

**LEADERSHIP**

**STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

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**RESILIENCE  
& REINVENTION**

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**2021 Program**

**SSAF  
FUNDED**

*Student  
LIFE*

 **VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Victoria University (VU) acknowledges the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Boonwurrung, Woiewurrung (Wurundjeri) and Wathaurung (Wadawurrung) on our Melbourne Campuses, and the Gadigal and Guring-gai people of the Eora Nation on our Sydney campus. These groups are the custodians of University land and have been for many centuries.

We acknowledge that the land on which our campuses stand is the place of age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. The Kulin and Eora people's living culture had, and has, a unique role in the life of these regions. VU supports the aim of Reconciliation Australia to build better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians.

It is important that staff, students and visitors understand and respect the significance of recognising the traditional owners of University land.



# WELCOME

Since 2010 the Victoria University Student Leadership Conference has inspired and empowered students on their individual leadership journeys. By connecting you with thought leaders and experts we aim to explore and prepare for the world that you will experience beyond your time at Victoria University (VU).

Our theme for this year's conference is **Resilience and Reinvention**. Today's leaders are curious, courageous, empathetic, adaptable and able to foster fairness and respect, value and belonging. This year's conference will explore leadership practices that garner self-awareness, help you develop and maintain resilience, and empower you to adapt and lead in a diverse range of situations.

At VU we aim to equip you with the skills to transition into an ever-changing environment. Our Student Life and Leadership programs will inspire you to take on leadership roles within VU and beyond, and cultivate a growth mindset, to seek out opportunities, take risks and to learn and adapt.

Our 2021 Student Leadership Conference will assist you to identify and seek out these opportunities. There will be occasions to listen, reflect and learn by doing, as well as network, make friends and branch outside your comfort zone. Most importantly, we want you to ask questions and learn from our presenters and participants, who bring a rich and diverse range of experience.

I congratulate you on your commitment to your personal and professional development. Make the most of your conference experience and stay connected with the wonderful community of student leaders you are now a part of.



**Naomi Dempsey**

Interim Deputy Provost (Students & Academic Services)



# ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

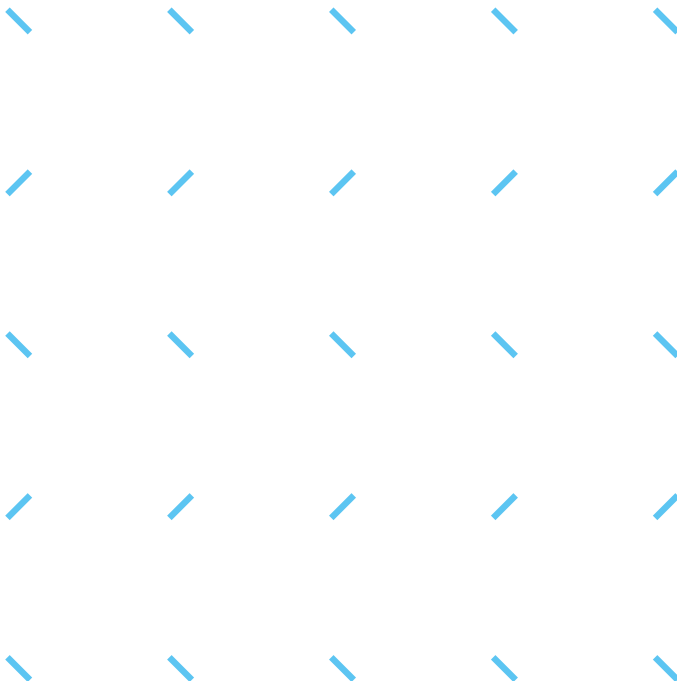
TIME	PROGRAM COMPONENT	PRESENTER
8:45AM	<b>Registration</b>	
9:30AM	<b>Welcome &amp; Acknowledgement of Country</b>	<b>Leon Kerr</b> Director, Student Services <b>Aayushi Patel</b> Leadership Assistant
9:45AM	<b>Opening Keynote Speaker</b>	<b>Professor Adam Shoemaker</b> Vice Chancellor & President
10:25AM	<b>Workshops Session 1</b>	
	Resilience in your career & making opportunities	<b>Daniel Lunardi</b> Careers Consultant, VU Employ <b>Tonya Wimhurst</b> Careers Consultant, VU Employ
	Transform discomfort & vulnerability into strength & resilience	<b>Nicole Melder</b> Senior Counsellor, Wellbeing Services
	Building resilience in a disruptive world	<b>Thinh Nguyen</b> Associate Professor, Head of VU Academy
	<b>Online workshop:</b> Placemaking & planetary health: possibilities for reinventing relationships	<b>Dr Helen Widdop Quinton</b> Lecturer & Research Fellow, Institute for Sustainable Industries & Liveable Cities <b>Paramitha Eka Putri</b> PhD Candidate
11:25AM	<b>Morning Tea</b>	
11:55AM	<b>Workshops Session 2</b>	
	Ending gender-based violence – what can men do?	<b>Shelley Hewson-Munro</b> Teaching Focused Scholar & Project Manager, Working Together with Men

