

## Commentary on Operations

### Overview

This year Grattan Institute again contributed the highest-quality policy research and ideas to public debate. We also strengthened our capability to communicate these ideas effectively to policy makers, opinion leaders, and the public through the media, presentations and events, and our website.

### Program content

The **Cities** Program, led by Jane-Frances Kelly and supported by Program Fellow Peter Mares, revealed in *What Matters Most? – A Grattan Working Paper* how significant differences in housing priorities across the population are likely to lead to large shifts in the housing mix offered within our cities. A second report, *Getting the Housing We Want*, proposed a way to break the deadlock in our cities between developers and residents, in ways that benefit both. Finally, the *Social Cities* report looked at ways to make cities better places to live by increasing our opportunities to connect with other people.

The **School Education** Program, led by Ben Jensen, organised a major conference, *Learning from the Best: A Grattan Institute roundtable on education systems in East Asia* in September. The event, attended by Prime Minister Julia Gillard, saw leading Australian and Asian educators discuss the success of education systems in East Asia, and what Australia could learn from them. The discussion informed the program's work on *Catching up: learning from the best school systems in East Asia* report, which explores four of the world's five top-performing school systems and shows how learning from their strengths in classroom teaching can improve Australian children's lives.

The **Energy** Program acquired its first Program Director, Tony Wood. Tony's first report, *New Protectionism Under Carbon Pricing*, explains how the Government's unduly generous assistance to industry under its carbon emissions package – especially its unjustified subsidies to the LNG and coal industries -- may create a new protectionism and that the whole community will pay for. A second report, *No easy choices: which way to Australia's energy future?* identifies the seven technologies that are most likely to enable Australia to meet its long-term emissions targets, but it also exposes the acute intellectual and policy challenge Australia faces to get some or all of these technologies producing power quickly.

The **Productivity Growth** Program was led in the first half of the year by Saul Eslake, whose opinion articles, public speeches, participation in panels and media commentary had a substantial impact on public debate. Following Saul's resignation, Jim Minifie was appointed as the new Program Director.

The new **Higher Education** Program, supported by the Myer Foundation and led by Andrew Norton, published *Mapping Australian Higher Education*. The report, which examines facts, figures and analysis relevant to understanding higher education institutions, students, and outcomes, suggests that Australia's higher education system is performing reasonably well or has positive trends.

The **Australian Perspectives** Program published *Game-changers: Economic reform priorities for Australia*. This report, widely covered in the media, identified reforms that would yield an extra \$20 billion to GDP by 2022. Changing the tax mix and increasing the workforce participation rate of women and older people could contribute more than \$70 billion a year to economic growth in the next decade.

## Communications

Grattan Institute is committed to presenting rigorous policy thinking and complex ideas in a clear and compelling fashion. We work hard to expose our work to the widest possible audience of policy-makers and the public. We have strong relationships with electronic, print and online media. Over the financial year Grattan Institute was mentioned in the media nearly 10,000 times.

In the past year Grattan Institute launched a new website, one that is more logical, user friendly and appealing to the eye. It contains all Grattan Institute's information, including all published material. The website was visited 118,000 times this financial year. Visitors viewed just under 400,00 pages and downloaded reports 30,000 times.

The database almost doubled in size, bringing the number of people on our mailing list to more than 11,000. Grattan Institute also continued to build its profile on social media, getting 1,765 followers on Twitter and 719 likes on Facebook.

Grattan Institute communicates directly to the public through speeches and public seminars. Over the year, Grattan Institute conducted 22 public seminars attended by 4,333 people, and facilitated this through its automated seminar invitations and acceptances. Grattan Institute also started live streaming most of its events. Podcasts and transcripts for most seminars have continued to be published on Grattan Institute's website.

Grattan Institute also works to influence policy makers. Program Directors and other staff are continually extending their professional networks to include more public sector officials, Ministers, and Shadow Ministers in all States. These and other stakeholders are routinely consulted for comment as Grattan Institute's work is in development, and after it is released publicly.

Early in the year, the first Grattan Gathering brought together Grattan Institute staff with almost 20 senior figures in government, academe, the community and private sectors. A wide-ranging and lively discussion informed the development of the report, *Game-changers: Economic reform priorities for Australia*, later in the year. The great success of the Gathering ensures that it will be held again in subsequent years.

## **Staff**

Grattan Institute appointed 15 new staff throughout the financial year, closing the year with 26 staff members. As well, 24 interns were employed at different times, contributing to specific projects and programs, and gaining opportunities for their own development. The strong demand for advertised roles at Grattan Institute confirms our position as a highly sought-after employer.

