

MONASH  
EDUCATION

# 2020- 2025 RESEARCH AGENDA

OUR PLAN TO FOSTER  
RESEARCH THAT TACKLES  
THE BIG ISSUES



# INVESTIGATE COLLABORATE INFLUENCE CHANGE

## ● EDUCATION AT MONASH IS RANKED NUMBER 1 IN AUSTRALIA.

We identify critical challenges in education and produce research, evidence and ideas that shape the future. In psychology and counselling we generate evidence that improves the mental health and wellbeing of our community.

As a faculty we work in partnership with industry. We envisage new ways of teaching, learning and leading. Underpinning our work is a deep commitment to social justice, and to fostering fair, equitable and sustainable futures.

**Cover image:** Laureate Professor Marilyn Fleer tests her new conceptual framework with an emerging researcher at Mount Barker Community College in Western Australia.

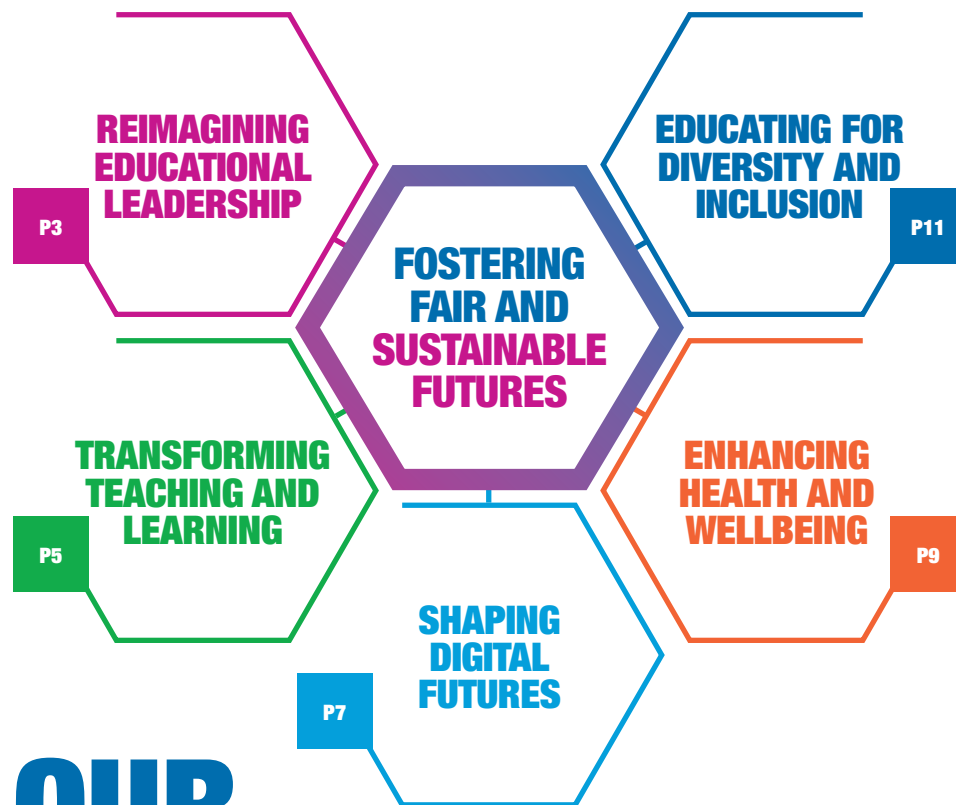
## OUR VISION

**A SOCIETY IN WHICH  
EDUCATION ENABLES  
FULL AND EQUITABLE  
PARTICIPATION.**

## OUR GOAL

**TO HAVE A LASTING  
IMPACT, NATIONALLY  
AND INTERNATIONALLY.  
TO CREATE REAL CHANGE,  
NOW AND FOR  
GENERATIONS TO COME.**





# OUR RESEARCH AGENDA



**Image:** Children from Noble Park Primary School were active participants in our research about the role of play in helping newly-arrived students thrive.