Workshop Session 2 continued on next page

TIME	PROGRAM COMPONENT	PRESENTER
	Resilient me	<b>Marian Cronin</b> Associate Director, Inclusion & Engagement
	Ignite & rewrite your story	<b>Anita van Rooyen</b> Chief Confidence Hacker, Confidence Hackers
	<b>Online workshop:</b> Overcoming implicit biases & covert racism	<b>Stefan Sambol</b> PhD Candidate, Institute of Health & Sport
<b>12:55PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b> LinkedIn photo booth	
<b>1:30PM</b>	Wellness session	<b>Professor Alex Parker</b> Executive Director, Institute for Health & Sport  <b>Dr Michaela Pascoe</b> Senior Postdoctoral Research Fellow
<b>2PM</b>	<b>Workshops Session 3</b>	
	Authentic leadership for planetary health	<b>Jeannie Rea</b> Associate Professor, Senior Manager, Planetary Health
	Yes, I am a human	<b>Michael Deppeler</b> Student Mentor  <b>Emma Sheridan</b> Student Mentor  <b>Senuri Weerasekara</b> Student Mentor
	Win the 'what ifs' war	<b>Anita van Rooyen</b> Chief Confidence Hacker, Confidence Hackers
	<b>Online workshop:</b> Using feedback to gain the edge in your next job interview	<b>Justine Warne</b> Coordinator, Enterprise Skills Development, Employability & Success

Order of proceedings continued on next page

TIME	PROGRAM COMPONENT	PRESENTER
3:10PM	<b>Closing Keynote Speaker</b>	<b>Nyadol Nyuon</b> Lawyer, community advocate, writer, & media commentator
4:10PM	<b>Closing Remarks</b> <b>Thank You</b>	<b>Leon Kerr</b> Director Student Services <b>Aayushi Patel</b> Leadership Assistant
4:25PM	<b>Online Event Concludes</b>	
4:25PM	<b>Networking Party</b> LinkedIn photo booth Entertainment – Chantelle & Liam (VU Music)	
5:30PM	<b>Event Concludes</b>	



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# MASTER OF CEREMONIES

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## **Leon Kerr**

### Director, Student Services

Leon Kerr is the Director of Student Services, a portfolio that includes Student Wellbeing, Student Life and Leadership, Student Advisory Services, International Student Advising and Student Communications. Leon works collaboratively with stakeholders across VU and beyond to continually evolve and innovate, ensuring that VU continues to provide the best and most relevant student experience unique to each individual and supporting students to thrive and succeed.



## **Aayushi Patel**

### Leadership Assistant

Aayushi Patel is the Leadership Assistant in the 2021 Student Life & Leadership team. Aayushi is a final year student studying Honours in Bachelor of Laws. Aayushi has been involved in multiple VU student leader roles and initiatives such as President at Dictum Society, VUSU Board Member, Indian Club Marketing Officer, Students as Partners Network, to name a few. Aayushi completed the LEAD Program last year, and is passionate about leadership and encouraging students to develop into stronger leaders.



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# OPENING KEYNOTE

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## **Professor Adam Shoemaker** Vice Chancellor & President

Professor Adam Shoemaker is the Vice-Chancellor and President of VU.

Prior to his current appointment, he was Vice-Chancellor of Southern Cross University, and has held senior leadership roles at a number of other Australian universities. He is one of Australia's leading researchers in the area of Indigenous literature and culture.

Adam has a compelling vision for the future of VU, with a goal to make VU the best dual sector university in the world. Adam is excited to lead VU as we innovate and sharpen our progressive way of learning to ensure graduates are ready to make a real contribution to the workforce, whether it is around the corner or around the world.





