THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

**Sydney Policy
Lab**

Sydney Policy Lab:

Progress and Prospects 2018

Welcome from the Director

We live in deeply turbulent times.

Across the world, politics is in turmoil, with countries witnessing the collapse of the established parties of old and the rise of new, far more forthright, forces. At the same time, economies are grappling with spiralling inequality and societies are responding to transformations in everyday ways of life on a scale rarely predicted only a few decades ago.

What is the task of a great university standing amongst all of this change?

The answers to this question are surely multiple, but one must be to bring our enormous breadth and depth of research expertise and wisdom to help people of all backgrounds make sense of the change that is going all around them. Learning from the past and glimpsing the future is, after all, what university research is all about.

So that is what the Sydney Policy Lab sets out to do.

We bring the very best researchers at the University of Sydney face-to-face with people from every different walk of life to help identify and understand the forces that are shaping all of our lives and together plot a path to a different future.

The Sydney Policy Lab is, as the name suggests, a non-partisan place of experimentation. A place where people will meet, investigate, debate and reach conclusions together — and then do it all over again, as we try to make sense of this rapidly changing world of ours and work out how we can collectively make a difference.

We can only succeed in doing that, of course, with your help, and the help of your colleagues, families, neighbours and communities. That's why, in a very real sense, the Sydney Policy Lab is your Policy Lab.

This review sets out what has already been achieved and what the Lab aims to achieve next. It outlines how it hopes to make change and the ways in which others might be able to play a part in its work.

I hope you enjoy it and feel that the ideas within it initiate a process of working together. Do let me know what you think and do please stay in touch.

Marc Stears
Director Sydney Policy Lab

September 2018

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Introduction

The Sydney Policy Lab exists to build dynamic, new partnerships between the world-class researchers at the University of Sydney, politicians, public servants, business leaders, policy advocates, campaigners and members of the broader community.

We do so because it is only truly inclusive and broad-based collaborations such as these that are capable of unlocking the most pressing public policy challenges of our turbulent times, including inequality, the implications of new technologies and the future of democratic politics itself.

Our fundamental goal is to use these partnerships to make a real, positive difference to each of the partners with whom we work and to build long-lasting policy change that benefits Australia and the world.

The Lab was established in 2017 as part of the University's 2016-20 Strategic Plan. Since the appointment of our first Director and core staff team between May-July 2018, and with the advice and support of colleagues from across the University, we have formalised these priorities in four key aims reflecting this core mission:

1.	**Create new and dynamic partnerships** that bridge the gap between the academic and policy-making communities and include new or previously excluded voices in the policymaking and research process.
2.	**Build the skills and capabilities of University of Sydney researchers** to conduct genuinely impactful research and to feel confident in engaging in policy-making, campaigning and advocacy in the longer term.
3.	**Challenge prevailing orthodoxies of policymakers** where required, opening up new debates and generating innovative policy programs and ideas.
4.	**Help effect a positive change in public policy** capable of enhancing the quality of life available to citizens, including citizens' economic well-being, the quality of their democratic experience and their secure sense of belonging in society.

The Lab so far

The University of Sydney recognises that we all live in deeply turbulent times, where huge social, political and economic challenges confront us all. The University also recognises that it has an opportunity and a duty to help solve those problems. The Lab was established as part of the University's 2016-20 Strategic Plan and joins similar initiatives at many of the world's major universities, including the Institute for Politics at Chicago, the Ash Center at Harvard and the Bennett Institute at Cambridge.

In 2018, the Sydney Policy Lab worked towards these aims through a program that incorporated collaborative research grants, run with the assistance of the Lab, a Fellowship program that brought policy-makers from outside into the University and a broad program of public and closed-door events that convened people from academia, civil society, government, the public sector and industry.
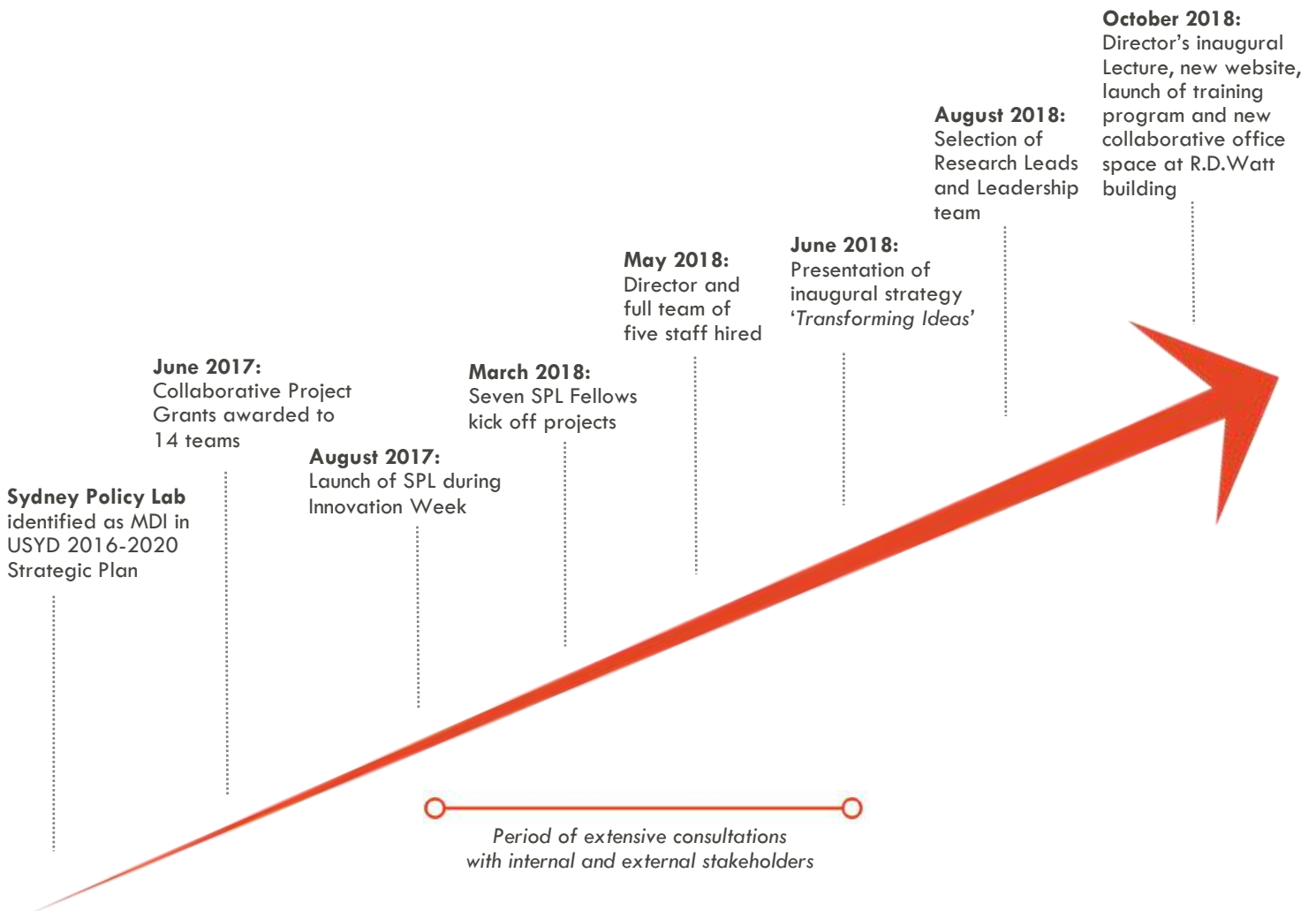
The program costs were just in excess of $400,000, with $332,211 of that going to the collaborative research grants.

