-  Welcome, everybody.  We're just waiting a couple of seconds for everyone to join us.

I will make a start.  Today, we are meeting on Tasmanian Aboriginal land.  I would like to acknowledge, with deep respect, the traditional owners of this land, the Palawa people, which I am on today. I would like to pay my respects to Elders, past, present and emerging and to the Aboriginal community that continues to care for the country.  I stand for a future that profoundly respects and acknowledges Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language and history and a continued effort to fight for Aboriginal justice, rights and paving the way for a strong future.

I am Darlene McLennan, I am the Manager of the Australian Disability Clearing House Education and Training.  Thanks for joining us today.  Today, the topic is disability… sorry, I've got the wrong sheet here… today's webinar - we are going to hear from two people from the National Centre who are undertaking fellowships around disability and the title is Supporting Students With Disability Through and Beyond Higher Education.

Before I introduce Professor Sarah O’Shea from the Centre to introduce our speakers today, I wanted to provide a few housekeeping items.  The webinar is being live captioned by Bradley Reporting and is also being recorded.  The recording will be on ADCET in the next few days.  If you are requiring closed captions, you can click on the CC button either at the side or at the bottom of your screen. To increase the number of lines appearing in the caption box, click the small arrow on the top right-hand side of the caption box.  If you have any technical difficulties today, you can email us at admin@adcet.edu.au.  The presentation will run for around 45/50 minutes and at the end, we will have some time for questions.  If you would like to put those questions into the chat box… and we encourage people to actually choose all panelists and attendees on the drop-down box there, because that means that we can have some conversations with each other throughout the presentation as well.

Okay, so, what I’d like to do now is introduce Professor Sarah O’Shea, who is the Director of the National Centre for Students and Equity in Higher Education, which is hosted by Curtin University. Sarah is going to introduce our speakers today. Over to you, Sarah.

- Hello and welcome to the first National Centre for Student Equity and Higher Education webinar. I, too, would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that I am sitting on and pay my respects to Elders, past, present and future. I'm delighted today to be able to introduce two of our National Centre fellows, Associate Professor Tim Pitman and David Eckstein.  Both Tim and David are joining our other foreign National Centre fellows who are all studying and researching key areas of equity research in the higher education sector. For those of you who don’t know, the National Centre is a body that is here to improve the higher education outcomes for marginalised and disadvantaged people through a variety of strategies.  So, some of the activities that the National Centre does includes strengthening research in the field of educational equity, supporting the development of a robust evidence base and also, we work across the sector to enhance best practice within the equity field and work at policy level.

Just to briefly touch on our two fellows that will be speaking today, Tim will be discussing his project, which is exploring how universities can best support people with a disability who are working through higher education and come from regional, rural and remote areas.  Tim is a researcher of higher education policy at Curtin University and his more broader research focuses on widening access and participation for groups of students historically underrepresented.  Mr David Eckstein works in the careers field at Swinburne University.  His fellowship is entitled, Meaningful Jobs for Graduates With Disability: From Luck to Business as Usual. His work will build upon Swinburne University’s accessibility careers hub which provides targeted career support for students with a disability.  I know, like you, I am very excited to hear about these two projects and I know both Tim and David have a really exciting presentation for you today.  So, over to you both.  I look forward to hearing about your work.

-  Thanks, Sarah. Today, I want to start with an acknowledgment, because throughout this presentation, David and I will be speaking in a lot of categorical terms.  The government and universities record people with disability through various categories.  We both wish to acknowledge that the creation of categories is also a part of the process of self-identification, how you categorise yourself, and how others categorise you creates, in part, a sense of identity.  Sometimes, this categorisation is done by the person and sometimes, it is not.  Sometimes, it is done by a supportive group and sometimes, it’s done by society and sometimes, it is done by a person or organisation.

I am not wishing to problematise that or get into discussion about it, merely to acknowledge that it is an issue, especially in the way that data is captured.  As I go through this presentation, as David then picks up and follows from me, we will be talking about categories and the language we use reflects mostly the way in which the data are captured and the way that people currently talk about disability and higher education.  This is something we’re highly aware of and we're acutely aware of this as we do our research.  Furthermore, the categories that we will be using are ones that were, up until this year, used.  Right now, the sector is changing how it categorises disability, but the categories we’re talking about are the historical ones.

Today, I will start by talking about the area of research in general and then, I will lightly touch upon and introduce my particular focus of my fellowship and then, I will pass over to my colleague, David, who will then continue with his.

Certainly, from my perspective, I'm not sitting here at the start of the fellowship telling you facts and telling you this is what is and what needs to be done.  The reason we wanted to engage through the ADCET community through this webinar is to alert people that this is research we’re going in to and we really want you to engage.  People with disability with their lived experiences, practitioners, supporters, advocates, researchers, we want you to be aware of our research now so you can start informing what we do and make sure that we're talking to the right people and asking the right questions.

