. He outlined the challenges and opportunities in

promoting Australia as a global leader in cultural tourism and fostering the creative economy. *HOSTED BY EY*

**Secretary for the Department of Treasury, Dr Steven Kennedy PSM** addressed the challenges and opportunities in funding Australia's future infrastructure needs. *HOSTED BY KPMG*

**Daniel Mookhey MLC, NSW Shadow Minister for Finance and Small Business, Shadow Minister for the Gig Economy** joined the Tech and Innovation Boardroom Series. *HOSTED BY TWITTER*

**Jaala Pulford, Victorian Minister for Roads, Road Safety and Minister for TAC, Fishing and Boating.** *HOSTED BY ALLENS*

## OCTOBER

**Senator for South Australia Rex Patrick** joined us for a unique roundtable discussion on how he plans to utilise his position as an influential cross bench senator to shape the Government's agenda. *HOSTED BY KPMG*

## NOVEMBER

Queensland Housing and Homelessness Forum with **Mick de Brenni, Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport.** *HOSTED BY PWC*

Former **Secretary, Department of the Communications and the Arts Mike Mrdak AO** joined us for the final instalment of the Cultural and Creative Industries series to talk about Australia's priorities for the creative and tech companies. *HOSTED BY ALLENS.*

'*Opportunities in Change: Responding to Future of Work*' report launch was officially launched by both **Treasurer of NSW Dominic Perrottet** and **Treasurer of Victoria Tim Pallas.** *HOSTED BY IAG*

**Chairman's Dinner, hosted by Dr Craig Emerson.**

## DECEMBER

Part 5 Queensland Climate & Energy Series: **Shannon Fentiman, QLD Minister for Employment and Small Business, Training & Skills Development** on the Just Transition

Authority and the future of work in Qld. *HOSTED BY TELSTRA*

**NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces Rob Stokes** addressed the Growth Series on the future of planning and infrastructure projects in the state. *HOSTED BY LENDLEASE*

The final executive boardroom lunch of the year with **Premier of NSW Gladys Berejiklian.** *HOSTED BY CLAYTON UTZ*





# Reports & Research

2020 has challenged policy makers and researchers like never before. Australia's largely successful COVID-19 response has been underpinned by government interventions previously unthinkable, and has fundamentally changed Australia's policy landscape.

In this tumultuous and unpredictable year, the McKell Institute has continued to release timely and impactful research, arguing for a more equitable response to COVID-19, while proposing and pushing for new ideas to help ensure a fairer recovery.

## 2020

### A Fairer Pathway

In this major report, the failings and unintended of Australia's immigration system were called into question. In particular, this report identified a trend in Australia's immigration policy that has led to large numbers of temporary migrants being exploited and underpaid across the country.

### Blue Harvest: Wage Theft and Labour Infringements on the NSW Mid-North Coast

In this major on-the-ground investigation, the extent of labour exploitation in the NSW blueberry industry was uncovered. The report led to widespread calls for a Royal Commission into horticultural exploitation across Australia, and received national attention in print, radio and TV news.

### The Problem with Junior Pay Rates

McKell commenced 2020 with our analysis on junior pay rates, finding that Australia's system of lower pay for junior's is out of step with the fairer way comparable countries like New Zealand and Canada that compensate younger workers.



#### IN THE MEDIA

NOVEMBER 2020

*Blue Harvest* was authored by McKell Institute's Director of Policy Edward Cavanough, and Policy Officer Connor Wherrett. It made front page of *The Australian*, headlines on *Sky News*, *ABC News*, *SBS*, *7News*, *The New Daily*, *Pedestrian*, *The Project* and *ABC Radio Melbourne*.



### Wage-cutting Strategies in the Mining Sector

McKell's first project on insecure work for 2020 highlighted the economic impact of the misuse of labour-hire on key mining projects in the Hunter Valley and across Queensland, costing regional Australia over \$800 million a year in lost economic activity.

### The Case for a National Paid Pandemic Leave Scheme

As the pandemic progressed, the Government resisted calls to implement a national scheme for paid pandemic leave. This report reiterated the case, finding the implementation of such a policy was essential to eradicating the virus.

