

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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University Professors honoured with Australian Research Council Laureates

Two outstanding University of Tasmania Professors have today been honoured with Australian Laureate Fellowships from the Australian Research Council, to investigate ways to mitigate against climate change, and balance the need for human development with environmental conservation.

It's the first time Tasmanian-based researchers have received this prestigious honour.

Professor Barry Brook, Chair of Environmental Sustainability in the Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Technology, and Institute for Marine and Antarctic Science Professor of Marine Biogeochemistry Philip Boyd, are among the 16 recipients for 2016.

The Fellowships will provide funding for two significant new research projects – worth almost \$11 million in total - led by the University of Tasmania Professors in their respective fields.

Professor Brook will investigate whether society can effectively “decouple” environmental impacts from economic growth and human prosperity, to resolve global trade-offs between human development and the competing need to conserve habitats, ecosystems and species.

Professor Boyd will evaluate the feasibility of boosting carbon dioxide removal by Southern Ocean microbes to offset climate change, to provide a framework for future research and inform international policy on the use of geoengineering – large-scale intervention in the Earth's natural systems – to mitigate against climate change.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said the inclusion of both Professors in the distinguished list of recipients demonstrated the quality and calibre of the University's academic staff and its commitment to research excellence in areas of global significance.

“The awarding of these Australian Laureate Fellowships to our academics is an outstanding achievement and a well-deserved accolade for their endeavours, enabling them to continue to advance research that will contribute to world-wide understanding in their respective fields,” Professor Rathjen said.

“It demonstrates our strategic intent to focus on our strengths and attract outstanding researchers from around the globe to the University of Tasmania, which is recognised internationally as producing world-class research in areas of priority.

“In turn, the University can look forward to increased exposure and opportunities as a result of these Fellowships, strengthening the bridge between Tasmania and the world as we work collaboratively to tackle global issues.”

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood said the announcement of the Laureates was testament to the University’s continued achievements through solution-oriented research and commitment to research excellence.

“This demonstrates the success of both our research investment and strategic recruitment in key areas of strength,” Professor Heywood said.

“In 2105, the University climbed all three of the highest-profile international ranking systems, and was rated at or above world standard in 48 out of 51 units assessed in the 2015 Excellence in Research Australia results.

“Our commitment to excellence in research ensures we will continue to attract and retain high-calibre academic staff – such as Professors Brook and Boyd – as well as recruit talented students from around the world who will benefit from their considerable knowledge, and gain degrees which are highly regarded by employers.”

Information released by:

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