

**July 2022**

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## AIMS@JCU Awards

Congratulations to the winners of the first round of the 2022 AIMS@JCU awards.

Professional Development Awards: Marko Terzin, Tiny Barry, Callaway Thatcher, Marine Lechene, Marie Thomas & Taylor Whitman

Science Communication Awards: Alex Gulizia, Redbird Ferguson, Marko Terzin, Callaway Thatcher, Cecilie Gotze, Marine Lechene, Geoffrey Yau, Rachel Neil, Sarah Kwong, Emma Marangon, Rhys Cornish & Emma Marangon

Pilot Research Awards: Gretel Waugh, Marie Thomas, Alex Gulizia & Taylor Whitman

AMSA Memberships were sponsored for Rachel Neil, Geoffrey Yau, Bede Johnson, Callaway Thatcher, Nico Briggs, Mikaela Nordborg, Emma Marangon, Cecilie Ravn Gøtze, Rhys Cornish, Taylor Whitman, Kevin Bairos Novak, Ingo Miller, Redbird Ferguson, Marites Canto, Magena Marzonie, Marko Terzin, Hugo Scharfenstein, Sarah Kwong, Raf Rashid & Chinenye Ani.

The second round of AIMS@JCU Awards will be advertised shortly, keep an eye on your AIMS@JCU emails.

## CONTENTS

AIMS@JCU Mindfulness course	<u>2</u>
ATSIMS/Winter School	<u>4</u>
Inaugural Leviathan Award	<u>6</u>
Pilot Research Award Summary	<u>7</u>
Research Director report	<u>8</u>

Photographs in this publication were submitted by AIMS@JCU members unless otherwise stated.

We are reducing our carbon footprint by limiting the number of printed copies available. Please let us know if you need a hard copy of this newsletter

### About the AIMS@JCU Newsletter:

This newsletter is produced quarterly and distributed by email to AIMS@JCU members, AIMS and JCU staff.

If you'd like to be added to our mailing list, or have a query regarding this newsletter, please contact:

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## AIMS@JCU Mindfulness Course

### Bringing Mindfulness to Life @ Work

We are extremely lucky to bring this wonderful course to you, send the AIMS@JCU office an email if you're interested in registering.

There will be a class exclusively for AIMS@JCU student members, which begins on Monday 22 August 2-4pm. It requires each participant to commit 5 weeks to a weekly 2 hour interactive online class (same time each week, Mondays 2-4pm), supported by fully automated delivery of reminder emails, relevant sections of the comprehensive course handbook and guided practice recordings. Here are a few details of the course:

"Working is a wonderful way of doing our best in life and of working out what our best is."

"Working mindfully works because it helps us to work more successfully and enjoyably."

–Stephen McKenzie, Mindfulness at Work

**Bringing Mindfulness to Life @ WORK** is a short course that aims to bring mindfulness to the daily demands and routines of working life.

Research has demonstrated that practicing mindfulness at work can:

- improve work-place wellbeing, communication and productivity
- reduce stress, burn-out and absenteeism
- support organizational leaders, teams and individuals to navigate change with clarity, confidence and grace



Julia Saper

# AIMS@JCU Mindfulness Course

## Bringing Mindfulness to Life @ Work continued

The **Bringing Mindfulness to Life @ WORK** short course will equip you and your staff with skills and strategies to:

- Reduce stress, distraction and procrastination
- Improve focus, confidence and communication
- Bring calm and clarity to workplace demands and routines

### The Program

**Bringing Mindfulness to Life @ WORK** is an effectively sequenced training program of 5 x 2 hour classes that draw on current research and practice revealing the benefits of mindfulness in the work place. Classes include information, invitations and opportunities to practice, reflect on and to discuss ways to apply mindfulness to workplace demands and daily routines.