### The Economic Benefits of Universal Superannuation

In a year where debate of the future of superannuation has reached fever pitch, this report provided a timely reminder of the virtues of Australia's retirement framework and its contribution to Australia's economic and societal wellbeing.

### Crossing the Fiscal Cliff

The two major economic support initiatives of the pandemic — JobKeeper and JobSeeker — began to wind down in late September. This report quantified the impact of this fiscal contraction and received widespread national coverage of its findings.

### COVID-19: Why Accessing Super Early is a Risky Idea

With the pandemic shifting Australia's economy into recession, the Australian Government announced its plan to allow Australia's early access to their superannuation to pay the bills. This report strongly argued against the proposal, highlighting the long-term impact of early access to Australians' retirement security, and the superannuation system as a whole.



#### IN THE MEDIA

MARCH 2020

*Wage-Cutting Strategies in the Mining Sector* was authored by Dr Stephen

Whelan, Labour Market Economist, University of Sydney and launched by Federal Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese MP in Mackay, QLD. It made front page of *The Courier Mail* and headlines with *ABC* and *Channel 7*.



#### Qld mining's 'billion-dollar' black hole exposed in bombshell report

A bombshell report out today has found replacing permanent jobs with outsourced labour is costing Queensland's mining regions \$825 million a year, but a key union says the Queensland-wide impact could be closer to \$1 billion.



#### IN THE MEDIA

SEPTEMBER 2020

The analysis by Director of Policy Ed Cavanough was featured online at *7news* and *The Guardian*.





## Australian Aviation after COVID-19

Aviation has been among the most impacted industries from the COVID-19 recession. This report assessed the nature of Australia's economic support for the industry, contrasting Canberra's modest response with those seen internationally.

## Reopening NSW & Reopening Queensland

While borders remained closed, the McKell Institute convened key stakeholders and experts in NSW and Queensland to identify safe and reasonable pathways to re-open the two states' economies.

## Mapping Food Security

The 2020 recession has further strained organisations on fighting on the frontlines of Australia's poverty crisis. This report highlighted the nature of food insecurity in Queensland, providing a geographic analysis of the regions most at risk of going hungry.

## University Course Fees' Dramatic Restructure: Young People at Risk Again

As the Government announced a radical overhaul of Australia's HECS system, this report assessed the impact on students.

## Reforming the Child Care Subsidy Would Strengthen the Economy

This report continued McKell's long history of advocating for a stronger early childhood education and care system in Australia. It found that reforming ECEC is essential to the long-term economic wellbeing of Australian families.



### IN THE MEDIA

OCTOBER 2020

Sam Crosby, former CEO on *In My View*, *Sky News* pushing for childcare reform.

*News.com.au* journalist Samantha Maiden quoted our report in her article Federal Budget 2020: Mums working for \$1 an hour under childcare rebate 'cliffs'.



## Activating the Harbour City

This report called upon the New South Wales Government to create an unbroken foreshore pathway between the Opera House and Parramatta. It led to the NSW Government committing \$500,000 to a feasibility study into the initiative.



### IN THE MEDIA

OCTOBER 2020

*Activating the Harbour City* made front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald*.



## Riding the Revolution

This report argued for further reform of Queensland's transportation network, placing a heavy emphasis on the greater use of active transport infrastructure.

## A COVID-19 Downturn and its Impact on Workers

As the pandemic took hold, this report highlighted the economic and health vulnerabilities for Australia's insecure workers, finding the 3.7 million Australians without access to paid leave were particularly vulnerable. This report foreshadowed the implementation of Paid Pandemic Leave, which is now available for many Australian casuals.

## A Timeline of Global Economic Responses to COVID-19

Governments around the world took unprecedented measures to protect their economies from the worst impacts of COVID-19. This project monitored the approaches of major economies in the first half of the year, adding context to Australia's response.

## COVID-19: Why the economic fallout is exacerbating inequality

This report highlighted the injustice at the heart of COVID-19's economic impacts. It found that the recession was bifurcated, impacting those who could least afford it the most while only modestly affecting those in secure work with work-from-home options.

## A COVID-19 Tax Rebate for Frontline Workers

As the burden of the COVID-19 response began to fall largely on frontline workers, this report argued for a one off tax-rebate for all those working hard to protect and deliver essential services — including food and transport — to Australians.