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# CLOSING KEYNOTE

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## **Nyadol Nyuon**

Lawyer, community advocate,  
writer, & media commentator

Nyadol was born in a refugee camp in Itang, Ethiopia, and raised in Kakuma Refugee camp, Kenya. In 2005, at the age of eighteen, she moved to Australia as a refugee.

Since then, Nyadol has completed a Bachelor of Arts from VU and a Juris Doctor from the University of Melbourne. She now works as a senior consultant in the Community Crime Prevention Unit of the Victorian Department of Justice.

Nyadol is a vocal advocate for human rights, multiculturalism, the settlement of people with refugee experiences and those seeking asylum. She has worked and volunteered extensively in these areas with a range of organisations.

Nyadol is also a regular media commentator in these areas, having appeared on ABC's The Drum, as a panellist on Q&A and contributing to The Age, Sydney Morning Herald and the Saturday Paper, to name just a few.



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# PRESENTERS

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## **Anita van Rooyen** Chief Confidence Hacker, Confidence Hackers

Anita van Rooyen used to be the shyest person in the universe. Scared to talk or be seen, her confidence was at level zero. Over time she learned, created and tried all kinds of tools to boost her self-esteem. Now as a human behaviour expert and Chief Confidence Hacker, Anita helps students to build lasting confidence using tools that truly work so that they can make better decisions about their study, job, happiness, contentment and even life itself.



## **Workshops**

### ◆ **Win the ‘what ifs’ war**

You know those thoughts that keep you awake at night? The ones that keep swirling through your head over and over? This workshop will help you find ways to win the war against ‘what ifs’, ‘why mes’ and ‘what thes’.

### ◆ **Ignite & rewrite your story**

This interactive session focuses on discovering and changing the beliefs that hold us back. Using guided vision work, Anita will work with you to create new beliefs that have the power to move you forward and be leader you want to be.

# Daniel Lunardi & Tonya Wimhurst

## Career Consultants, VU Employ

Daniel is a Career Consultant at VU working in VU Employ. Daniel has been working in career development for five years, and has professional background in recruitment and education. Tonya's experience as a Careers Practitioner includes having worked in several Victorian universities. Her roles have included Careers Consultant, Lecturer, Career Mentoring Program Coordinator and Careers Education Content Consultant. She finds great reward in guiding students to recognise and articulate their employability skills and to develop career action plans.



## Workshop

### ◆ Resilience in your career & making opportunities

Learn how to stay resilient through job searches and application processes, network for support, and use the adaptability skills you developed through COVID-19. This workshop will help you explore and create opportunities for yourself through freelancing, entrepreneurship, networking, business creation, personal branding and embracing the future of work.

## **Nicole Melder**

### **Senior Counsellor, Wellbeing Services**

Nicole Melder is a psychologist with leadership and clinical experience in the area of student mental health spanning a twenty year career. Nicole has developed extensive knowledge and skills in the area of creating accessible and relevant counselling services to students in various settings including schools, TAFE and universities. Nicole has a strong interest in supporting teams and individuals to learn to identify and understand feelings of discomfort in order to transform such feelings into opportunities for growth, development and courage.



## **Workshop**

### **◆ Transform discomfort & vulnerability into strength & resilience**

Students will gain insights into how transformative discomfort, confrontation, and vulnerability can be when leaders have the courage to identify and admit to what we are feeling, even when the feelings may be extremely challenging to cope with. Nicole will invite students to share experiences of challenging situations (including her own) and demonstrate how being open and honest about our vulnerabilities will transform us into agile, resilient and courageous leaders. Nicole will draw on work by Dr. Susan David (Psychologist and Management Consultant) to facilitate a discussion around emotions and how our emotions can be used as a strength rather than weakness.

## **Professor Alex Parker**

### **Executive Director, Institute for Health & Sport**

Alex Parker is the Executive Director of VU's Institute for Health and Sport (IHES). IHES addresses real-world problems of local, national and global relevance in both health and sport. Research within IHES encompasses exercise science, active living, chronic disease, biomedical sciences, technology, nursing, community health, psychology, public health, sport performance, sport in society, sport participation and sport business. As a Professor of Physical Activity and Mental Health, Alex's research examines the role of movement in preventing and treating mental health concerns. Her research is mainly in youth mental health and she is also a practicing clinical psychologist. Alex is involved in research to support the mental wellbeing of VU students and is a member of VU's Refreshed Student Mental Health Strategy 2018-2021 Reference Group.