This training program engages participants in understanding and practice of:

- The fundamentals of mindfulness and how to practice
- The value and practice of mindfulness and stress reduction at work
- Identifying and exploring personally and contextually relevant opportunities for mindfulness at work
- Mindful time and workload management
- Mindful interpersonal communication
- Establishing a personal mindfulness practice for self care and workplace wellbeing

Each participant will receive:

- 5 x 2 hour classes
- Expert instruction
- Guided practice recordings
- Course handbook
- Pre-training survey
- Certificate of Completion – CPD Points may apply
- Discounted registration on all subsequent courses and retreats

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Julia Saper

## ATSIMS/Winter School

Cherie Motti, Assistant Research Director

Nurturing next-generation indigenous scientists

Motivating, encouraging and supporting the younger generation to participate in science is an important part of AIMS@JCU's remit. Of equal importance is the need for full acknowledgement, attested by recent initiatives to ensure full acknowledgement is given to Australia's indigenous peoples, the first scientists of this land. To meet these goals, AIMS@JCU is collaborating with AIMS' Indigenous Partnerships and JCU's Indigenous Education and Research Centre (IERC) to increase indigenous youth participation in marine science.



In June we welcomed back the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine (ATSIMS) Program. Year 9-10 students from local and regional Queensland schools participated in a variety of tours and workshops learning about the Great Barrier Reef and the research being done to secure its future. In the same month AIMS@JCU also co-hosted the inaugural IERC Marine Science Winter School. This is a highly competitive program with successful Year 11-12 students from all around Australia being immersed in a 1 week university intensive focussed on all things marine science.



Mikaela  
Nordborg

## ATSIMS/Winter School

Cherie Motti, Assistant Research Director continued



These engagements require significant time and resource commitment, and we would like to thank all AIMS and JCU organisers and research staff for ensuring the students had a memorable experience. A big individual thanks goes out to Dr Mikaela Nordborg who not only participated in the Winter School tours but also kindly spent an afternoon providing her insights into her career journey. To find out more about these programs check out the following links:

<https://atsims.com>

<https://www.jcu.edu.au/ierc/pathways-to-study/winter-school>



Emma Marangon

If you are keen to be involved in these or similar upcoming engagements, either as tour guides or mentors, please contact the AIMS@JCU office for details.

Contact: [aims@jcu.edu.au](mailto:aims@jcu.edu.au)



## Inaugural Leviathan Award

We often see science inspiring art, or art inspiring science, but rarely do we see science and art practiced together. AIMS' Dr Madeleine van Oppen has been collaborating with UK based artist Shezad Dawood to do exactly this. Madeleine's research as a genetic ecologist is focussed on accelerated evolution and hybridisation of corals to help them to become more resilient to ocean acidification and warming. Shezad's art is making connections between ocean conservation, migration and mental health. Together they are raising the awareness of the plight of the Great Barrier Reef through increasing empathy and offering solutions to repair the damage humankind has caused.

This collaboration forms part of the Leviathan project, which was born in 2013 from Shezad's desire to address complex issues, such as democracy and refugees. He uses the oceans as an allegory to make these topics more accessible to the public across all generations.

Shezad is excited to expand his collaboration with Madeleine by committing an initial 2 year programme of small grants (\$5K) for doctoral candidates and post-doctoral researchers based at AIMS. The focus of these grants is to further enshrine the need for coral-sustainability.

If you are interested in learning more about the Leviathan project, please refer to the following links:

<https://www.therobertsinstituteofart.com/programme/podcasts/shezad-dawood-and-madeleine-van-oppen>

<https://leviathan-cycle.com/reading-room/>

If you are interested in applying for one of the small grants, please submit an application:

<https://aims.jcu.edu.au/leviathan-grants/>

Applications will close 19th September 2022. Your application is limited only by your imagination!