## The Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Work in Victoria

COVID-19's economic impact has been uneven. Women in particular have been burdened by the downturn. This report highlighted that fact, and how governments can do more in areas like childcare to help improve women's economic health.



### IN THE MEDIA

AUGUST 2020

The McKell Institute Victoria's Executive Director Ryan Batchelor authored the analysis which was picked up by *The Age* and *ABC Radio National*. The topic of women and work received another round of attention in November, focussing on the five Budget ideas that could help women bounce back.

## Multiple Job Holders and the COVID-19 Recession

Those holding more than one part time job were acutely impacted by COVID-19. This report highlighted the plight of Australia's multiple jobs holders.



### IN THE MEDIA

AUGUST 2020

The McKell Institute Victoria's Executive Director Ryan Batchelor appeared on ABC's *7.30* to discuss insecure work and multiple jobholders.





## Living with Duchenne & Becker in Australia: Supporting families waiting for a cure

This report in collaboration with Save Our Sons Foundation details the issues and challenges facing those living with Duchenne and Becker and their families as they wait for a cure. It explores the gaps in the existing healthcare system and the costs facing families whose family members live with Duchenne and Becker, undertaking a cost of disease analysis, and surveying 150 families and individuals experiencing the impacts of the disease. It was launched at Parliament House in September 2020.

## 2019

### Opportunities in Change

This report explored the forces that are shaping the Australian labour market, and how Australia can excel in a 21st century global economy.

### The electorate-level benefit of penalty rates

The issue of reducing weekend penalty rates was central to the 2019 election campaign. This report identified how much each electorate would stand to lose should the reductions be implemented.

### How Government investment in housing can boost the economy

In the run up to the 2019 election, this report argued for a greater Commonwealth investment in public housing — a program that would alleviate high rates of homelessness, provide an economic stimulus and offer a return on investment.

### Ending in Wage Theft

This major report outlined the extent of wage theft in Australia, and how state and federal governments can bring the scourge to heel.

### The Economic Impact of Wage Theft in South Australia

This report quantified the nature of wage theft in South Australia, helping inform that state's inquiry into wage theft and exploitation.

### The Economic Impacts of the Australian Investment Guarantee

An Australian Investment Guarantee was floated in the 2019 Federal Election Campaign. This report found that the policy would incentivise Australian investment, while avoiding the negative economic and revenue implications of a blunt and poorly targeted corporate tax reduction.



#### IN THE MEDIA

MARCH 2019 – SEPTEMBER 2020

Edward Cavanough featured in the *Adelaide Advertiser* twice in a year, calling out the shocking level of wage theft in South Australia.

## Fork in the Road: Comparing Penalty Rate Policies

This report compared the two major parties' penalty rate policies in the lead up to the 2019 election.

## Representative Government: Diversity in the Next Parliament

Questions over the level of diversity in our national parliament led to this report, which quantified diversity within the two chambers and advanced recommendations to ensure Australia's leadership becomes more representative.

### Islands of Opportunity

As Australia's international focus shifted to the Pacific Island region, this report explored how Australian clean-tech businesses can work with Canberra to help overcome the Pacific's energy access challenges.

### Disability & Rare Disease

Too many Australians with rare diseases aren't receiving the treatment they deserve. This report explored how we can reform the NDIS to ensure it is delivering better for those with rare diseases.

## Does higher superannuation reduce workers' wages?

This report looked at the data to see whether an increase in the superannuation guarantee would lower Australian wages, finding little evidence to support the talking point of those who justify lower super increases as beneficial to Australian workers.

## We'd like to thank our experts for their contribution

**Associate Professor Nicholas Biddle** Associate Director of the ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods, Director of Policy Experiments Lab, Fellow of the Tax and Transfer Policy Institute, Senior Fellow Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research

**Angela Jackson** Economist, Equity Economics

**Abul Rizvi** former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Department of Communication

**Dr Stephen Whelan** Labour Market Economist, University of Sydney



### Solar a simple sell

Pacific Islanders are diesel-dependent: for their sunbathed land, solar makes sense.

