

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*