

UN Business and Human Rights Regional Forum Australia and New Zealand

Strengthening responsible business practices in turbulent times

26 - 27 August 2025 | Melbourne

Free, Public Side Events

Unravelling Exploitation - Report Launch and Panel

Discussion

Tuesday August 26, 8.15am - 9.15am
The Green Brain, Level 7, Storey Hall,
RMIT University

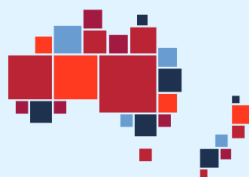
The event will launch Oxfam Australia's newest report on Modern Slavery and the need for Responsible Business Laws. It will also feature a panel of leading experts that includes:

- Chrisanta Muli, the Acting Chief Executive of Oxfam Australia
- Freya Dinshaw, an Associate Legal Director at the Human Rights Law Centre and;
- Professor Shelley Marshall at RMIT Business and Human Rights Centre.



This report builds on Oxfam Australia's labour rights work and existing What She Makes campaign. The report presents evidence of widespread and systemic labour rights violations across Bangladesh's garment supply chain, with a particular focus on workers in informal workplaces. Drawing on more than one dozen focus group discussions and key informant interviews and surveying over 400 workers it exposes how the current sourcing model, from which international brands benefit, enables and sustains conditions that amount to modern slavery. This report adds to the weight of evidence calling for stronger responsible business laws including - stand-alone mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence legalisation and import bans. This breakfast event hosted by RMIT will take place just prior to the opening on the UN Business and Human Rights regional forum.

Free. Registration encouraged: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/unravelling-exploitation-report-launch-and-panel-discussion-tickets-1565040651719>



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Discount Workers – Film Screening

Wednesday, August 27, 12.40pm – 1.20pm

Lecture Theatre, Level 1, Storey Hall, RMIT University

336-348 Swanston St, Melbourne

Discount Workers (2020 film directed by Ammar Aziz and Christopher Patz)

Over a decade ago, fire broke out in a cellar workshop in Karachi, Pakistan, where clothing was made for a German chain store. 258 people were buried under the ruins.

One can never be certain whether or not their clothes were sewn in a dark windowless cellar, by someone working with no breaks and under wretched conditions. No one pays attention to safety regulations in such places, so even a minor accident can turn into a tragedy. The road to punishing the guilty and obtaining reparation is difficult and drags on for years. The film tracks the persistent efforts of one of the victim's parents to obtain not only justice for their son, but also dignified conditions for thousands of other workers in factories manufacturing cheap fashion. Will they win the court dispute? How can the targeted customers contribute to making a change?

Smart Tech, Safe People: Human Rights Due Diligence for Business

Wednesday August 27, 12.40pm - 1.20pm.

The Green Brain, Level 7, Storey Hall,

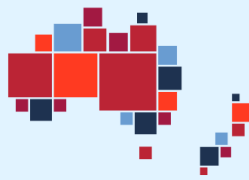
RMIT University

This session organised by *Away from Keyboard* (AfK) features:

- **Sarah Barnbrook**, Founder, Away From Keyboard (AFK)
- **Professor Lisa Given**, Director, Social Change Enabling Impact Platform, RMIT University
- **A/Prof. Mohammad Hossain**, Business and Human Rights Centre Theme Leader-Digital Technology, RMIT University



As AI and emerging technologies reshape the way businesses operate, this session will offer practical guidance on how to apply Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) frameworks and Safety by Design principles during development, not after harm occurs. It will help participants recognise digital risk as human rights risk, and equip them with strategies to align innovation with the UN Guiding Principles and emerging global expectations. This side event would serve Forum participants who are actively engaging with the technical, legal, and ethical challenges of emerging tech. It would provide tangible tools to support human-centered innovation and future-fit risk management.



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Karen Hao Talks AI

Friday, September 5, 6pm - 7pm
Auditorium, Storey Hall, RMIT University

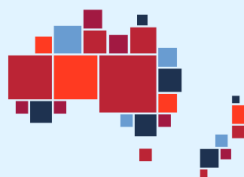
Registration is free, but essential.

