



Dr Emma Rowe

Associate Professor in the School of Education, Deakin University

FUNDING AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dr Emma Rowe is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at Deakin University, specialising in public education policy and practice, with expertise in school choice, segregation, privatisation, and marketisation.

A Fulbright Scholar (2020) and recipient of an Australian Research Council grant (2021), Dr Rowe's research on philanthropy in public education has been recognised with multiple awards, including the Springer Best Paper Award (2020). She is a contributor to leading global organisations and universities and serves in publishing, editing, and advisory capacities for internationally recognised education journals.

Prior to academia, Dr Rowe held leadership roles in secondary education and worked as an editor, freelance writer, and secondary school English teacher.



Dr Stephane Shepherd

Professor of Forensic Psychology, Deakin University & Co Founder 16 Yards

YOUTH JUSTICE AND SCHOOL DISCONNECTION: TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND LIVED-EXPERIENCE SOLUTIONS

Dr Stephane Shepherd is Professor of Forensic Psychology at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation at Deakin University. His work on the cultural, social and mental health needs of young people who are involved in the justice system has received international recognition.

Stephane has published over 100 academic articles and book chapters and has received over 4 million in research funding. In 2020, he was named one of ABC's top 5 scientists under 40 and received the 2020 Victorian Government Multi-Cultural Award for Excellence in Justice.

Stephane also received the American Psychology-Law Society's Early Career Award in 2019, an Australian Research Council DECRA Fellowship in 2017, and a Fulbright Scholarship in 2015. He was appointed to the Victorian Youth Parole Board in 2022 and is a member of the Victorian Government African Communities Committee.

16 Yards: Works alongside young people connected to the justice system, helping them transform skills tied to survival into tools for success. Through mentorship, education, and real-world opportunities, we invest in their futures—unlocking their potential to contribute, thrive, and lead in their communities.

Zayd Safi is an African-Australian man who has lived experience of the Victorian Adult Justice System. Zayd is currently studying his Bachelor of Social Work at Deakin University. Zayd is an active member of Victoria's East African and Muslim communities. He is a lead program consultant and mentor at 16 Yards.

Chris Segio is a Samoan-Australian man who has spent time in and out of Victorian youth justice facilities. Having changed his own life for the better, he now hopes to help make an impact on the younger generation through sharing his lived experience.

Abraham Kuol is an Associate Research Fellow and PhD Candidate at Deakin University and a Program Manager at 16 Yards. Abraham is an emerging South Sudanese leader who directly experienced the pre and post-settlement challenges of many people in his community. He has worked extensively in the Not-For-Profit sector in the South-East providing programs for justice-involved African-Australian young people and post settlement support services for their families. He was recently awarded a Westpac Fellowship.





Leadership Seminar & SGM 2025

FRIDAY 16 MAY 2025, at Kooyong Tennis Club

PROGRAM

9:00	Welcome Colin Axup, President VASSP
9:10	VASSP Advocacy and Influence Transforming Education Through School Leadership
9:30	Funding and Public Education Dr Emma Rowe Public school leaders navigate complex funding challenges beyond the School Resource Package. With growing pressure to secure grants, this session explores the impact on equity, sustainability, and the future of public education.
10:20	Business Partner Presentation
10:30	Morning Tea
11:00	Business Partner Presentations
11:20	Youth Justice and School Disconnection: Trends, challenges and lived-experience solutions. Dr Stephane Shepherd and 16 Yards While youth custody rates in Victoria have declined over the past decade, high-harm offences and justice system involvement among CALD young people have risen. This session examines the factors driving their over-representation and explores strengths-based, community-led solutions to reduce system contact and improve outcomes for young people and their families.
12:50	Closing Remarks - Colin Axup, President
1:00	Collegiate Lunch