Since then, we have also begun to professionalize our operations. We have hired a new staff, including our inaugural Director, a Chief Operations and Engagement Officer, two Project Managers and a Project Officer.

In preparation for future years, we have also conducted an extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders to improve our offer in the longer term. This included 31 one-to-one meetings with University of Sydney staff; 31 one-to-one meetings with senior external stakeholders in the policy community; meeting 60 University of Sydney staff in small groups; meeting 40 University of Sydney staff in medium groups; hearing from 182 people in a University of Sydney-wide online survey.

All these developments have enabled us to reflect on the Lab's activities, refocus our efforts for increased impact and set out a plan for the years ahead.

October 2018:
Director's inaugural Lecture, new website, launch of training program and new collaborative office space at R.D.Watt building

August 2018:
Selection of Research Leads and Leadership team

June 2018:
Presentation of inaugural strategy 'Transforming Ideas'

May 2018:
Director and full team of five staff hired

March 2018:
Seven SPL Fellows kick off projects

June 2017:
Collaborative Project Grants awarded to 14 teams

August 2017:
Launch of SPL during Innovation Week

Sydney Policy Lab identified as MDI in USYD 2016-2020 Strategic Plan

Period of extensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders

How well have we done?

The Sydney Policy Lab has established itself extremely quickly as a place of real consequence in local, national and international debates around public policy.
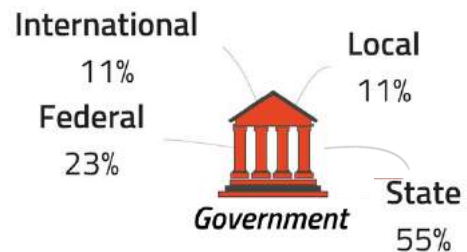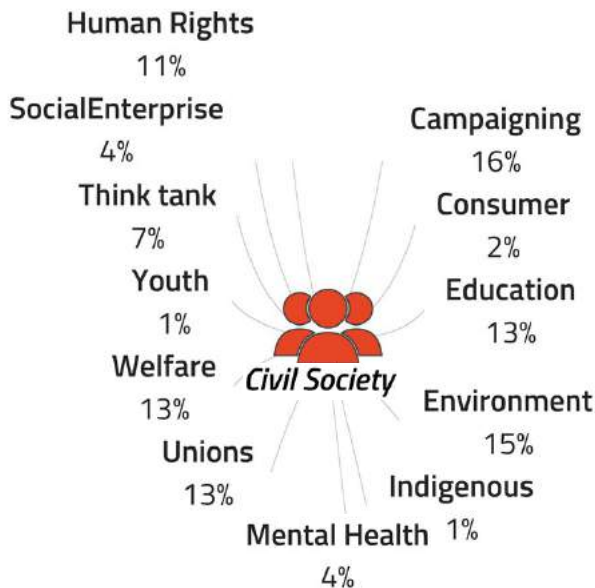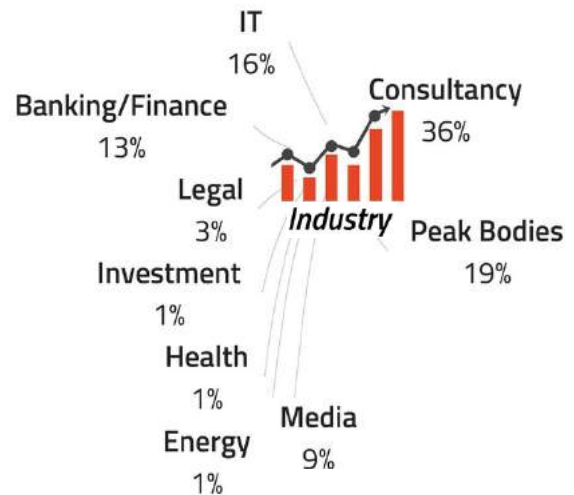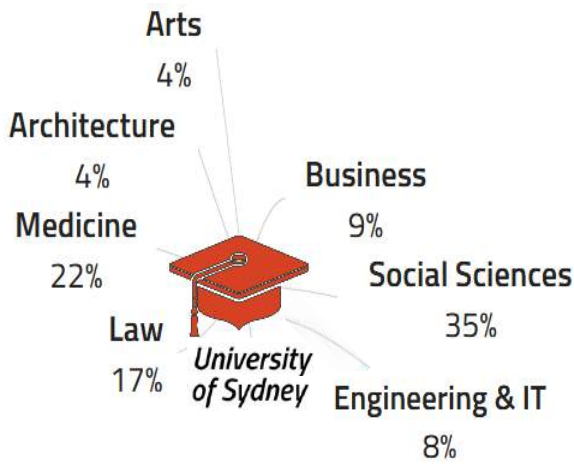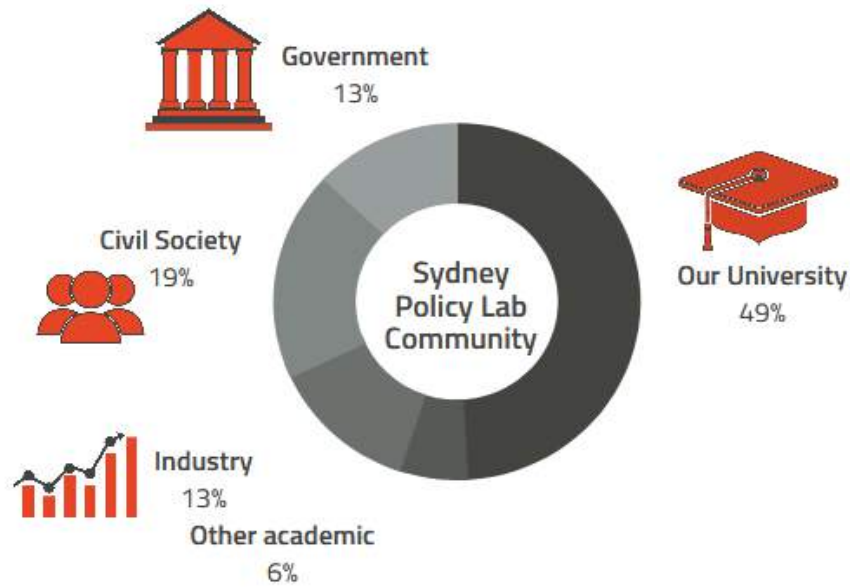
Through research and targeted public engagement, we have forged deep connections with some of the leading actors in public policy in Australia and around the world and built sustainable partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders external to the university.