To help set the scene and also to explain how these categories can be problematised, up until this year, categories of disability were in these broad themes.  This is the language used, hearing, learning, mobility, vision, medical and other.  Looking at two points in time, one 25 years ago, the earliest ever attempts to categorise disability in higher education, we can see how proportionally these groups fell into higher education.  Fast-forward 25 years, we can see that these have dramatically changed.  The main point I'm trying to make from this slide is to say that our understandings of disability — disability lived experiences is not a static thing, it changes.  Also, in 1992, it was disability support officers who were doing the categorisation.  Now, we ask students to identify themselves and that changes things.  We have seen a rise in people identifying as having medical issues or other issues and “other” is problematic, because it is effectively saying “otherwise”/“not categorised”.  We need more refinement around that.

This is the reason why there is a positive reason for categorising and counting because, certainly, when it comes to institutions, whether that institution is a government or a higher education institute, it is only when you actually call something out, bring it to people's attention, make it visible that you really start to have meaningful action around it.

Starting with the good news and starting with the reason why we want to do further research into supporting students with disability, over the last 10 years, we have just seen a massive increase in enrolments and participation for students identifying as having a disability.  It is more than doubled over the last ten years. In 2009, it was a little over 30,000 students in the system, and at the last count, it was over 70,000.  We need to look carefully at the reasons for that.  To what extent is this an actual increase in enrolments in participation, to what extent is it better collecting, better reporting by institutions and we're now actually identifying students that have always been there, and to what extent is it students, for their own personal reasons, being more comfortable or wanting to identify to the institution that they have a disability.

However, whilst participation has really increased, we're not seeing the same increase in other measures of success.  I could show you dozens, but I just wanted to show you one, because this says, really, what you need to know at this point, and that is that when we look at the national retention rate, the all-critical first year of study, surviving beyond the first year of study, students with disability lag 3 to 4 percentage points behind the national cohort.  So, it's great that we're seeing more students in higher education, but we need to do more to support them and that is, very much, one of the focuses of my research.

The other thing that we want to look at closely and again, talking about this problematic issue of categories, is this slide shows a completion rate.  It took a cohort of students in 2005 and it waited for nine years to take into account part-time enrolments, interruptions to enrolments, and it said, after nine years, what percentage of that 2005 cohort completed their studies?  What it found was that overall, all students, national population, a little over 72 per cent.  When we start looking at the various categories of disability, we find that their rates are significantly lower.  The exception is this category and again, the language used by the department is visual.  This is a reminder to us that we need to think more critically and in a more nuanced way around how students define this disability and what they're saying and how the various forms of disabilities interact in the sector.

The final slide that I want to show before passing over to David, because this introduced something that I'm particularly interested in, it will be the focus of my research, is the intersection of disability and regionality.  The small pie graph on the left shows how many students in higher education have self-identified as having disability, and it is around 6 per cent in this particular grab of data.  Looking more closely at those students, what we find is, of those 6 per cent, only half a per cent of the whole national population was students with disability who would be classified as from regional rural remote Australia.

Just yesterday, I received updated data.  I didn't update the slide, because I wanted to look closely at it and check it, but it seems the number has gone up to over 1 per cent, which is great, and in line with the overall increase in enrolments with students with disability.  It is showing the double impact of the social and infrastructure barriers that students with disability in regional remote Australia face.  That's why I want to focus on that group of students.  I don't want to do it in isolation and I'm excited to be partnering with David, because by working together, we can be looking at our own issues, not only in isolation, but in a unified way.  At that point, I want to pass over now to David.  He will introduce his slides.  Don't forget to tell me when to change them.

-  Thank you.  Thanks so much, Tim, and thank you, everyone, it’s very good to be with you. Thank you, ADCET, for this wonderful opportunity to speak with you.

My project looks in particular at the decisions that universities make in order to support the career development needs of students with disability.  So, this affects two things.  It affects their engagement while they're at university, but more importantly, or as importantly, it also affects students' ability to transition to the workforce after they complete university, and these statistics that we're looking at here are an up-to-date snapshot that was taken at the time of my application for this fellowship and there is no argument that students with disability suffer systemic discrimination when it comes to negotiating with and trying to enter the workforce.  That is not disputed, but the reasons for that are complex, and this is the basis for my research project, is this experience of students with disability.

I want to get to the main heart in just a moment, but could I ask you now, because the responses are so varied, if you may, chat a quick response to this question, what do you feel is the biggest barrier for students with disability when it comes to getting meaningful work? And while you're thinking about that, I might remind you that the definition of "meaningful work" that I am using, is work that is related to the student's core discipline.  We know from the statistics that students with disability, when they graduate, are more likely, if they get work, to be engaged with work that does not use the skills they obtained at university.  Anecdotally, and in the literature, as well, there is a great deal of evidence that students with disability do not use their degree when it comes to getting work.

- Sorry to interrupt, Dave, it’s Darlene here, if people can just make sure they try to choose all panelists and attendees, because then we can all be a part of the conversation.  Some people are just ticking all panelists, not attendees.

