

Social Sciences

Australia's research field leaders

These are the top researchers and institutions in the 29 fields of the social sciences

Academic & Psychological Testing

Field leader: David Boud, Deakin

Lead institution: Deakin

Anthropology

Field leader: Michael Petraglia, Griffith

Lead institution: ANU

Archaeology

Field leader: Chris Turney, UTS

Lead institution: UNSW

Cognitive Science

Field leader: Ullrich Ecker, UWA

Lead institution: Uni of Newcastle

Criminology, Criminal Law & Policing

Field leader: Kristina Murphy, Griffith

Lead institution: Griffith

Diplomacy & International Relations

Field leader: Constance Duncombe, Monash

Lead institution: ANU

Early Childhood Education

Field leader: Michelle Neumann, SCU

Lead institution: Macquarie

Education

Field leader: David Boud, Deakin

Lead institution: Deakin

Educational Psychology & Counseling

Field leader: Andrew Martin, UNSW

Lead institution: ACU

Environmental & Occupational Medicine

Field leader: Thomas Astell-Burt, Uni of

Wollongong

Lead institution: UNSW

Environmental Law & Policy

Field leader: Russell Smyth, Monash

Lead institution: CSIRO

Ethics

Field leader: Alexander Newman, Deakin

Lead institution: Deakin

Family Studies

Field leader: Alina Morawska, UQ

Lead institution: UQ

Forensic Science

Field leader: Duncan Taylor, Forensic Science

SA

Lead institution: UTS

Geography & Cartography

Field leader: Michele Acuto, Uni of Melb

Lead institution: Uni of Melb

Health Policy & Medical Law

Field leader: Sue Brennan, Monash

Lead institution: Uni of Sydney

Higher Education

Field leader: David Boud, Deakin

Lead institution: Deakin

Human Migration

Field leader: Loretta Baldassar, ECU

Lead institution: Deakin

International Law

Field leader: Anthea Roberts, ANU

Lead institution: UNSW

Military Studies

Field leader: Charles Hunt, RMIT

Lead institution: Deakin

Political Science

Field leader: Robert Thomson, Monash

Lead institution: ANU

Public Policy & Administration

Field leader: Brian Head, UQ

Lead institution: Uni of Melb

Science & Engineering Education

Field leader: Lynn Monrouxe, Uni of Sydney

Lead institution: Monash

Social Sciences (general)

Field leader: Jolanda Jetten, UQ

Lead institution: UQ

Social Work

Field leader: Cathy Humphreys, Uni of Melb

Lead institution: Griffith

Sociology

Field leader: Francisco Perales Perez, UQ

Lead institution: UQ

Special Education

Field leader: Umesh Sharma, Monash

Lead institution: Monash

Teaching & Teacher Education

Field leader: Jennifer Gore, Uni of Newcastle

Lead institution: Monash

Urban Studies & Planning

Field leader: Md Liton Kamruzzaman, Monash

Lead institution: Uni of Melb

Chris Turney

UTS

Field leader in
Archaeology

Chris Turney is fascinated by the fertile interactions of disciplines and sectors in the overlapping fringes of academic fields and specialties where ideas are born.

An earth scientist by training and a leader in the field of archaeology, Turney has turned his hand to wildly different projects: from carbon dating the fossil “hobbits” of Indonesia’s Flores island, to founding a New Zealand-based company that turns biowaste into the graphite used in lithium ion batteries, to researching ice-sheet dynamics in Antarctica.

Now a pro-vice chancellor (research) at the University of Technology Sydney, Turney’s favourite book is *The Medici Effect* by Frans Johansson. “Inspired by the Medici family in Florence, the idea is that when you get together different disciplines, different cultures, different genders, a whole range of backgrounds, then things start to spark,” he says. “If you have engineers talking to historians talking to biologists, suddenly they just have a different approach to the way of thinking. That’s where those huge innovations happen. When you bring those disciplines together all sorts of things start flying around.”

Turney collaborated with colleagues from a range of scientific disciplines on a paper named to honour Douglas Adams, the late, great author of the science fiction novel *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*. Adams famously wrote that the answer to life, the universe and everything was 42.

Turney and his biologist, archaeologist and climate scientist collaborators investigated the last time the Earth switched its magnetic poles, 42,000 years ago. North became south and south became north and, for a while, the Earth’s magnetic field effectively collapsed to near-zero, exposing the planet to a barrage of high-energy cosmic rays.