We have also welcomed high-profile visitors to the Lab, including Jeremy Heimans, co-author of 2018 bestseller *New Power*, co-founder and CEO of the consultancy Purpose; Nick Pearce, who leads the Institute for Policy Research (IPR) in the UK; Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs, Chair Justice Connect and former President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, and distinguished Harvard Professor Meira Levinson.

The Lab has also commenced a program of Change Breakfasts which bring together representatives from civic groups, academia, industry and government to participate in a stimulating morning of conversation, debate and reflection on methods of creating social change.

The Lab has so far hosted 19 events, which brought together more than 1000 people including representatives from 176 civil society groups. Over 700 people stay on top of the Lab's activities and thinking through our weekly newsletter, with readership stretching internationally. Over 5,000 people follow the Lab or our Director on Twitter.

engaged 176 community groups

over 1000 event attendees

33 engaged researchers

36 community partnerships

over 5k online followers and subscribers

Our Reach

Sydney Policy Lab Community

- Government 13%
- Our University 49%
- Civil Society 19%
- Industry 13%
- Other academic 6%

University of Sydney

- Arts 4%
- Architecture 4%
- Medicine 22%
- Law 17%
- Business 9%
- Social Sciences 35%
- Engineering & IT 8%

Industry

- IT 16%
- Banking/Finance 13%
- Legal 3%
- Investment 1%
- Health 1%
- Energy 1%
- Consultancy 36%
- Peak Bodies 19%
- Media 9%

Civil Society

- Human Rights 11%
- SocialEnterprise 4%
- Think tank 7%
- Youth 1%
- Welfare 13%
- Unions 13%
- Mental Health 4%
- Indigenous 1%
- Environment 15%
- Education 13%
- Consumer 2%
- Campaigning 16%

Government

- International 11%
- Federal 23%
- Local 11%
- State 55%

What lies ahead?

The Sydney Policy Lab's program for 2019 is entitled transforming ideas. It aims to generate new policy-relevant ideas capable of responding to the enormous, disruptive economic, social and political change currently on the horizon.

Our program of activities addressing that theme is designed to advance our core purpose of creating dynamic, new partnerships to enhance the public good, especially as it relates to these central priorities of assisting Australia and the world transition to a future that is more equal, more fully participatory and where people can enjoy a stable sense of their own identity.

In the year ahead, we intend to:

– Deepen our collaborative research program, appointing three Research Leads in the priority areas of equality, belonging and power.

– Develop a world-class, bespoke training program to equip University of Sydney researchers with the skills to become leaders in external collaboration, political influence, and Category 2 and 3 grant winning.

– Continue to expand the Policy Lab Fellowship program, renamed Fellows and Visitors in order to recruit at a senior national level and internationally.

– Build and launch the first Sydney Policy Lab website as a primary mode of external communication.

– Move into our open plan collaborative space in the newly refurbished R. D. Watt building, equip it and utilise the space to its fullest potential through our events and research program.

Collaborative research

The Sydney Policy Lab is one of the few University policy centres in the world to conduct all of our original research in collaborative partnership with actors from outside the University. Our aim in our 2019 is to scale up this collaborative research activity from its excellent starting point in 2018 and connect it to the thematic priorities described above. In order to do so, we will appoint Research Leads or teams of Research Leads for each of the three thematic priorities. These Research Leads will work with the Policy Lab staff to allocate up to $75,000 per annum in collaborative research in their area. These programs of research will include workshops, conferences, retreats, policy masterclasses, arts and drama events, to be designed collectively. Such activities are expected to result in academic journal and book projects and other forms of dissemination. We have shortlisted with the help of an external panel of well-known policy experts and will shortly appoint Research Leads to commence research activities at the beginning of the academic year 2019.

Training

Conducting collaborative research that makes a real impact externally is not easy. And it is not something in which many academics ever receive formal training. The Sydney Policy Lab aims to put that right. Over the next few years, we intend to develop a world-class training offer, equipping University of Sydney researchers with the skills they need to conduct this kind of research. This training will be led by an Education Lead appointed from within the University, who will conduct open training sessions along with the Lab's Director covering everything from relationship building with vulnerable groups to impressing a Cabinet Minister in a one-to-one policy briefing.

Public engagement

Communication is at the heart of politics and policy-making; it is the way that ideas flow and minds get changed. The Lab is therefore developing a website of our own, independent from the Research Portfolio where we currently appear, with the sort of presence that equivalent organisations have globally, such as the Ash Center at Harvard University, the Institute for Politics at the University of Chicago, the Global Policy Lab at the LSE and the Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge. We will develop blogs, training videos, podcasts and other social media presence, with content produced in-house by our own team, by our researchers and the wider University community, by our Global Visitors and by external commentators. We will host both closed and confidential policy briefing or discussion sessions and more public-facing stimulating events for a wide audience. We will also develop close and continuing relationships with opinion formers, journalists and commentators from across Australia and beyond.