## **Physical infrastructure**

Renovations of the premises at 8 Malvina Place in early 2012 enabled the installation of eight new desk spaces, while maintaining the light-filled, warehouse-looking workspace that is so popular with employees and visitors.

## Major Reports

Grattan Institute published nine major reports during the financial year. These reports were downloaded from our website 30,458 times over the year.

### Australian Perspectives

#### ***Summer reading list for the Prime Minister 2011***

Published: 05 December 2011

Grattan's annual Prime Minister's Reading List contains books and articles that we believe the Prime Minister – or indeed any Australian – will find stimulating over the summer break. They're all good reads that we think say something interesting about Australia and its future.

#### ***Game-changers: Economic reform priorities for Australia***

Author: John Daley

Published: 07 June 2012

If Australian governments want to lift economic growth they must reform the tax mix, and increase the workforce participation rates of women and older people. These reforms could contribute \$70 billion to the economy.

### Cities

#### ***What Matters Most? – A Grattan Working Paper***

Authors: Ben Weidmann and Jane-Frances Kelly

Published: 19 September 2011

*What Matters Most?* reveals significant differences in housing priorities across the population. Over time they could lead to large shifts in the housing mix of our cities.

#### ***Getting the Housing We Want***

Author: Jane-Frances Kelly

Published: 14 November 2011

*Getting the housing we want* proposes a new approach to city planning that allows our cities to grow while giving residents a real say in the future of their neighbourhoods.

#### ***Social Cities***

Author: Jane-Frances Kelly

Published: 26 March 2012

Humans are social animals: relationships are critical to our wellbeing. Indeed, a lack of face-to-face contact can put our health at risk. This report looks at ways to make cities better places to live by increasing our opportunities to connect with other people.

## **Energy**

### ***No easy choices: which way to Australia's energy future?***

Authors: Tony Wood and Tristan Edis

Published: 06 February 2012

The carbon pricing scheme alone is not enough to effect the change Australia needs. The report assesses the main low-emissions electricity options, and suggests ways to address an acute intellectual and policy challenge.

### ***New Protectionism Under Carbon Pricing***

Authors: Tony Wood and Tristan Edis

Published: 30 August 2011

The Government's unduly generous assistance to industry under its carbon emissions package may create a new protectionism. The whole community will pay for unjustified subsidies to the LNG and coal industries.

## **Higher Education**

### ***Mapping Australian higher education***

29 January 2012

Higher education is entering one of its most significant periods in recent history. Mapping Australian higher education puts in one place facts, figures and analysis for understanding institutions, students, and outcomes.

## **School Education**

### ***Catching up: learning from the next school systems in East Asia***

Author: Ben Jensen

Published: 17 February 2012

The world's centre of high performance in school education is now East Asia. Four of the five top-performing systems are Hong Kong, Shanghai, South Korea and Singapore, according to OECD's 2009 PISA assessments. In recent years, Australia and many OECD countries have substantially increased education expenditure, often with disappointing results. Grattan Institute's new report, *Catching up: learning from the best school systems in East Asia*, shows how studying the strengths of these systems and applying them in our classrooms can improve our children's lives.

## **Other Publications**

Over the financial year Grattan produced a range of other publications including opinion pieces, speeches and presentations, as follows.