## **Dr Michaela Pascoe**

### **Senior Postdoctoral Research Fellow**

Michaela is a Senior Research Fellow in the Institute of Health and Sport, Victoria University. Her research expertise are in mental health, mindfulness, physical activity, stress and science communication.

She explores the impact of stress on mental health and the influence of mindfulness and physical activity/exercise on the brain and well-being including in populations of female athletes.

Michaela's examination of the impact of stress and mindfulness on mental health has made a significant scholarly contribution and has led to numerous invitations for her to communicate her research to both academic and general audiences. She has presented her work live on national television, is commonly interviewed on radio across Australia and internationally and widely published in print media.



# Presentation

## ◆ Simple strategies for our mental wellbeing

The plenary session will provide a brief overview of the evidence behind the everyday strategies we can use to promote and protect our physical and mental wellbeing. We will share a few examples and practice a couple of brief and simple wellbeing techniques together.



## **Jeannie Rea**

Associate Professor,  
Senior Manager Planetary Health

Jeannie Rea is an Associate Professor in the College of Arts and Education, and Course Chair for the Graduate Certificate in Planetary Health in VU College. Over the past year she has focused on making Planetary Health part of all that VU does. She brings many years of experience, enthusiasm and leadership in making transformational change.



### **Workshop**

#### **◆ Authentic leadership for planetary health**

Our planet embodies resilience and reinvention – it always fights back despite all that humans do to destroy it. First Nations peoples around the planet have cared and advocated for the wellbeing of people, place and planet as custodians of Country, despite the relentless destructive impacts of invasion and colonisation. At VU we have made a whole of university commitment to make planetary health part of all we do. Students through participation and leadership in education and research as well as co- and extracurricular activities can make this real. What makes a leader in transformative change for the wellbeing of people, place and planet? Do we need to reinvent leadership? Explore these questions, and workshop how to be a resilient and authentic leader to make a better world today and tomorrow.

# Thinh Nguyen

Associate Professor,  
Head of VU Academy



Thinh is Head of VU Academy, a student leadership program at VU supporting student-led initiatives that aim to improve the community and the environment.

## Workshop

### ◆ Building resilience in a disruptive world

The last 12 months have seen unprecedented disruption and change. Many found it challenging, while others saw opportunities to thrive. What makes one person resilient while others falter from the stress? This workshop will present the science behind resilience and how to build it.





# Marian Cronin

## Associate Director, Inclusion & Engagement

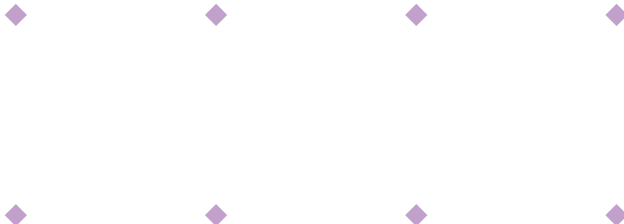
Marian Cronin is Associate Director, Inclusion and Engagement at VU and leads VU's agenda for Inclusion and Engagement. She has more than twenty years' experience in working with organisations to build equitable and inclusive workplace cultures, and has won several awards for her groundbreaking work in this area. In 2018, Marian was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Engagement. Marian is the Deputy Chair of the Preventing Violence Together (PVT) 2030 Regional Partnership and seeks to amplify its work within the University, seeking opportunities for joint work with PVT partners wherever possible across the west of Melbourne.



## Workshop

### ◆ Resilient me

In small groups, women and female identifying people will have the opportunity to work with Marian for an experience of exploration, learning and growth. Together we will tap into our own resilience, recreating our narratives, examining our “self-talk”, taming that “inner critic”, and doing a deep dive into the myth that our success is due to “luck”.



# Michael Deppeler, Emma Sheridan & Senuri Weerasekara

## Student Mentors

Michael Deppeler is doing a double degree and a Master of Clinical Exercise focusing on rehabilitation of chronic illnesses. He is a proud gay man working with the LGBTQIA+ community and is passionate about breaking down barriers and stigma around sport and exercise within the community. On a personal level, Michael is a pole sport competitor and coach.



Emma Sheridan is a third year Bachelor of Human Nutrition student at VU. Her drive to study this degree stemmed from her love of food and urge to help others in society. Emma has been passionate about leadership from a young age and has been on multiple school council committees. Emma's hobbies include marathon running and cycling in intermediate events – she loves the training and the feeling of accomplishment that come with both.