#### IN THE MEDIA

SEPTEMBER 2019

Displacing diesel power in the Pacific should be a priority for the Morrison Government, writes McKell's Director of Policy Edward Cavanough in *The Australian*.



#### IN THE MEDIA

OCTOBER 2019

Former CEO Sam Crosby and Economist Angela Jackson, Equity Economics write on how to make the NDIS work in *The Australian*.



### Failing to help the needy

Let's make it work for the vulnerable Australians falling through the cracks and being cruelly stranded there.





NSW TREASURER DOMINIC PERROTTET  
AND VICTORIAN TREASURER TIM PALLAS,  
LAUNCHED OPPORTUNITIES IN CHANGE:  
RESPONDING TO THE FUTURE OF WORK,  
A REPORT COMMISSIONED BY IAG.  
8 NOVEMBER 2019



## Impact

OVER  
**1 MILLION**  
TWEET IMPRESSIONS



**50%** OF OUR AUDIENCE  
ON SOCIAL MEDIA ARE UNDER  
**34 YEARS OLD**

**110%**  
INCREASE  
IN INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS



IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS,  
THERE HAS BEEN AN  
**↑146.1% INCREASE**  
IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE  
WHO HAVE SIGNED UP TO  
OUR MAILING LIST

**35%**  
OF FACEBOOK  
FOLLOWERS  
ARE FROM  
**NSW**

**21%**  
OF FACEBOOK  
FOLLOWERS  
ARE FROM  
**VIC**

**11%**  
OF FACEBOOK  
FOLLOWERS  
ARE FROM  
**QLD**

OVER 88K USERS  
ON OUR WEBSITE AND A

**131.6%**  
INCREASE IN  
USER INTERACTION

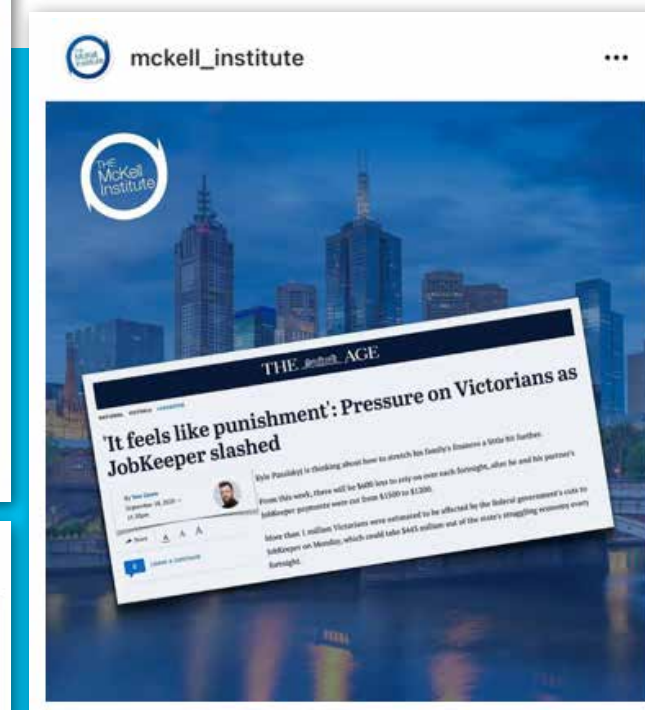
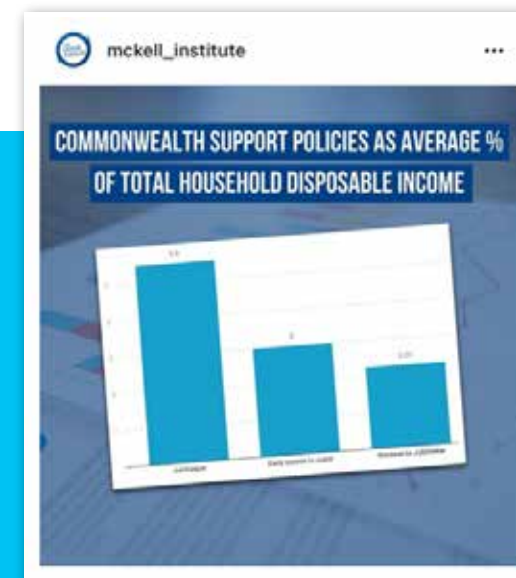