# REIMAGINING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

## WE LIVE IN A VOLATILE WORLD. SOCIETY IS FRAGMENTED AND INEQUALITY IS RISING.

Our research reimagines the role of educational leaders to better address these complex challenges.

## FOCUS

### AS A COMMUNITY WE FACE WICKED PROBLEMS LIKE GLOBAL WARMING AND POLITICAL DIVISION.

It has never been more important to collectively build civic awareness and the social and intellectual capacity of our students.

Principals and other educational leaders play a central role, particularly in nurturing holistic educational practices that link to the broader community.

These leaders can foster social justice, boost access and equity and support the collective good.

We need to move beyond the leader as an individual hero and create alternative models.

Our scope is broad – from understanding the experience of individual school principals to tackling entrenched systemic issues.



# BIG QUESTIONS

**+ WHAT DOES THE WORK OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS LOOK LIKE, AND WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?**

**+ WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF POLICY AND POLITICS ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERS?**

**+ HOW CAN RESEARCH REDEFINE THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP?**

## IN PRACTICE

### CREATING MORE EQUITABLE SCHOOLS

Working collaboratively with industry and government, we are investigating how to support and retain high quality principals across Australia, including in rural and hard-to-staff schools. Our research will be used to make evidence-based policy recommendations.

### AMPLIFYING VOICES

Building on long-term partnerships in Thailand, we looked at the intersection of religion and education during conflict. Work with local school leaders highlighted local responses to growing extremism.

### BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Restorative justice is being used in Australian schools to build strong and respectful learning communities. Our research looks to foster a national network of leaders who use these practices.

## OUR FUTURE IMPACT

● We equip educational leaders to rise to the challenge of the knowledge economy. ● Local and systemic priorities shift to be more responsive to critical modern problems, including the environment. ● School leadership influences social cohesion, tolerance, creativity and the resilience of our communities.

**Image:** School leader Laura Carolan from Parktone Primary School empowered her students to lead, design and develop a new playground, and develop critical entrepreneurial skills.



# TRANSFORMING TEACHING AND LEARNING

## OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM IS BASED ON A MODEL DEVELOPED OVER A CENTURY AGO.

The world has changed, and our research looks at the ways teaching and learning needs to adapt and change, and foster new kinds of learners.

## FOCUS

### OUR SOCIETY IS CHARACTERISED BY CHANGE, DIVERSITY AND FRAGMENTATION.

Modern education needs to nurture learners who are able to respond to the challenges of an unpredictable future.

Our research seeks to equip educators, counsellors and psychologists to enable learning and development that transforms individuals, communities and societies.

We cast a wide net – from the design of educational spaces and innovative teaching practices, to developing entrepreneurial thinking.

Our research is future-focused, exploring education across the lifespan of our learners – from infancy to adulthood.

With this focus, we work collaboratively to produce flexible and innovative thinkers and transform teaching and learning.

# BIG QUESTIONS

**+ HOW DO WE CONCEPTUALISE, BUILD AND SUPPORT NEW WAYS OF THINKING AND LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE?**

**+ HOW CAN EDUCATORS SUPPORT NEW KINDS OF LEARNING AND THINKING WITH THEIR STUDENTS?**

**+ WHAT ROLE DO SOCIAL NETWORKS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITIES PLAY IN EDUCATIONAL REFORM?**

**+ TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF LIFELONG LEARNING, WHAT NEW FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE, RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE DO WE NEED TO PRODUCE?**

## IN PRACTICE

### LEADING THE WAY

Monash's *Conceptual PlayLab* investigates the links between imagination in play and imagination in STEM for young children. Based on our research, new models and support will be rolled out for early childhood educators, parents and care-givers.

### SHIFTING OUR APPROACH TO LANGUAGES

We critically examined how languages are taught and maintained in Australia. Our research supports schools to develop specific language policies and to affirm languages spoken at home.