### **Australian perspectives**

#### ***Inquiry won't stop a changing world***

19 September 2011

#### ***Summer reading list for the Prime Minister***

03 December 2011

#### ***Rebuilding from the ground up – a National Disability Insurance Scheme***

11 April 2012

#### ***Critiquing government regional development policies***

16 April 2012

### **Cities**

#### ***Building social cities: the value of the human connection***

02 April 2012

#### ***City harmony: just ask the people***

03 April 2012

#### ***A tip for developers – give residents a say if you want the green light***

14 November 2011

#### ***Balance can be a household word***

15 November 2011

#### ***The houses we want are not getting built***

25 June 2012

#### ***Why planning our cities must involve citizens***

30 June 2012

### **Energy**

#### ***Time running out for nuclear option***

23 August 2011

#### ***The right way to value solar***

21 December 2011

#### ***A bright shine in small solar fixes: response to the Climate Spectator***

14 February 2012

***The future of gas power***

07 May 2012

***Credible, consistent policy key to clean-energy future***

15 May 2012

***Who is killing aluminium smelting in Australia?***

25 May 2012

**Productivity Growth**

***Transparency in trade policy***

19 July 2011

***Big Shifts in the Global Economy***

19 July 2011

***Productivity - the lost decade***

16 August 2011

***The resources boom, structural change and 'Closing the Gap'***

21 September 2011

***The tax reform challenge***

21 September 2011

**School Education**

***Sea change in education policy needed***

02 April 2012

***Declining student performance***

06 July 2011

***Turn east and learn from the world's best***

01 August 2011

***A focus on learning will revitalise teaching***

31 August 2011

***The Challenges of Learning from Others***

27 September 2011

***Good jobs begin in school***

10 October 2011

***Measuring Educational Quality***

25 October 2011

***The Economics and Politics of Teacher Merit Pay***

14 November 2011

***Gonski review reforms must not be delayed***

06 March 2012

***Implementation, not bonuses, key to results***

09 May 2012

***Education reform with the wrong focus***

18 May 2012

**Higher Education**

***How to Create a World Class University***

28 July 2011

***The rise of university rankings***

12 October 2011

***Subsidy review plan neither fair nor enticing***

14 December 2011

***Australian higher education: trends, policies, performance***

09 February 2012

***Higher education pricing***

20 March 2012

***Professionalism lacking in university teaching***

24 April 2012

***Poor marks for policy guesswork***

05 June 2012



## Public Events

Grattan Institute held 21 public events over the financial year.

***Big Shifts in the Global Economy***

19 Jul 2011

Presenter: Michael Spence

***The Future of Wind Energy in Australia***

20 Jul 2011

Panel

***How to Create a World Class University***

28 Jul 2011

Presenter: Andrew Hamilton

***The Future of the Electricity Network in Australia***

24 Aug 2011

Panel

***The Challenges of Learning from Others***

27 Sep 2011

Presenter: Yong Zhao

***The Spirit of Cities***

04 Oct 2011

Presenter: Daniel Bell

***Measuring Educational Quality***

25 Oct 2011

Presenter: Dr Brian Stecher

***The Future of Transport in Australia***

25 Oct 2011

Panel

***The Future of Solar Power in Australia***

10 Nov 2011

Presenter: Tony Wood

***The Economics and Politics of Teacher Merit Pay***

14 Nov 2011

Presenters: Andrew Leigh MP, John Daley

***Getting the housing we want: report launch***

21 Nov 2011

Presenters: John Brumby, Jane-Frances Kelly

***Summer reading list for the Prime Minister***

05 Dec 2011

Presenters: George Megalogenis, John Daley, and Jane-Frances Kelly

***Australian higher education: trends, policies, performance***

09 Feb 2012

Presenters: Andrew Norton, Julie Hare

***No easy choices: which way to Australia's energy future?***

15 Feb 2012

Presenters: Andrew Charlton, Tony Wood

***Catching up: learning from the best school systems in East Asia***

28 Feb 2012

Presenter: Ben Jensen

***Multiple climate change policies: killing no birds with two stones?***

01 Mar 2012

Presenter: Cameron Hepburn

***Social Cities***

28 Mar 2012

Presenter: Jane-Frances Kelly

***Rebuilding from the ground up – a National Disability Insurance Scheme***

11 Apr 2012

Presenter:

***Sydney - Game-changers: economic reform priorities for Australia***

12 Jun 2012

Presenters: Paul Kelly, John Daley

***Melbourne - Game-changers: reform priorities for economic growth in Australia***

13 Jun 2012

Presenters: George Megalogenis, John Daley

***Melbourne - The Future of Coal and Gas in Australia***

Energy Futures Series

27 Jun 2012

Panel

## Private Events and Seminars

Grattan Institute held eighteen private seminars over the financial year.

## Grattan Staff

Grattan Institute ended the 2011-12 financial year with the following staff:

John Daley, *Chief Executive Officer*

Andrew Norton, *Program Director, Higher Education*

Ben Jensen, *Program Director, School Education*

Jane-Frances Kelly, *Program Director, Cities*

Jim Minifie, *Program Director, Productivity Growth*

Tony Wood, *Program Director, Energy*

Peter Mares, *Fellow, Cities*

Ben Weidmann, *Senior Associate*

Cassie McGannon, *Senior Associate*

Peter Breadon, *Senior Associate*

Amelie Hunter, *Associate*

Daniel Mullerworth, *Associate*

James Savage, *Associate*

Joanna Farmer, *Associate*

Julian Reichl, *Associate*

Julie Sonnemann, *Associate*

Leah Ginnivan, *Associate*

Prasanna Venkataraman, *Associate*

Ana Passaportis, *HR & Finance Co-ordinator*

Andrew McDonald, *Corporate Services Manager & Company Secretary*

Angela Henderson, *Relationships Manager*

Emma Turner, *Administrative Assistant*

Fiona Allen, *Executive Assistant*

James Button, *Manager, Communications*

John Harris, *Manager, Strategic Communications*

Mary Wang, *Database Management Assistant*