NET FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK HAVE  
**INCREASED BY 497%**  
COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS  
24-MONTH PERIOD

FACEBOOK VIDEOS VIEWED FOR  
**MORE THAN 12K MINUTES**

**1500+ MENTIONS BY MEDIA OUTLETS**  
FEATURED ON CHANNEL 10, CHANNEL 9, CHANNEL 7, SBS,  
ABC, SKY NEWS, THE AUSTRALIAN, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD,  
THE GUARDIAN, FINANCIAL REVIEW, HERALD SUN,  
THE AGE, DAILY MAIL, COURIER MAIL, THE NEW DAILY

IN 2020 WE  
**HAVE HOSTED**  
**13 ZOOM**  
**EVENTS**





# Governance

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**Mary Delahunty** HEAD OF IMPACT HESTA

**Luke Hilakari** SECRETARY VICTORIAN TRADES HALL COUNCIL

**Chris Newton** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT IFM INVESTORS

**Liberty Sanger** PRINCIPAL, BOARD MEMBER AND PRACTICE GROUP LEADER AT MAURICE BLACKBURN LAWYERS



The Government are asking workers in financial stress to withdraw up to \$20k from their super.

It's worth a reminder - for many younger Australian workers, this would see their super balances wiped out.

#auspol #superannuation #covid19au #stimulus

Age	Median Super Balance - Men	Median Super Balance - Women
20-24	\$5,924	\$5,022
25-29	<b>\$23,712</b>	<b>\$19,107</b>
30-34	\$43,583	\$33,748
35-39	\$64,590	\$48,874
40-44	\$99,959	\$61,922
45-49	\$145,076	\$87,543
50-54	\$172,126	\$99,520
55-59	\$237,022	\$123,642
60-64	\$270,710	\$157,049

Australian Unions

12:42 PM - Mar 22, 2020 - Twitter Web App

Pinned Tweet



**BREAKING:** We've just released our investigation into wage theft in the Coffs Harbour blueberry industry by @edwardcavanough and @CSWherrett

The report found that in some cases, workers were paid as little as \$3/hour.

Check out our feature on the front page of the @australian



4:39 PM - Dec 4, 2020 - Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

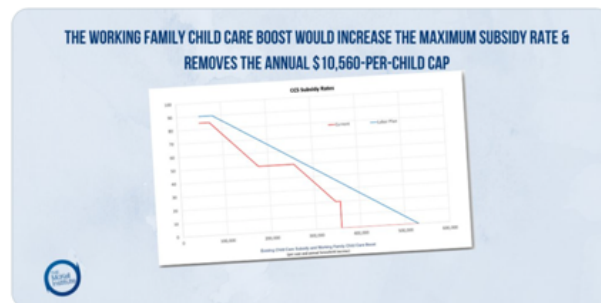
25 Retweets 6 Quote Tweets 42 Likes



About last night: @AlboMP committed to increase the maximum Child Care subsidy to 90 per cent, cutting costs for 97 per cent of all families in the system.

Families would save between \$600 and \$2900 each year on fees.

We break it down 1 2 3  
[mckellinstitute.org.au/research/repor...](https://mckellinstitute.org.au/research/repor...)



10:15 AM - Oct 9, 2020 - Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

25 Retweets 3 Quote Tweets 54 Likes



Today, we're in Mackay, Queensland with @AlboMP & the @CFMEU\_ME, launching our report exploring the economic impacts of wage-cutting in the mining sector:



CFMEU Mining & Energy and Anthony Albanese

2:29 PM - Mar 12, 2020 - Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity



“The scale on which miners are being ripped off through the casualisation of the workforce is nothing less than a crisis. And it is growing.”

HON. ANTHONY ALBANESE MP, IN MACKAY QLD LAUNCHING “WAGE-CUTTING STRATEGIES IN THE MINING INDUSTRY: THE COST TO WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES” SPONSORED BY CFMEU. THE OPPOSITION LEADER WAS JOINED BY CR ANNE BAKER, MAYOR OF ISAAC REGIONAL COUNCIL AND CFMEU REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN SMYTH, QLD DISTRICT PRESIDENT. 12 MARCH 2020.





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