People

The Sydney Policy Lab is made up of a small group of core staff and the Lab's Research and Training Leads, plus an active and involved network of Fellows, Affiliated Researchers, Global Visitors and Associates, supported by an Advisory board made up of both domestic and international experts who connect the academic and non-academics world. The Lab's achievements will grow from the contributions by all these people. The Lab's successful Fellowship program supports experienced people from NGOs and public service professions into the University, to work closely with researchers in various Faculties. The popular program has enabled some impressive partnerships to incubate, and will continue in 2019. We will also create a new Global Visitors scheme to bring world-recognized policy thinkers and practitioners into the University for visiting programs. In addition, a membership option will allow the Lab to connect with those in the policy community (broadly considered) who wish to have an affiliation with the Lab and are committed to supporting its work.

Collaborative research
to date

The Policy Lab has worked with University of Sydney academics and their external collaborators to deliver forward-thinking research that brings together academics and non-academics in novel ways. This year, their work has tackled a wide range of urgent policy questions, including out-of-home care, youth employment, dental health and food sustainability, to gender equality, dispute resolution, consumer data protection and cyber security.

> *"As a nurse and a qualitative researcher, the SPL grant enabled me to undertake never-dreamed-of collaborations with computer and data scientists!*
>
> *Every week, a new scandal hits the news about breaches of our consumers' privacy and trust. Our team brought together the necessary skillsets to answer consumers pressing questions about the privacy of their personal data."*

Quinn Grundy and her team, in collaboration with the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, **identified security risks to consumers and health professionals that arise through the use of mobile apps.**

> *"That our involvement with the Policy Lab has been incredibly valuable to us is a significant understatement. Being able to develop a focused, collaborative, policy-oriented output has been a powerful way for us to engage the community with our areas of research interest.*
>
> *The success of this project has opened doors for ongoing collaboration and dialogue with the sector in a way which would not have been possible otherwise."*

Jennifer Smith-Merry and her team, in collaboration with Community Mental Health Australia, **investigated the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).**

RESEARCH SUCCESSES

29 community partnerships

13 major media reports

83 media mentions

12 academic papers

1 public report

2 reports tabled in Federal Parliament

5 Hansard mentions in Federal Parliament

2 reports supporting Parliamentary Inquiries and Senate Committees

1 successful Category 2 funding application

8 external funders, including a $7 million government budget allocation

4 ARC grant applications underway

1 NHMRC grant applications underway

Heiko Spallek and Kylie Gwynne and their team from the Poche Centre and School of Dentistry set out to **reduce tooth decay in Aboriginal children**. Examining how Aboriginal Health Workers, coordinated by Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Services (ACCHS) who co-designed the project, can perform fluoride treatment in schools, the project persuaded the Chief Dental Officer and Chief Medical Officer to change legislation. The success has spurred calls for nation-wide implementation, and the Lab will help plan a national stakeholder workshop in late 2018.

Carolyn Barker from First Languages Australia, was mentored by Dr Susan Poetsch and supported by the Sydney Informatic Hub. She researched and created a remarkable online tool that **chronicles the history and recognition of the role of First Languages in Australia**. It caught the attention of ABC Kids *Play School* and in August 2018 segments on Indigenous Languages are filmed for the TV program. A full-day conference is being planned to coincide with *2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages*.

Eliza Ginnivan from the NSW Department of Justice explored **online dispute resolution (ODR) mechanisms in NSW Courts,** under mentorship of Law School Professor Peter Cashman. In June 2018, the NSW Attorney General and Treasurer announced that the ODR scheme at the heart of Eliza's project will be piloted as part of the NSW Civil Justice Strategy. The pilot will turn LawAccess, the government's online legal portal, into an interactive guide providing self-help tools enabling users to resolve common disputes. It is hoped this will ease pressure on courts, and save people time, money and stress.

Rebecca Scott-Bray collaborates with the NSW **Coroner's Office**. Rebecca and State Coroner Michael Barnes warned in the Sydney Morning Herald that the NSW Coroner's Office is clogged with deaths from natural causes that do not require an autopsy. Socio-Legal Studies senior lecturer Rebecca is investigating the cause of the sudden increase in reporting of natural-causes deaths and ways to reduce the growing problem.

Collaborative Research
to come

The distinctive strength of the Sydney Policy Lab lies in its ability to create new, creative, dynamic partnerships between the world-class researchers at the University of Sydney and policy-makers, campaigners and the broader community. Our consultation demonstrated that there is widespread excitement about that fundamental purpose and a strong sense that it is an approach whose time has come.

Nonetheless, that core purpose is a broad ambition. As such the Lab will have a narrower set of priority areas for these partnerships to focus upon. In seeking to identify such priorities, the overall theme that has captured most excitement among those consulted both inside and outside the University has been: **transformation**.

The idea of transformation emerges from the strong sense that Australia and other developed democracies are entering a period of rapid and potentially far-reaching change. Although there is clearly great possibility in such a moment of change, at present it is also widely seen to be unsettling communities, causing anxiety especially among the most vulnerable groups in society, and causing politicians and public servants of all ideological allegiances to question some of their most fundamental assumptions. This sense is best captured in one concerning statistic from Ipsos Mori that reveals that only 25 per cent of Australians currently believe that the next generation will enjoy a better quality of life than the current or previous generations.

As a result of this trepidation about the future, those we have consulted have strongly argued that what is needed is an organisation where new, big, bold ideas can be examined that have the potential to lead to pathways to a better, not worse, future for all Australians, and for the peoples of the world.

"The overall theme that has captured most excitement among those consulted both inside and outside the University has been: transformation.

The consultation also revealed how this broad question of transformation and the pathway to a better future can be broken down further into three parts, which reflect the economic, social and political dimensions of the issue."

The consultation also revealed how this broad question of transformation and the pathway to a better future can be broken down further into three parts, which reflect the economic, social and political dimensions of the issue.

These three are: equality, belonging and power.

In developing research and partnerships in each of these three areas, we have shortlisted and will shortly appoint three teams of Research Leads from across the Faculties, Schools and Departments of the University.

In our open plan collaborative space in the newly refurbished R. D. Watt Building, the Sydney Policy Lab team will support and mentor our Research Leads to generate bold new ideas of relevance to the thematic priority areas, to create new partnerships between University researchers and groups or individuals who have not had a deep or prolonged relationship with the University, to generate high-quality academic and non-academic outputs, and to enhance the University's reputation as an innovator in public policy.