### FOSTERING CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

In collaboration with schools, our team of researchers developed and tested new ways of teaching mathematics in primary schools. The goal was not only to teach content, but to foster critical thinking skills.

## OUR FUTURE IMPACT

- By rethinking the nature of education, we can reshape the future.
- As we transform education, we transform lives and influence social, economic and cultural change.
- Through this work we plant the seeds for imaginative solutions to complex problems that benefit all Australians.

**Image:** Nathan Taylor is a lead STEM teacher working at Clifton State School in rural Queensland. He sees STEM Education as important for supporting his students' problem solving skills.



# SHAPING DIGITAL FUTURES

## ● THE RISE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IS TRANSFORMING THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE.

Our research aims to critically and proactively shape the way in which education responds now and in the future.

## FOCUS

### WE EXAMINE THE EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF ESTABLISHED AND EMERGING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND PRACTICES.

There are significant technological challenges in education, and we want to understand them.

These range from the increasing reliance on virtual education to the rise of data-driven educational processes, digitally automated decision making and AI-driven education.

We look at the impact of the intensification of digital practices in teaching and learning, as well as the influence of technology on wellbeing, health and safety of learners.

Through our research we aim to influence both education policy and practice.

We engage in theoretically and empirically robust forms of inquiry and use our work to support evidence-based decision making.

We provide a voice in professional, policy and public debates on digital education.



# BIG QUESTIONS

**+ HOW CAN DIGITAL EDUCATION BE DESIGNED TO IMPROVE LEARNING AND TEACHING?**

**+ HOW DOES DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY ALTER THE NATURE OF DISADVANTAGE IN EDUCATION?**

**+ HOW DOES DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IMPACT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING?**

**+ WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN AN AGE OF AUTOMATION, AI AND BIG DATA?**

## IN PRACTICE

### EXPLORING DATAFICATION IN SCHOOLS

Every day, schools generate large quantities of digital data, but it remains poorly utilised and understood. Our *Data-Smart Schools* project aimed to change that. Working in secondary schools, our research team explored ways to use digital data for social good.

### IMPROVING FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS

One of the most powerful processes shaping learning outcomes is feedback. We drew on large-scale data to understand what makes it effective, and developed instructional principles and conceptual models to provide individualised feedback at scale, via video and other media.

### CHAT BOT SUPPORTS MENTAL HEALTH

We have developed a chatbot in collaboration with young people, the tech industry and healthcare professionals. It's called Ash, and it's designed to provide evidence-based mental health support to teenagers.

## OUR FUTURE IMPACT

- Our work contributes to changing policy and professional agendas with regards to emerging technologies and education.
- Our experts play a key role in leading the public conversation around digital education and the future of education.
- We provide a robust and responsive evidence base for shaping future education provision and practice across all levels of education.
- Our investigations shine a light on issues of wellbeing, health and safety in the digital age, and explore the ways that technology in schools can be harnessed for social good.

**Image:** Our research in digital futures takes a critical look at the impact of digital technology in the classroom and provides the basis for evidence-informed practices in schools.



# ENHANCING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING ARE CRITICAL FOR A FLOURISHING SOCIETY.

Our research considers how to educate and support healthy communities, address health inequities and promote physical and mentally healthy lifestyles.

## FOCUS

### MENTAL ILLNESS, PHYSICAL INACTIVITY, AGING AND HEALTH INEQUITIES SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACT OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

We acknowledge that enhancing health and wellbeing is complex work. We draw insights from interdisciplinary perspectives to consider how the broader social and environmental contexts shape the everyday lives of people.

Our research examines how we can best support schools and communities to develop evidence-based policies and programs that will contribute to the enhancement of health and wellbeing.

We work to develop innovative approaches to help people negotiate and support their own health and wellbeing needs in increasingly complex and difficult time.

