

Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee, 2020-2023



Judith Jones, GTECCC Chair

Associate Professor BSc (Syd); LLB (NSW); DipPracLegTraining (UTS); Solicitor NSW

Judith is an Associate Professor at the ANU College of Law.

Harnessing her dual background in both science and law, Judith began her research career as an environmental and planning lawyer by focussing on uncertainty, precaution and risk assessment. This has included almost two decades of service, in different capacities, on the federal non-statutory and statutory bodies that provide advice to the Gene Technology Regulator on legal and ethical issues relating to risk assessment and the regulation of gene technology in Australia. Judith has a range of scholarly publications in the areas of environmental impact assessment, risk regulation and precaution. The emphasis in those publications is designing regulation in conditions of scientific and other uncertainty. She is also a member of the ANU Institutional Biosafety Committee.

Judith's research also combines her environmental law research interests with her own rural background and interests in Australian legal history to examine the impact of historical and current practices on Australian soils, water and vegetation. This research focusses on the impact of colonial property law and culture on landuse practices and consequent environmental degradation. In terms of contemporary agricultural landuse, this research focusses on law and culture relevant to encouraging sustainable landuse practices in regions of high agricultural value.



Rachel Ankeny

Rachel A. Ankeny has a BA in Liberal Arts, MA degrees in Philosophy, Bioethics, and Gastronomy, and a PhD in the History and Philosophy of Science. She currently is Professor in History and Philosophy and Deputy Dean Research in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Adelaide. She has diverse research interests in bioethics, history, and philosophy, and expertise and ongoing research on health and science policy, particularly regarding public engagement. She is currently Vice President of the Australasian Association of Bioethics and Health Law and President-Elect of the International Society for History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Biology (ISHPSSB). She previously served on the Gene Technology Ethics Committee/GTECCC between 2004 and 2014.

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Deborah Cleland

Dr Deborah Cleland is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the School of Regulation and Global Governance (RegNet) at the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. She is currently part of an industry linkage project working with Victoria's Environmental Protection Authority to understand how restorative justice can be effectively used to achieve better outcomes in environmental regulation. She has previously researched diverse regulatory domains, including workplace health and safety, child protection, higher education policy and fisheries, asking how regulation can improve quality of life and citizen engagement in our democracy. Deborah holds a strong interest in science communication and participation, having previously spent a decade designing decision support and engagement tools to improve coastal resource management in South East Asia.



Paul Downey

Dr Paul Downey has BAppSc from the University of Canberra (UC) specialising in resource and environmental management, a BSc (Hons) in plant ecology from the Australian National University and a PhD in plant invasion biology/ecology in natural ecosystems from the University of New England. Dr Paul Downey's post-doctoral work was on agricultural weed ecology at North Dakota State University, USA.

Dr Paul Downey has worked on invasive plant species for over two decades, spanning a range of roles both within government and academia as well as with NGOs. He worked for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service managing major weed programs for conservation outcomes across NSW. He then held the position of Associate Professor in Plant Ecology at the UC until 2018 and now holds an Adjunct Associate Professor position.

Dr Paul Downey has 120 publications on plant invasions. His research spans many different areas of invasion biology, including understanding the impacts to biodiversity, how climate change might alter invasions, adaptive management, biological control, biosecurity, legislation and policy, improved monitoring practices, prevention and risk assessment. Dr Downey's work has been at the interface of research, management and policy. He has worked on plant invasions in South Africa, France, United States, Bhutan, Iran and Australia.

Recently, he has been working as an environmental consultant, advising government to improve management outcomes for invasive species, providing strategic advice on policy and strategies, adaptive management, risk assessment and biosecurity.

Dr Paul Downey has been appointed to both the Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee (GTTAC) and GTECCC.

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Paula Fitzgerald



Paula Fitzgerald is a senior professional with a background in stakeholder and government relations, policy development and advocacy, communication, regulatory affairs, issues management, membership engagement and capacity building.

