



## HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE UWA MODERN SLAVERY RESEARCH CLUSTER (MSRC)

### 2019 WAS AN EXCITING YEAR FOR THE MSRC!

Although the MSRC has existed informally since 2017, the group achieved formal recognition in early 2019 when it was established as a research entity within the Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Education. The MSRC has over 20 members from across the Faculty and the wider university. Read more about the [MSRC and its members](#).

Some highlights from 2019 are summarised below.

### IN THE NEWS

There were several interesting developments for MSRC members in 2019. Adjunct Professor John Southalan (UWA Law School) was [appointed as the inaugural independent examiner](#) in the Australian National Contact Point on the OCED Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Dr Fiona McGaughey (UWA Law School) was appointed to the [Law Council of Australia's Business and Human Rights Committee](#). Associate Professor Dave Webb (UWA Business School) secured a UWA Alcoa and Milne Visiting Professor grant for research partner Professor Hinrich Voss from Leeds University Business School to visit UWA in September 2020.

Professor Jane Lydon (Wesfarmers Chair in Australian History) was awarded an [Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant](#). The project aims to bring Australia into the global

history of slavery by exploring the legacies of British slavery in Western Australia. Professor Farida Fozdar, Professor Loretta Baldassar and Dr Donella Caspersz hosted another successful annual [Migration Update](#) through the Migration, Mobilities and Belonging Research Cluster.

## EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENT

The MSRC's inaugural symposium, *Perspectives on Modern Slavery*, held in September 2019, brought together academic and industry speakers from across Australia and internationally to consider a variety of perspectives on modern slavery. Read the [symposium program](#).

The MSRC hosts international webinars every three months, involving staff from UWA and the University of Leeds with their collaborating partners. Presentations are given by either collaborating staff members or external guests, including Marshall PLC UK's Chris Harrop OBE who presented on, *Modern slavery, the supply chain and the need for a new business model*, 17 October 2019. Chris's talk set the basis for further discussions between UWA and Leeds academics to explore these issues in collaborative research.

If you would like to be notified of future webinars and events, please join our mailing list (see below).

## RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Thanks to a Faculty Research Collaboration Award, MSRC members [Fiona McGaughey](#), [Dave Webb](#), [Donella Caspersz](#), [Holly Cullen](#), and [Peta-Jane Hogg](#) are working with partners at the University of Leeds on two research projects, due for completion in 2020.

**Project 1** explores the role of small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) in respect to the introduction of the Modern Slavery Acts (MSAs) both in the UK in 2015 and Australia in 2018. Although the laws target large companies, SMEs are integral to these companies' supply chains and the project highlights that more attention should be paid to SMEs in global value chains. Ethics-approved fieldwork (interviews) is underway in Australia and the UK.

**Project 2** is a comparative analysis of the UK Modern Slavery Act, Australian Modern Slavery

Act and French duty of vigilance law. Using a reflexive law framework, this research maps the scope of the laws in each of the three jurisdictions, identifies companies reporting under all three laws, and positions the laws within a spectrum of stringency.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH INITIATIVES**

- **Professor Hinrich Voss from Leeds University Business School (LUBS)**, together with UWA MSRC members, successfully applied for a Leeds University Business School Challenge Fund 2019/20 in preparation of a large ESRC grant application in 2020. The research will expand on Project 1 and include stakeholder workshops in London in both February and July 2020.
- **Associate Professors [Dave Webb](#) (UWA) and [Matt Davis](#) (LUBS)** are currently conceptualising a project exploring consumer issues and modern slavery.
- **Associate Professors [Dave Webb](#) (UWA) and Dr [Nin Kirkham](#) (UWA)** are developing a project exploring the relationship between values-driven conversations in organisations and modern slavery in supply chains. This work will focus on conceptualisation and the practical implications for business ethics in business.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact our convenors Dr Fiona McGaughey ([fiona.mcgaughey@uwa.edu.au](mailto:fiona.mcgaughey@uwa.edu.au)) or Associate Professor Dave Webb ([dave.webb@uwa.edu.au](mailto:dave.webb@uwa.edu.au)).

Special thanks to MSRC interns in 2019, including Jessica Bennett and Elise Milroy.

**Dr Fiona McGaughey**  
**Associate Professor Dave Webb**

## **Contact**

Conveners

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