Equality

 The recent trend towards greater inequality, not just between the traditional socio-economic groups but also between generations, cultural and ethnic groups and regions of the country is now beyond dispute. What is less clear, however, is what is driving that trend and what might be done to ameliorate or reverse it.

Questions in this area might include, but are not limited to: Is technology, and especially the rise of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning, a cause for optimism or pessimism when it comes to inequality? Are global companies who are driven by an orthodox understanding of shareholder value now being challenged by alternative models of ownership and control, as populations seek to reverse the inegalitarian trends of the last thirty years? What role do education and health services have in responding to the rise in inequality? Are new options like Universal Basic Income a distraction from concrete programs for change or a real possibility?

Belonging

Alongside the rise of economic inequality and political distrust, there has been a dramatic upswing worldwide in the dominance of what have been variously called cultural and national questions or questions of belonging and identity.

These concerns include, but are not restricted to, patterns of migration and social integration, the so-called "culture wars" that accompany public debate on gay marriage, the place of religion in society, changing understandings of gender and related concerns. They encompass also the relationship between place and peoples and the sense of social erosion and alienation currently reported in countries across the world. They further encompass questions of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Lab's work will focus on many of these areas, and others, including themes related to the place of higher education itself in challenging traditional understandings of belonging and identity.

Power

Faith in the established institutions of democracy is in precipitous decline in Australia, as it is in almost all of the developed democracies across the world. In the 2018 global Edelman Trust barometer, the level of distrust in politicians in Australia was surpassed only by Russia. We have witnessed elsewhere the electoral consequences of this decline, with the rise of populist political movements and the shattering of conventional parties on both the left and the right, but we are yet to see the deep and broad implications of this shift in Australia.

This part of our work will focus on what changes could be made to politics, broadly considered, to reverse this trend towards populism and distrust. Do new participatory models, such as the participatory budgeting and city-based devolution popular in an increasing number of developed democracies, hold out hope? Are there more radical alternatives to conventional representative politics emerging? Is it possible even to talk of a period of post-democracy? How might people from outside of the political elite play a role in shaping a new political settlement? How might the public service itself react?

Training
to date

The unique strength of the Lab rests in its ability to forge new, surprising and dynamic partnerships between researchers, policy-makers, campaigners and the broader community. As such, it is imperative that the Lab provides world-class training and education in co-production, co-design and related skill sets to enable its participants to succeed.

The consultation period taught us that there is much demand for broader training for skills associated with impact and engagement, including speechwriting and speech giving, social media, blogging, policy brief composition, public event facilitation and design, influencing skills, power mapping and related activities.

In our first year, we have begun providing this support in-house. Our Director has presented on the idea of the Lab and its training offering to the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Law School, the Business School, the School of Social and Political Sciences. He has also led sessions on "public narrative" for our grantees and Fellows, has provided small group or one-on-one mentoring and advice to researchers from across the University, including the School of Veterinary Science, and has been commissioned to run bespoke sessions on policy influencing for researchers from the Business School and for the Charles Perkins Centre.

"This was just excellent and one of the best seminars I have been to in years.

Marc is an engaging and natural presenter, and I feel really well equipped to immediately put these techniques into practice in several areas of my life.

I would love for him to run this training for my policy colleagues."

Training
to come

For 2019, we are devising a wholly new, world-leading training offer, working in tandem with programs already offered by other parts of the University where possible. It is our intention that this program will be a requirement for Policy Lab Research Leads and also made available for all University of Sydney academics.

The program will have the following elements:

– A six-session course offered twice per year covering every major aspect of collaborative research design, relationship management and policy influence, delivered by the Lab's Education Lead and its Director.

– A series of half-day workshops to be offered to policy-oriented researchers across the University, including bespoke offerings for any research group with a collaborative policy research agenda.

– An office-hour advice system, whereby individual researchers or teams of researchers in the University can consult with the experts in the Policy Lab team about any aspect of their work which involves collaborative policy research or impact.

– A series of on-line resources, including video masterclasses from our Policy Lab Global Visitors, and podcasts on the process of policy change, including a series produced in conjunction with the City Road podcast and another in conjunction with the Changemakers podcast, Australia's most successful independent podcast series.

Public engagement
to date

Communication and connection is at the heart of politics and policy-making; it is the way that ideas flow and minds get changed. This is why the Lab invests heavily in bringing people together who otherwise would not meet and helping researchers communicate their work so that it resonates beyond the University walls.

Through research and targeted public engagement the Lab has seen broad and deep engagement with media, public service, government, industry, civil society and the broader community. The uptake of Lab research, communications and events by those who would not usually find themselves in a University context is an encouraging foundation for the years to come.

So far, the Lab has hosted 19 events which brought together more than 1000 people including representatives from 176 civil society groups. More important than these numbers is the Lab's deliberate strategy.

Lab events tend to be part of a longer trajectory of co-design and collaboration, and set itself apart from the many fantastic intellectual talks by the likes of Sydney Ideas and others. They are by nature participatory and convene an (often strategically curated) audience of stakeholders from across professional backgrounds, to forge idea-sharing, and deepening connection across the silos that stratify our society.

Part of this strategy are the Labs newly launched 'Change Breakfast' and 'Conversations at the Lab' Series. Change breakfasts convene representatives from civic groups, academia, industry and Government to debate and reflect on methods and tactics of creating social change, whilst Conversations at the Lab tackle big ideas and promising policy solutions.

These public-facing series are complemented by tailored engagements, sometimes closed-doors or even confidential, that stem from collaborative research, often in the form of policy briefings, roundtables, or workshops and public forums.

We have so far had the pleasure to welcome both distinguished domestic guests as well as Global Visitors. Our Change breakfasts have featured the likes of **Jeremy Heimans,** co-author of 2018 bestseller *New Power* and co-founder of Purpose, GetUp! and Avaaz.org, and accomplished community organiser Professor **Rom Coles,** our Conversations at the Lab series has welcomed Emeritus Professor **Gillian Triggs,** former President of the Australian Human Rights Commission; **Nick Pearce,** former Head of the 10 Downing St. Policy Unit; and Harvard Professor **Meira Levinson** who discussed the future of public education with former NSW Education Minister **Verity Firth.**

Just a few examples of such tailored engagements include:

– **Community refugee sponsorship initiative**
A roundtable convening community organisations from the refugee sector ranging from **Save the Children** and **Amnesty International,** to the **Refugee Council** and the **UNSW Kaldor Centre** around the promise of policies focusing on community sponsorship of refugees.