Paula has worked across a diverse stakeholder base and has established trusted networks, both nationally and internationally, to develop and lead local and global teams, to deliver strategies and solutions, particularly across the science and agriculture sectors. She is an advocate for science-based decision making, farmer access to new tools and technologies, and agriculture engaging with the community to ensure a strong social licence.

Paula is currently a Director (Deputy Chair) of Skills Impact Australia and a Director of Animal Health Australia.

Jaden Hastings, expert adviser



BA (New York University), AM (Harvard University), MSc (University of Oxford), MFA (Central Saint Martins, UAL), PhD (University of Melbourne)

Jaden Hastings works across multiple fields as a researcher as well as an entrepreneur, from synthetic biology to machine learning and bioastronautics. As a biomedical researcher, she has worked in some of the world's leading institutions, yet has devoted substantial effort to opening up avenues for the public to engage directly in scientific research for over a decade. Since 2009, she has maintained a laboratory within her home in every country she has resided, and is frequently asked to help organise and formalise local community biology groups that wish to start their own laboratory spaces. In 2017, Hastings founded the x0.lab Initiative a not-for-profit organization that supports mission-based scientific field studies and supporting STEAM education in remote communities. Hastings has co-founded two community labs, London Biohackspace and Melbourne's BioQusitive—and was the first garage lab start-up in Australia to obtain PC1 certification from the OGTR. J.J.'s involvement in BioSummit began with running workshops as part the inaugural BioSummit 1.0 at MIT Media Lab, then served as part of the Organisation Committee in for BioSummit 2.0, and was part of the Leadership Committee for the Global Community Bio Fellows Programme and Organising Committee for BioSummit 3.0. She remains a central figure in the global community biology movement as well as an internationally-acclaimed artist addressing the impact of biotechnology in society.

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Rabbi Dr Aviva Kipen

BA, MA, Dr Ministry Studies

Aviva is cross-member from the Australian Health Ethics Committee, NHMRC.

Human research ethics committees became Aviva's service to the community when she was invited to join as a clergy member of Monash University's HREC. She has since served the Victorian Biotechnology Ethics Advisory Committee and AHEC as clergy member, and is currently serving AHEC for a second time. Her research inquired into the ministry service of Victorian clergy who also offer their service to HRECs. She has expertise in interfaith work and is an accredited Spiritual Director. She is a Fellow of Ormond College, University of Melbourne.



Rachel Nowak

BSc (Hons) (University of Leeds), MA (Johns Hopkins University), PhD (University of Leeds), GAICD (Graduate Australian Institute of Company Directors)

Dr Nowak has extensive experience in science, technology, and research and development, and publishing and media, including in Silicon Valley's biotech industry, and in both Executive and Non-Executive capacities. She has had repeated success identifying, developing and driving new opportunities that bring benefits to enterprises and their customers and stakeholders.

She was a Non-Executive Director at COSMOS Media Pty Ltd., and has previously served one triennium with the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator's Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee. Rachel is highly skilled at ensuring that governance delivers significant benefits to the business or enterprise.

Dr Nowak has worked in the US, UK and Australia, as an award-winning business and science journalist, and as an academic, specialising in biomedical and agricultural research. She is the recipient of an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellowship.

Dr Nowak is currently Director of Research Marketing and Communications at one of Australia's largest research organisations, The University of Melbourne. In this role, it is her job to ensure that the tools of marketing and communications are used to get the University's research offerings into the hands, minds and businesses of people who can use them to bring about health, economic, social and cultural benefits.

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Gabrielle O'Sullivan

BSc (Hons) PhD MPH (Hons)

Dr Gabrielle O'Sullivan is the Executive Officer of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Institutional Biosafety Committee. She has a BSc in microbiology (major) and chemistry (minor) from University College Dublin and a PhD in biochemistry and immunology from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Her post-graduate work was in medical microbiology and biochemistry. Her PhD was in the area of acute phase reactants, lectins and amyloid formation. Her post-doctoral research was at the University of Sydney focusing on cellular immunology and cell migration, specifically Langerhans cells, cytokines and glycosaminoglycans. She has a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Sydney and has made contributions to genetics and public health education, epidemiology, public health and the ethics and biosafety of gene technology. She co-developed and co-ordinated a very successful short course on genetics and public health at the University of Sydney and co-authored a book on the ethics of inheritable genetic modification. Dr O'Sullivan has extensive experience in science-based risk communication and risk assessment of gene technology, particularly in the contexts of biomedical research, clinical trials and gene, cell and molecular therapies. She has contributed to many gene technology reviews and is a co-chair of the Australia and New Zealand Legal and Regulatory Affairs Committee of the International Society Cell and Gene Therapy and a cross-member of GTTAC and GTECCC.