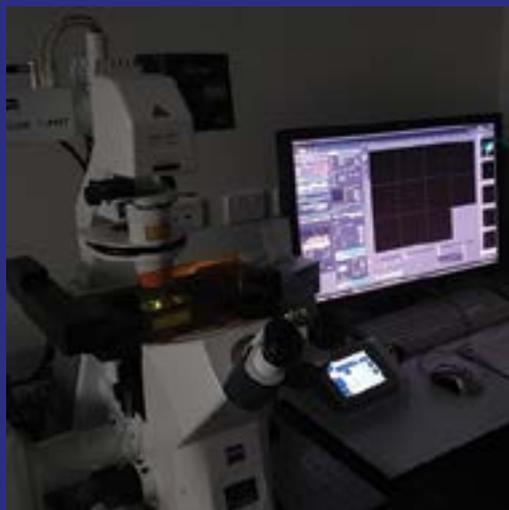
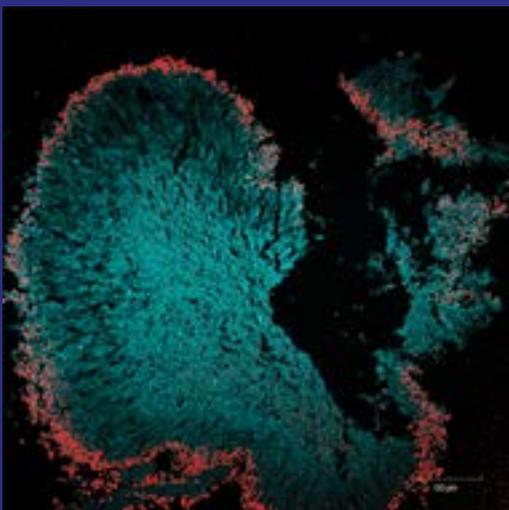
## Pilot Research Award summary

Elien Versteegen

Thanks to the AIMS@JCU pilot research award I was able to explore the use of new oligonucleotide probes to identify and localize different bacterial classes in the tissue of two common GBR sponges.

The interaction between the parent sponge and offspring larvae depends on the reproduction method of the sponge. Contact between parent and offspring during reproduction may play a key role in the vertical transmission of bacterial symbionts. The aim of my project was to obtain a visual map of bacterial symbionts in the larvae and adult tissue of *Carteriospongia foliascens* and *Ircinia*, as well as give an indication of the abundance of bacteria within the adult and larval tissues. Fluorescence in situ hybridization using oligonucleotide probes labeled with a fluorescent dye was used to label different classes of bacteria in the sponge tissue. Components below the larval epithelial layer were stained with the universal probe for bacteria, but could not be identified further (see figure). Previous works have localized bacterial symbionts in adult sponge tissue but have not related this to the corresponding sponge larvae. My results create a base for future research that will provide a new perspective on the bacterial composition of these sponges, as well as provide evidence towards the mode of action for symbiont acquisition.

I am very grateful for the support of the AIMS@JCU pilot award as it funding the needed probes that is needed for the execution of the experiments.



**Left figure:** Example of a stained *C. foliascens* larvae. The autofluorescence of the tissue is cyan colored, and in red is the signal originating from the universal DNA probe specifically binding bacteria. **Right figure:** Standard setup of the confocal microscope where I spend quite some days looking at the larvae.

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Chris Brunner

## Research Director Report

Undertaking a PhD is an uncertain journey suited to the curious. It is sometimes challenging and downright frustrating, but always rewarding when completed. It is our absolute pleasure to announce our newest AIMS@JCU Drs, Dr Marites Canto, Dr Benjamin Gordon and Dr Mikaela Nordborg and congratulate them on achieving this significant milestone. We wish you all the best as you take the next step in your career journey. We would also like to congratulate those AIMS@JCU PhD candidates who have recently submitted and are awaiting reviews.

The last round of AIMS@JCU awards was highly contested and we are pleased to announce ten AIMS@JCU affiliated students were successful in securing AIMS@JCU travel funding to attend the upcoming August AMSA conference in Cairns – congratulations and it's great to see such a strong cohort planning to represent both AIMS and JCU on the national stage! AIMS@JCU is the sponsor of the AMSA student night and we can't wait to see you all there!

Travel funding was awarded to a further five students for attendance at international conferences and one domestic conference; and one to assist towards Open Access Publications. Four pilot awards were granted and, for the first time, six students were awarded funding for Professional Development to build their technical skills.

Upcoming events:

Key dates to lock in for the 2nd half of the year include:

- AMSA Student Night- 7:00PM - 10:00PM Tuesday, 9th August at the Rattle n Hum, Cairns;
- 2022 AIMS@JCU R-course with Murray Logan - kicking off again the 1st and 15th August;
- Mindfulness course: Mondays 2.30pm to 4.30pm from 22nd August
- The AIMS@JCU Writing Retreat – date to be confirmed;
- PhD applications for 2023 intake close 30 September 2022;
- The annual AIMS@JCU Seminar Day and end of year celebration to be held on the 2nd December 2022.

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Chris Brunner