– **Future frontiers report: Preparing for the best of times and the worst of times.** A Policy Lab report produced by researchers from business, IT and education in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education. Launched in June, 3,500 school teachers, government officials, academics and members of the public tuned into the Launch by livestream, 17,000 people have viewed the launch video, and 45,000 people have visited the report online.

– **Mind the gap: The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and mental health.** A Policy Lab report produced by grant recipient Jennifer Smith-Merry and her team in January received significant media exposure from the Sydney Morning Herald, ABC TV news, The Guardian, ProBono, Crikey and others. The report was tabled in Federal Parliament and cited in numerous Senate Estimates Committees. Smith-Merry's project has led to funding for two new projects and a successful Category 2 funding application.

Public engagement
to come

The Sydney Policy Lab will continue to strengthen its evolving public engagement strategy, and build on our strong communications agenda to enable academics to tell their stories to different audiences.

In line with the Lab's strategy, each of our events, media engagements and communications platforms have a clear purpose and are part of a longer trajectory of contact, collaboration and action. More often than not, they are organised in collaboration with partners external to the University. Our key requirement is that all Lab events are participatory and collaborative in their purpose, style of engagement, format and audience composition.

All our events deliver a concrete and lasting call to action for academics and the broader policy community that we will sustain and explore further through podcast series, regular newsletters, blogposts, training videos, and social media, with content produced in-house by our own team, by our researchers and the wider University community, by our Global Visitors and by external commentators.

We will also develop close and continuing relationships with opinion formers, journalists and commentators from across Australia and beyond.

Change breakfasts

A safe space for up to 60 leaders from academia, civil society, local government, public service, industry and other sectors to learn and practice methods of change.

Past Change Breakfasts have focused on understanding power in our hyperconnected world, and essential skills for publicly engaged academics.

In September 2018, Inequality expert **James Crabtree** and **Pam Anders** from Oxfam Australia will share tools for tackling global inequality.

Conversations at the lab

In partnership with Sydney Ideas, SPL hosts a talk series that places two interlocutors in informal dialogue. Participatory elements and tools will invite audience members to connect with each other, speak up and become involved in the conversation.

Past Conversations at the Lab have focused on *The Legacy of Empire in the Anglosphere*, and *The Future of Public Education*.

Tailored engagements

Organised collaboratively with the Lab's Research Leads, Fellows, Grantees, University stakeholders and external partners, we will design and curate participatory forums round tables, briefings and conferences on policy-relevant research outcomes or policy solutions and challenges.

In September 2018, roundtables are planned on the **Future of Conservatism** and consultations by **PM&C on new data-sharing laws**.
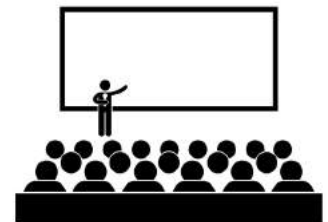
High profile tasls

Occasionally, the SPL will host public lectures with global visitors and distinguished guests.

We open this series with **Marc Stears**' Inaugural Address as Director of the Sydney Policy Lab in October 2018.

In November 2018, Sydney Peace Prize laureate **Joseph Stiglitz** joins us for a conversation on inequality and economic justice.

Hosting at the Lab

A part of the function of the Lab is to facilitate connection between the community and the University and to be a connection point between both worlds.

In order to ensure the Lab is accessible and can be a place to meet and exchange ideas, we will make our new collaborative workspace and event spaces in the new R. D. Watt building available to **community organisations**, especially those who lack space or resources to build the power they need to work for better policy.

Global Marquee Event 2020

In early 2020, we plan to arrange a **major global conference** highlighting the unique strengths of the Lab. It will be fully participatory, bringing together leaders from across politics, industry and civil society to debate the major issues confronting the world today.

Our goal is to facilitate innovative, experimental and open thinking, with provocations from international figures emphasizing both the challenges and opportunities facing the world today.

People

The Sydney Policy Lab is made up of a small group of core staff and the Lab's Research and Training Leads, plus an active and involved network of Fellows, Affiliated Researchers, Global Visitors and Associates, supported by an Advisory board made up of both domestic and international experts who connect the academic and non-academics world.

The Lab began a successful Fellowship program in early 2018, supporting experienced people from NGOs and public service professions into the University, to work closely with researchers in various Faculties. The popular program has enabled some impressive partnerships to incubate. We will continue to run the Fellowships in 2019, with applications opening at the end of 2018.

We will also create a new Global Visitors scheme, transferring some of the funds that were used to award small collaborative grants, which will enable us to bring world-recognized policy thinkers and practitioners into the University for visiting programs. Visitors would be required to contribute to the Lab's research agenda, participate in our Change Breakfast or Conversations at the Lab series, provide a masterclass in the training program described below, engage in community service with one of our partner organisations, and where relevant, share their expertise with the media. Visitors will be located in the Lab but also offered an affiliation with a Department, School or Faculty where appropriate.

Operating within the University's internal governance frameworks, the Sydney Policy Lab will build a broader coalition of members to hold it to account, bolster its reach and profile and act as ambassadors for its cause. Through its members, the Lab will create a high quality environment that forges and pushes performance.

The Lab's achievements will grow from the contributions by all these people.

Our goal is that in five years time, the Lab be a well-recognized and accessible place to gather, connect, share ideas and skill up for academics, policymakers, the community and members of industry alike. We will have trained hundreds of publicly engaged academics, numerous experienced practitioners will have had the opportunity to see through critical research at the University, and the Lab is often consulted for new ideas and expertise.

The following categories of membership will be offered:

Advisory board
this Board of eight to ten people will meet two or three times a year to offer their guidance and hold us to account. They will have an initial two year term and be composed of both local and global leaders. They will have a strong background in public policy and/or community campaigning, be relevant office holders in public policy positions and academic representatives from the University. Advisory board members provisionally include Dr Gurnek Bains, Will Somerville, Professor Eileen Gillooly and Dr Tim Soutphommasane, Michael Traill AM, Kirsten Andrews and Professor Rae Cooper.

Sydney Policy Lab fellows
those who are seconded to the University through the Sydney Policy Lab Fellowship program shall be called Fellows. They are entitled to access the Lab shared space and facilities in the new building, in addition to facilities provided by their mentors and host faculties.