Fascinated by human behaviour, Senuri Weerasekara embarked on a journey to pursue psychology. Senuri is deeply interested in the relationship between leadership and social change. Senuri usually spends her time in front of the laptop studying or working, or in front of the oven baking.



## Workshop

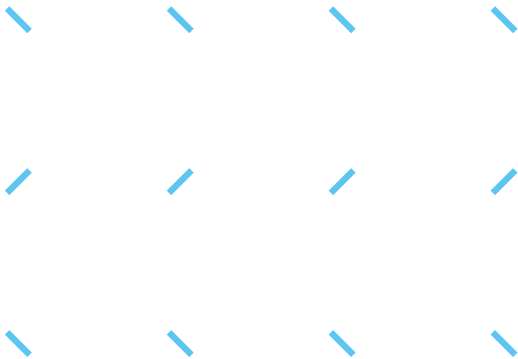
### ◆ Yes, I am a human

This workshop focusses on human interaction, team building after isolation, group work and resilience. During the workshop we will be doing some interactive activities using giant Jenga in the form of a competition. We will also be focussing on the student experience during one of the toughest years we faced in 2020.

# Shelley Hewson-Munro

## Teaching Focused Scholar & Project Manager, Working Together with Men

Over the last 14 years Shelley has worked and co-designed programs and projects across all levels of violence response around Australia, including one of the first Aboriginal-owned and Aboriginal-designed Respectful Relationships initiatives in the central desert of Western Australia. She has also facilitated men's behaviour change and fathering without violence sessions, and provided partner contact, trauma and family violence counselling to victims and survivors, boys, adolescents and men who use violence. Shelley is passionate about grassroots, strength-based and accountable activation and from 2018 to the end of 2020 managed the Working Together with Men initiative and Project Momentum for HealthWest Partnership, the latter of which, after piloting several concepts, created a national-first resource that aims to inspire practitioners and provide a suggested model of response to activate grassroots men in accountable violence prevention efforts for their communities. Shelley is also currently working on two gender justice research projects with Dr Amanda Keddie and Dr Michael Flood for Deakin University.



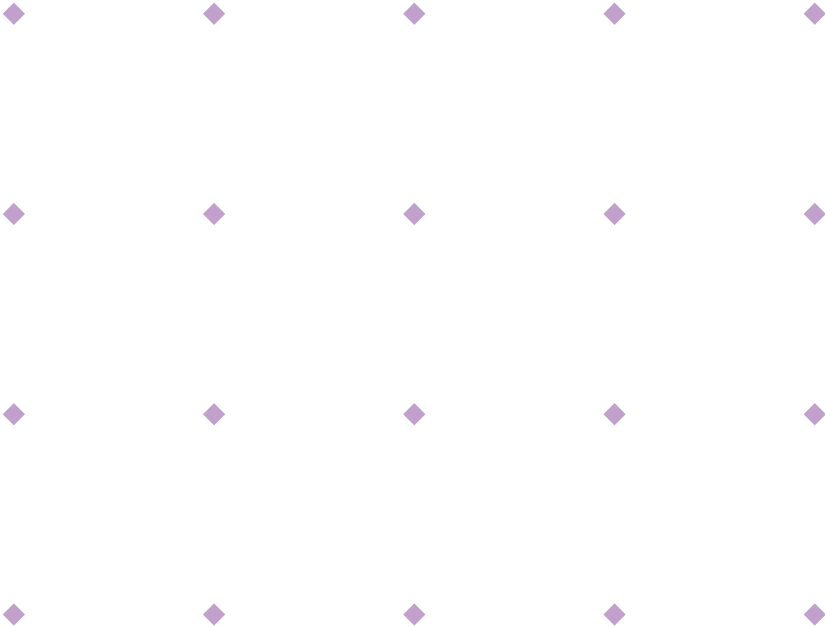
# Workshop

## ◆ Ending gender-based violence – what can men do?

So, you want to be a male ally and help end violence against women? Come to this session to learn about the principles of male allyship from a leading expert in the field, and some guys who have started their journey as allies.

Topics covered include:

- Pro-feminist - could this be you?
- Outdated masculinity norms and their impact.
- Tips from men who have tried to be active bystanders.
- Your next steps for becoming an ally.



