

Upcoming research

Managing the world's most precious resource: The role of water accounting

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This project contributes to the National Research Priorities goal to develop sustainable ways of improving water productivity, using less water in agriculture and other industries, and providing increased protection of rivers and groundwater. Robust and rigorous water accounting and assurance will allow water managers to identify and address system water losses, and will underpin increased market and investment confidence in water information among water users. The collaborations between industry, academia, government and the accounting and water management professions will provide and demonstrate high profile, significant and timely international thought leadership in the emerging discipline of water accounting standards.

Product design and competitive advantage

Assoc Prof F Farrelly; Prof M Beverland

To be conducted over the next three to four years, this project aims to understand the competitive value of industrial design. It investigates a) how consumers and business buyers respond to design aesthetics and usability, and b) how firms leverage design for competitive success. It will develop models of buyer response to product design (consumer and business buyer) and of a design-led business. The principal practical objective of this research is to establish how firms can approach design strategically to gain a competitive advantage. The call for a focus on the design-marketing interface by academics, industry and government both nationally and internationally highlights the importance and timeliness of this project.

Event reviews

SME–Entrepreneurship Global Conference 2008

Melbourne, 3–4 July 2008

The SME and Entrepreneurship Global Conference brings together researchers from around the globe and (local) industry practitioners to discuss developments within the sector and to share knowledge from research and practice. The conference is usually held in Malaysia but in 2008 moved to Melbourne and was jointly organised by the Family and Small Business Research Unit (FSBRU), Monash Gippsland and the Special Education Resource Unit (SERU), Monash University Sunway Campus. The conference was opened by Professor Stephanie Fayeh, Deputy Vice Chancellor (International), Monash University, and had a special keynote address by the Minister of Small Business, Mr Joe Helper. There were also two keynote addresses by Professor Richard Fletcher from the University of Western Sydney and Professor Rowena Barrett from DeMontford University, UK. The conference presented about 70 papers on areas as diverse as human resource management, information technology, marketing, knowledge management, government policy, gender and minority issues and the internationalisation of SMEs. Participants travelled from Africa, Asia, Europe, the UK and the US. The chairs expressed their gratitude to the government of Victoria for supporting the conference.

Review by Co-chairs Assoc Prof Nelson Oly Ndubisi
and Assoc Prof Donna Buttigieg

Federal ministers feature at CEDA's State of the Nation event

Canberra, 5–6 June 2008

CEDA's annual State of the Nation conference signalled a new phase in national politics this year, featuring a strong line-up of senior ministers in the new Rudd Government. More than 150 CEDA members and guests listened to Julia Gillard, Martin Ferguson, Lindsay Tanner, Anthony Albanese and Chris Bowen discuss their new portfolios. Climate Change Minister Penny Wong also spoke about the potential impacts of emissions trading on business. Balancing the political spectrum, Opposition leader Dr Brendan Nelson delivered the keynote address at dinner on Day 1. Five panel discussions featuring industry and policy experts took place on energy, ageing, skills, infrastructure and higher education. The highlight was an engaging session on the business impacts of the ageing population, featuring Ann Harding from NATSEM, Pauline Vamos from the Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia (ASFA) and Dr David Knox from Mercer.

Review by David Byers, Chief Executive, CEDA