Sydney Policy Lab Global Visitors major
figures in public policy, community campaigning and scholarship who spend time at the Lab working on a project or initiative, and who contribute to Lab activities through training, mentoring and events. They will have a desk space for the duration of their visit in the new building.

Sydney Policy Lab affiliated researchers
Members of University research staff and research students who are involved in on-going Sydney Policy Lab activities and projects shall be called Sydney Policy Lab Affiliated Researchers. These shall include all grantees and former grantees. They are entitled to access the Lab shared space for Lab related work. Those who are involved in significant projects (such as grant recipients) or ongoing collaborations will be expected to attend Sydney Policy Lab training.

Sydney Policy Lab associates
Influential figures in public policy or community campaigning who expect to have a long-term, on-going relationship with the Sydney Policy Lab, either through organizing and appearing at Sydney Policy Lab events, providing training and mentoring, refereeing grant applications, submitting joint grant applications and the like. They shall be entitled to access the Sydney Policy Lab shared space. They may include members of the Advisory Board and former Global Visitors.

Sydney Policy Lab
Those in the policy community (broadly considered) and supporters who sign up for public-facing events, communications and who are invited to play a role in shaping the direction and the future of the Lab, who wish to have an affiliation with the Lab and are committed to supporting its work.

Concluding Thoughts

Universities across the world are increasingly recognising that they have a duty to assist the societies in which they are located respond to the enormous policy challenges of our times. Several successful initiatives have already been developed elsewhere and more institutions spring up week by week.

The Sydney Policy Lab aims to be among the first rank of these efforts. But it can only do so with the support of the University's researchers and the broader community. It is by working together, in surprising, creative, dynamic partnership, that we can ensure that our research is genuinely impactful in helping to build a more prosperous, fair, secure and open society for all to enjoy.

We hope you will join us.

Additional information

Sydney Policy Lab Collaborative Grants

Project title / Research team / External partners	Outcomes to date	Aims
Shaping policy to end tooth decay in Aboriginal Children Professor Heiko Spallek, Faculty of Dentistry; Dr Kylie Gwynne, Director of Poche Centre for Indigenous Health School of Public Health Ministry of Health Centre for Oral Health Strategy, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, Armajun Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (Inverell), Durri Aboriginal Corporation (Kempsey), Katungul Aboriginal Medical Service (Narooma), Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service (Wollongong), La Perouse Aboriginal Community Health Centre, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service	Legislative change allowing Aboriginal Dental Assistants to use fluoride treatment One paper submitted for publication, second in pipeline. Planning to have a national workshop by end of 2018 Successful partnership with NSW Ministry of Health, Chief Health Officer, Chief Dental Officer, Australian Dental Association, and Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Services (ACCHS)	I, II, III, IV
What is a 'reportable death'?: reducing overreporting of natural causes deaths to the coroner Dr Rebecca Scott Bray - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Michael Barnes, NSW Coroner's Office	Exposure for study in Sydney Morning Herald, November 2017 Project to continue in 2018, online focus groups to be conducted	I, II, III, IV
Mind the gap: the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and mental health Faculty of Health Sciences and Menzies Centre for Health Policy: Associate Professor Jennifer Smith-Merry, Dr Nicola Hancock, Dr John Gilroy, Professor Gwynnyth Llewellyn, Ms Ivy Yen Amanda Bresnan, Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA)	January 2018 release of public report titled 'Mind the Gap: The National Disability Insurance Scheme and psychosocial disability. Final Report: Stakeholder identified gaps and solutions' Significant media exposure from ABC TV News, radio and news online; The Guardian; ProBono, Crikey and others. Report tabled in Federal Parliament; Cited in numerous Senate Estimates Committees; National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) response to report mentioned in Hansard. Project received further funding and partnership with Vicserv to look at the Victorian experience	I, II, III, IV
Cost-benefit analysis of open adoption from foster care: A scoping study Associate Professor Amy Conley Wright - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	Scoping study nearing completion, Enhanced partnerships with Family and Community Services (FACS) and Barnardos Children in Care Workshop held with key stakeholders and frontline staff, Presentation to Parliamentary Inquiry into Open Adoption June 2018	I, II, III
Co-Producing Responses to 'Crisis' - Informal accommodation and vulnerable households in metropolitan Sydney: the scale, drivers and policy responses Professor Nicole Gurran - Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning	Strengthened existing partnerships with external stakeholders, incl. State Govt Departments, developed linkages with new partner organisations Presentation at TEDx Sydney 2018 on 'a Fair Housing System' Further funding for two related studies secured from NSW Dept of Planning & Environment and Australian Coastal Councils Association, worth $49,700 and $43,000 respectively. Results to be finalized, paper to be developed, article for The Conversation pending	I, II, III

Project title / Research team / External partners	Outcomes to date	Aims
Messages from the Frontline: Australian domestic violence workers' policy advice for the implementation of national domestic violence policy and implementation Associate Professor Ruth Phillips - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	National Domestic Violence Conference https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/messages-from-the-frontline-domestic-violence-sector-symposium-webinar-registration-44662806657?mc_cid=896d4e4e7c&mc_eid=[UNIQID]# 4 academic papers prepared for submission	I, II
Environmental Assessments of Mining Projects in New South Wales: A cross-disciplinary policy opportunity for improving health and wellbeing Dr Patrick Harris - Sydney Medical School	Academic paper accepted for publication https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eiar.2018.05.009	I, II
Setting the standard for consumer data sharing practices of top-rated health apps Dr Quinn Grundy - Faculty of Pharmacy	2 academic papers in preparation 1 conference presentation (Pharmaceutical Society of Australia Annual Conference July 2018); 1 conference proceeding submitted 3 app developers cited in study who were then approached have taken practical steps to review and upgrade the security of their health apps to protect consumer data development of online resource healthprivacy.empirical.fun Possible event in August 2018 Video describing experience of Multidisciplinarity of project	I, II, III
Improving methods to evaluate evidence in support of public health guidelines to protect Australians from environmental health hazards Professor Lisa Bero - Faculty of Pharmacy	Updated guidelines on risk of bias tools Workshop with local and international participants (see Key Events table) Workshop event covered in NTP Newsletter 1 published protocol listed as a Sydney Policy Lab collaboration 2 papers submitted for review Project has led to further collaboration opportunities with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and World Health Organisation (WHO)	I, II
Participatory Planning for our Food Future: The Sydney City Food Policy Project Dr Alana Mann – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	Project to commence late 2018 as Chief Investigator has been on SSP for the first half of 2018 Media interest in partnership with City of Sydney food incubator pilot https://sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2018/04/23/university-led-food-business-incubator-pilot-backed-by-council.html	I, II
Policy Scenarios for the Future(s) of Australian Cyber Security Dr Frank Smith - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	Report forthcoming—to be published Sept./Oct. in Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) Demonstrated usefulness of scenario planning in this field	
Ethics and Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR): A Global Solution to a Global Problem Professor Angus Dawson - Sydney Medical School	Report in preparation	
Improving the Employment Outcomes of Youth through Sport and Social Engagement: Utilising Social Networks in Employment Services Associate Professor Gaby Ramia - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	Report in preparation	
Nature-based solutions for growing cities: rewilding policy and practice Associate Professor Dieter Hochuli - Faculty of Science	Report in preparation	