# BIG QUESTIONS

**+ WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ENGAGE AT-RISK GROUPS AND CONNECT THEM TO HEALTH SERVICES?**

**+ WHAT ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ADDRESS HEALTH INEQUITIES AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION?**

**+ HOW CAN PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND COMMUNITIES BE BEST SUPPORTED TO ENGAGE IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING?**

## IN PRACTICE

### NEW INTERVENTION FOR AT-RISK YOUTH

One in five young Australians has a parent with a mental illness, and are at greater risk of developing their own mental health issues. We identified a gap in services, and developed *mi.spot*, a six-week, on-line intervention program for 18-25 year olds.

### INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVING HEALTH

We are working with VicHealth and the Centre for Multicultural Youth to better understand the impact of informal sports for young people from diverse backgrounds. This work will inform the way governments, sport and health agencies can support and enable these opportunities.

### BRINGING FOOD EDUCATION RESEARCH TO LIFE

Working across faculties, our food education researchers developed the *Schooling Food* exhibition. It was designed to provoke conversations that transform the way we address the policy 'problem' of food in schools.

## OUR FUTURE IMPACT

- By understanding the different ways to improve health and wellbeing, we change lives.
- Our work identifies ways to ensure all children are mentally well and physically healthy.
- We will help reduce inequalities in supports and services.

**Image:** Bronson the Labradoodle is part of Australian-first research into the use and effectiveness of therapy dogs.





# EDUCATING FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

## ● EDUCATION CAN REDUCE INEQUALITY AND EXCLUSION, OR FURTHER EMBED IT.

Inclusive education practices have a particularly strong impact on students from diverse backgrounds. Our research examines how systems, institutions, educators and communities recognise and respond to diversity through ethical, socially-just and evidence-informed practices.

## FOCUS

### **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IS CENTRAL TO BUILDING A DEMOCRATIC AND COHESIVE SOCIETY.**

Our research focuses on the experience of people from Indigenous, differently-abled, migrant, refugee and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Our society has become superdiverse, and is made up of a complex mix of people from different cultures, beliefs, languages and identities.

We seek to understand the implications of this superdiversity for policy and our education systems, and to support educational reform.

Our work is designed to empower teachers, school leaders and policy makers to tackle disadvantage, identify areas that require reform and to create conditions for life-long learning.

# BIG QUESTIONS

**+ HOW CAN WE WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY TO PROVIDE QUALITY EDUCATION AND FOSTER GENDER EQUALITY?**

**+ HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND DIVERSITY AND DISADVANTAGE, AND THEIR IMPACT ON TEACHING, LEARNING AND LIVING IN SOCIETY?**

**+ HOW CAN EDUCATORS IMPROVE THE SUCCESS OF LEARNERS FROM DIVERSE OR DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS?**

**+ HOW AND WHY ARE SOME LEARNERS EXCLUDED FROM ACCESSING QUALITY EDUCATION?**

## IN PRACTICE

### SUPPORTING POLICY MAKERS AND EDUCATORS

Our research looked at how Australian teachers determine the level of educational adjustments required under the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on Students with Disability. This work will feed into a custom-designed national professional learning program.

### EDUCATION IN SUPER-DIVERSE CITIES

We are investigating the effectiveness of teacher education programs to respond to increasing student diversity in our schools. Working with educators in Melbourne and London, we are developing practical models to improve inclusive teaching and learning.

### STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH WITH REFUGEES

Research typically looks at gaps for students from refugee backgrounds. Instead we asked: What helps them succeed? Safe spaces, strong relationships and time to play are key factors. Our work gives schools new evidence to design programs.

## OUR FUTURE IMPACT

● We inform policy development and implementation in inclusive education. ● New funding models are developed and tested for disadvantaged youth. ● We help build social cohesion by co-designing and co-delivering research and programs. ● We develop world-class professional practice programs for teachers and educators focusing on super-diversity and inclusion.

**Image:** Narre Warren South P-12 College partnered with us to develop and test a new model of support for students and parents from linguistically and culturally diverse communities.









**Image:** Monash researchers are conducting the first major analysis of informal sport within Australia.





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