<https://www.readings.com.au/events/karen-hao-talks-ai>

This event is co-organised by RMIT's *Social Change Enabling Impact Platform*, the *Centre for Human-AI Information Environments* and us! the *RMIT Business and Human Rights Centre* in partnership with *Readings*.

Empire of AI: When longtime AI expert and journalist Karen Hao first began covering OpenAI in 2019, she thought they were the good guys. Founded as a nonprofit with safety enshrined as its core mission, it was meant, its leader Sam Altman told us, to act as a check against more purely market forces. But the core truth of this massively disruptive sector is that it requires an unprecedented amount of proprietary resources: the 'compute' power of scarce high-end chips, the sheer volume of data that needs to be amassed at scale, the humans on the ground 'cleaning it up' for sweatshop wages throughout the Global South, and a truly alarming spike in the need for energy and water underlying everything. We have entered a new, ominous age of empire with OpenAI setting a breakneck pace, as a small group of the most valuable companies in human history try to chase it down. In exhilarating prose and with unparalleled access to those closest to Sam Altman, Hao recounts the meteoric rise of OpenAI and shows us the sinister impact that this industry is having on society.





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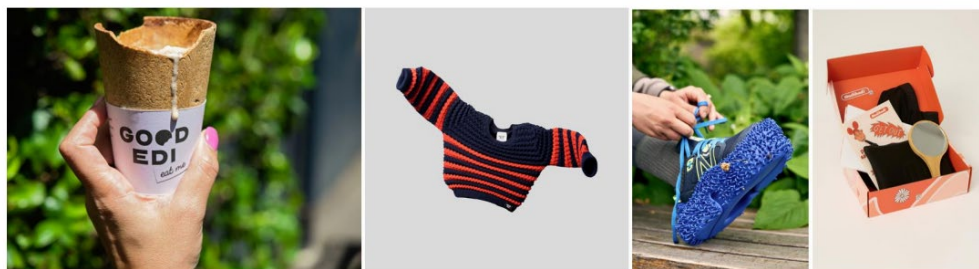
Making Good: Redesigning the Everyday

Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia

29 August – 1 February 2026

Free entry

From air-purifying paints to edible coffee cups and leather made from seafood waste and mushrooms, NGV's latest design exhibition, *Making Good: Redesigning the Everyday*, brings together the work of more than 50 Australian and international designers, spotlighting products and systems that improve the health and wellbeing of society and the environment. Opening at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia on 29 August, *Making Good* explores a powerful shift in design practice driven by studios and entrepreneurs who are transforming products used in daily life such as clothing, toiletries, and grocery items, to be both functional and make a positive impact. Visitors will discover designers who have developed innovative solutions to repurpose and recycle construction waste into sustainable building materials.



(L to R): Good-Edi edible cup by Good-Edi Pty Ltd. Photo © Good-Edi; Knot-Tile® Merino Jumper by Petit Pli. Photo © Petit Pli; Rewild the run by Kiki Grammatopoulos. Photo © Mael Henaff; Teen Period Kit by Modibodi. Photo © Modibodi.

Making Good Symposium

NGV x RMIT University

Friday 29 August, 10am – 3pm

NGV International, Clemenger BBDO Auditorium

Booking required, fees apply.

<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/program/making-good-redesigning-the-everyday-symposium/>

The *Making Good Symposium* is a dynamic, one-day program that expands the themes of *Making Good: Redesigning the Everyday* bringing the transformative potential of design into sharper focus. Today we find ourselves on the cusp of great change. *Making Good* reveals a world of systems, places and products where design heals and regenerates rather than simply reducing or minimising the environmental and social harm commonly associated with the consumption, construction and manufacturing that underpin everyday life. Across six interrelated panels, the symposium brings together designers, entrepreneurs and researchers who are challenging outdated materials, systems and social norms. Spanning architecture, fashion, food systems, public health and product design, the program explores how design is confronting urgent social and environmental issues while presenting practical, regenerative alternatives. This is an opportunity to hear directly from the innovators redesigning the world around us. Through conversation and debate, the *Making Good Symposium* invites audiences to consider how design is driving systemic change and contributing to a future founded on repair, resilience and renewal.