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# ONLINE PRESENTERS

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## **Dr. Helen Widdop Quinton**

Lecturer & Research Fellow,  
Institute for Sustainable Industries  
& Liveable Cities

Helen Widdop Quinton is a Lecturer in the College of Arts & Education and a Research Fellow with the Institute of Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities at Victoria University. She works with situated knowledge, with a particular focus on socioecological learning through place-attuned and relational pedagogies for sustaining the wellbeing of people, places and planetary systems.



## **Paramitha Eka Putri**

PhD Candidate

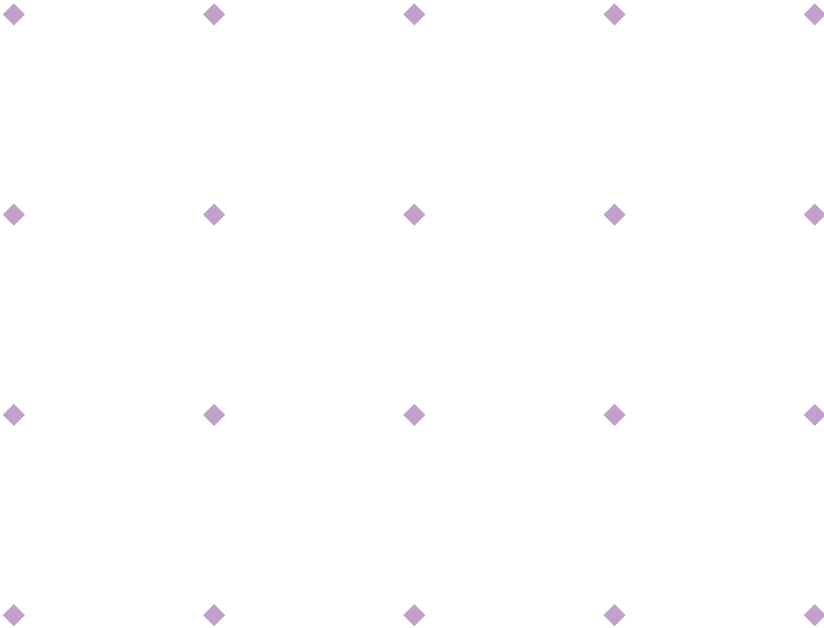
Mitha Eka Putri is a Balinese academic undertaking her PhD research at VU. Her research is focused on engaging creativity and Balinese environmental knowledge to reframe teacher education; connecting students with Balinese ways of knowing nature and place.



# Workshop

## ◆ Placemaking & planetary health: possibilities for reinventing relatings

Place and planetary health are both generative concepts for rethinking our relationships with and between people, places and the planet. In this workshop we will explore these concepts and some applications. Through case examples we will draw attention to possibilities for placemaking, building resilience, restoration through nature connections, contact zones for action, and shifting of worldviews for planetary health. As a workshop group we will identify strategic possibilities for your own place based and resilience activities.



## **Stefan Sambol**

PhD Candidate,  
Institute of Health & Sport



Stefan has been working and studying at VU for the past seven years. He is conducting a PhD in the field of cognitive psychology investigating our higher-order abilities such as our capacity to regulate emotions, solve problems, and perform goal-directed behaviours. Stefan has been part of numerous research teams and teaches a variety of psychology units. These experiences have helped refine his expertise in the field of cognitive psychology. Stefan has a passion for cognitive psychology and believes through understanding our mental processes we can be on the best path for self-improvement.

### **Workshop**

#### **◆ Overcoming implicit biases & covert racism**

It is an inescapable reality that we make thousands of decisions a day, ranging in severity and the amount of mental effort we apply when making a decision. There are many mental shortcuts we take to save time and effort. However, through these “automated” decision-making processes we are susceptible to biases and display clear favouritism for our own in groups. In this workshop we will cover implicit cognition and how we have unconsciously made associations that may negatively affect how we interact with people of different ethnicities, genders, or sexual orientations. You will have the opportunity to complete a racial implicit association task and learn what “unconscious biases” you may harbour. Most importantly, we will learn what it means to have these implicit biases and how to be more “conscious” when interacting with others.

# Justine Warne

## Coordinator, Enterprise Skills Development, Employability & Success

Justine is one of VU's own Career Consultants. She has a background in HR and recruitment and vast experience across higher education, not-for-profit and the private sector.



### Workshop

#### ◆ Using feedback to gain the edge in your next job interview

This workshop will explore how to use feedback to your advantage in your next job interview. You will learn how to ask for constructive feedback, and how to apply it to give you the edge that will help you land the job you want.