Sydney Policy Lab Fellows

Fellow / Affiliation	Mentor	Project	Outcomes to date	Aims
Carolyn Baker First Languages Australia	Dr Susan Poetsch	First Languages Australia's Knowledge Bank and Timeline	Public facing timeline developed: https://www.jarrak.com.au/ Involvement with *Play School* Launch event planned for August 2019	I, II, IV
Euan Brown Commonwealth Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency	Professor Garry Barrett	Applying value capture to infrastructure projects in Australia	Report in preparaion	I, II
Oisin Sweeney National Parks Association of NSW	Associate Professor Dieter Hochuli	Developing nature-based solutions for resilient and healthy communities	Article in The Conversation http://theconversation.com/proposed-nsw-logging-laws-value-timber-over-environmental-protection-97863 Submission based on project submitted to NSW Government Departments (Health, Environment and Planning) Article to appear in Local Government newsletter, Local Government Focus Explore option for academic paper	I, II
Eliza Ginnivan NSW Department of Justice	Professor Peter Cashman	Online dispute resolution mechanisms	Announcement that the project has received funding in the NSW State budget to be piloted: https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/court-fights-go-online-in-nsw-trial-20180611-p4zku4.html Launch event to be organised	I, II, III, IV
Jenny Norderyd Barnardos Australia	Associate Professor Amy Conley Wright	Mechanisms to keep newborn babies placed with their siblings in out-of-home care	Hansard mention at Federal Inquiry into Open Adoption Initial project results have shifted focus from agencies to limitations of foster families	I, II, IV
Troy Roderick Male Champions of Change	Professor Rae Cooper	Organisational experiences in implementing 'all roles flex' flexible working arrangements	Report launch to be scheduled	I, II
Susan Price Women Lawyers Association of NSW	Professor Marian Baird	Advancement of gender equality in the legal profession	Gender Pay Symposium scheduled for 28 September Report launch for Law Firm Comparison Project	I, II

Sydney Policy Lab – upcoming events

Event	Date	Purpose	Number of attendees and background Background
Sydney Policy Lab launch and ideas exchange on "The Future of Work, Wellbeing and Technology".	17th August 2017	Launch of the Sydney Policy Lab Engagement with Thought Leaders	Total attendees: 92 28% Academic/Research – The University of Sydney, Brain and Mind Centre, 17% Industry – Male Champions of Change, PwC, 17% State Government – Dept. of Premier and Cabinet 12% NGO - UnitingCare 12% Federal Government – Dept. of Prime Minister and Cabinet 9% Peak Body – National Mental Health Commission, Australian Human Rights Commission 3% Other – The Ethics Centre 2% Overseas Government – UK Behavioural Insights Team
Children in Care Workshop	27th March 2018	Workshop to discuss key themes related to Out of Home Care (OOHC) practices in NSW	Total attendees: 35 7% Academic – The University of Sydney 7% State/Territory Government – Family and Community Services 86% NGO – Barnardos
Improving Methods to Evaluate Evidence in Support of Public Health Guidelines	16-17th April 2018	Workshop and presentations examining tools to evaluate bias risk in public health guidelines	≈65 over 2 days International Experts – University of California, San Francisco; National Institutes of Health Academics – Monash, The University of Sydney
Jeremy Heimans 'New Power' – Change Breakfast Series	11th May 2018	First in Sydney Policy Lab Change Breakfast Series Partnership with Purpose	Total attendees: 60 50% Academic – The University of Sydney, University of Technology, Sydney 2% Government – Human Rights Commission, City of Sydney 17% Industry – Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bain Consulting, Deloitte, Facebook, AirBnB 28% Advocacy/NGO – Purpose, Sydney Aliiance, United Voice, Australian Conservation Foundation, Amnesty International
Nick Pearce 'Shadows of Empire'	12th June 2018	Panel Discussion on ongoing impact of a belief in Empire with Nick Pearce, Duncan Ivison and Gillian Triggs	Total attendees: 35 54% Academic 7% Government – Western & South South Sydney Regional Operating Councils, Committee for Sydney, Public Service Commission 39% ndustry - Deloitte
Launch of Future Frontiers Report	26th June 2018	Report Launch in Partnership with NSW Dept. of Education 'Preparing for the Best and Worst of Times'	Total attendees: 106 ≈3,500 via Facebook live ≈45,000 web visits ≈17,000 views of event video Academic Teachers & Principals from State and Independent Schools Teachers Union Government – Dept. of Education Industry - Incubate
Meira Levinson & Rom Coles—Tearing Down the Ivory Tower—Change Breakfast Series	6th August 2018	Second in the Policy Lab's Change Breakfast series. Focus on how to build public universities and to be a politically-engaged academic	Total Attendees: 40 85% Academic—University of Sydney, University of Technology, Sydney, Macquarie University, Australian Catholic University 7% Civil Society—National Tertiary Education Union 8& Government—City of Sydney
Meira Levinson & Verity Firth—What Future for Public Education? - Conversation at the Lab	6th august 2018	Curated discussion on the challenge of inequality and public education.	Total Attendees: 71 36% Academic—University of Sydney, University of Wollongong, University of Technology, Sydney 16% University Students—University of Sydney, University of Technology, Sydney 18% Civil Society—Oxfam, The Smith Family, Public Education Foundation 20% - Government— NSW Dept of Education & Training, FaCS 10% - General Public

September 2018

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**Sydney Policy
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