Kelly Pearce

BSc (Hons), PhD, GAICD

Dr Kelly Pearce is a Grain and Prime Lamb Producer from Yealering in Western Australia along with her young family. Kelly has had a 16-year career in Agricultural Research and continues to coordinate a number of regional science and innovation projects through her regionally-based business Wheatbelt Science Pty Ltd. Kelly has recently taken up a position as a Research Fellow with the Australian Farm Institute. Kelly is also a Director of the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority, Biosecurity Council of WA, Grower Group Alliance, Farmers Mutual Limited and the WA Sheep & Goat Industry Funding Scheme Management Committee. Kelly is a 2012 Nuffield Scholar and Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

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Stephen Robson

Professor Steve Robson MPH MD PhD FRANZCOG FRCOG FACOG

Steve is a senior obstetrician and gynaecologist and academic at the Australian National University Medical School. He is the immediate past-president of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. He has a strong interest in the effects of genomics on society and is involved in research on genetic screening.



Robert Sward AM

BSc (Hons), PhD

Dr Sward worked in the Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI) from 1980 to late 2012. Prior to that he held positions as: Post-doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne; Experimental Officer with the CSIRO Division of Horticulture; and Scientific Officer with DPI under a research contract with the International Potato Centre (CIP), Peru. The earlier part of his career focused on R&D in plant virology - a discipline that converged with crop biotechnology and incorporates many technical aspects of gene technology and related biosciences.

In more recent years, from early 2003 to late 2012, he managed the Biotechnology Policy portfolio within DPI which covered many aspects of government and industry policy in biotechnology and gene technology. As Manager Biotechnology Policy, he was involved in a broad range of gene technology topics and issues, including development of policies relating to the regulation and legislation of genetically modified (GM) crops in Victoria, as well as consulting and providing comments on applications for dealings in GM organisms and GM products relevant to the agricultural and related industries. In other capacities, he was Executive Officer and member of DPI's Gene Technology Standing Committee; Chair and State representative on the Commonwealth Primary Industries Standing Committee's Industry Development Committee GM Taskforce; and Member of the AusBiotech National Agricultural, Environmental and Industrial Biotechnology Advisory Group.

Dr Sward currently works as a private consultant in his own company, BioBotanicals Consulting and is a cross-member with GTTAC. In 2013 he undertook the Review of Queensland's Gene Technology Act 2001 in collaboration with Foursight Associates.

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Lynn Woodward

BAppSc (QUT, Qld), MAppSc (Brunel, UK), MBioethics (Monash, Vic), PhD (JCU, Qld)

Dr Lynn Woodward is a senior lecturer, teaching bioethics, in the College of Medicine and Dentistry at James Cook University. Lynn has a laboratory based background, with a Bachelor of Applied Science and a Master's degree in Applied Immunology. Her PhD project involved the development of a genetically modified subunit vaccine. Her work with genetic manipulations, and the potential uses of this technology, lead to her interest in the field of bioethics and she completed a Masters of Bioethics at Monash University. Lynn was awarded the Monash WHO Bioethics Fellowship and worked in the Ethics in Health Unit of the World Health Organization in Geneva.

Lynn's work at JCU includes a role with the Australian Institute of Tropical Health & Medicine (AITHM), where she developed and manages the AITHM Biobank and is currently also coordinating a Phase I vaccine trial. Her recent research interests includes areas in clinical ethics and biobanks, including the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in biobanking. She currently sits on the JCU and Townsville Hospital Human Research Ethics Committees.