-  Thanks, Darlene. There's some very interesting chat coming through, some specific skills are being mentioned, but things like stigma, bias and stereotyping, lack of understanding of opportunities, attitudes and cultural barriers, these are crucial things.  A very interesting comment there, an opportunity of just being given a chance.  I think these comments speak directly to the experience of people with disability.  We know from the research into career development theory that there is tension between an individual's responsibility for getting work and the system that excludes them from being able to negotiate with the workforce and to enter it.  Our response to these tremendous comments that you're making, a deficit-based approach to thinking about people, people living with more than one disability, raise very complex engagement issues for students and for the workforce.  This is what the university can actually help with, if it acknowledges the nature of the challenge that students with disability are being faced with.  So, maybe we can skip to the next slide.

There is a brief acknowledgment that the tailored interventions do work.  We're going to present a poll for you in a moment because, again, there is no debate about this.  We know that specific programs that target the issues that students with disability need to face, specifically exclusion, and imposed notions of disability are very well addressed by targeted programs.

-  Do you want the poll up now?

- Can we wait for that, just for a moment, Darlene? Thanks.

Could you put the poll up there? Thank you, that’d be great.  We know also, at last count, less than half of Australia's universities provide targeted support for careers with disability.  Could we skip to the next one, perhaps?

-  Sorry, I don’t know if you heard that. It’s Darlene, here. If you could get to the next poll, sorry…

- We’re just interested to know…

- The question is, does your university/TAFE/school run programs to help students with disability get meaningful work?  The answers are “yes”, “no” or “don't know”.

-  Are we getting a trend in the results yet, Darlene, do you think?

- I'm not seeing it, I don’t know why…

- Jane, here. If we could wait a couple more seconds.  We will see when it stops and then, I will end the poll and we will see the results.  I’m ending it now and sharing the results.

-  These are very interesting results.

- David, can you read them out, or do you want me to read them out?

- I beg your pardon, I’m sorry. I don’t want to cross you there. Yes, please read them out.

- So, does your university/TAFE/school run programs to help students with disability get meaningful work? 33 per cent said “yes”, 30 per cent said “no” and 37 per cent of people said they don't know.

-  I think the interesting thing about these results is that if we have the negative responses, the term “don't know” as a negative response, the vast majority of people, if we translate this to the student population, don't have access to programs, even if they exist.  That is another point that is picked up in the literature.  Simply providing opportunities for people with disability doesn't automatically translate into them being able to access those things and receiving benefit from them.

That trend, I feel, is reflected in the poll that we've just seen there.  We can go a little deeper and ask questions if we do know that there are targeted programs being offered at our university.  What kinds of programs are they?  I would be grateful if you could chat with the panel an example of the kinds of programs that are being run and even if there are not any programs being offered by your organisation, what kinds of programs would you like to see being run?

I was going to step you through these questions one-by-one, perhaps in the interest of time, we could do them in one hit. Take a pick of the questions, if you want to answer one of them, that’d be great. Let us know, in your opinion, what is it that prevents universities from providing more programs?  It is not that they're a good idea.  We know they're a good idea.  That's not the issue.  There are factors at work that prevent universities from providing targeted career support for students with disability.  That's the focus of the research project I’m working on.

Darlene, do you mind if I speak to some of the chat that’s coming through? We made a pact before - don’t talk for too long. I’m trying to stick to it. Please pull me up if…

- It’s up to Tim as well, we want to give him equal time.

- Thank you. The kinds of things that are coming through are funding and resources as being offered as a response to this issue of what is it that prevents universities from providing more programs and that is undeniably the case, I think.  Some of the other responses we have to the first question or two are answers to those questions.  We all need to know about the terrific UCEP program that the NDCO is ushering into the sector.  This is a marvellous opportunity to partner with a disability employment services provider.   These people are skilled with working with people with significant career challenges.  Because of the government funding model they operate under, they come to the sector at little direct cost.  This is something that we need to explore, because there are other iterations of this kind of arrangement that are also very helpful.  Swinburne partners with Wise employment to provide a related kind of service. At this stage, I want to point out that we need this variety.  It is not that one iteration of a service is better than another.  We know that students with disability, like the rest of us, need different modes of engagement and different options to choose from.  Examples of things that work well are what we're after, so if you have contributions to make to this project, I’d be very pleased to hear from you when we survey the staff and the student population later on this year.

There is also a couple of comments about a lack of understanding of how things operate, a lack of understanding of available resources and also, an interesting comment from an NGO about support for high school leavers with disability.  And are we aware of the… I'm not sure about that one.  I don't know if anyone wants to help.  Sorry, yes, I beg your pardon.  Part of the support also includes an array of external providers, some of whom we recommend and some of whom we don’t, because of the extra cost involved.  So, we need to be mindful of the situation that our students are in and, of course, connect them with the services that are right for them.  In the interests of time, we can go to the next slide.

-  I just want to address a couple of earlier questions before we get too far.  Also wanting to respond to some of the webinar chat. One question that came through wanted to know if people with a disability are changing over time as a percentage of total students; in other words, yes, the raw numbers have gone up, but if you will, what's the slice of the pie?  I can answer that.  Participation of people with disability is both going up in real numbers and proportionally.  Going back about 10 years ago, 3 per cent of all students were people with disability.  Then it moved up to 4.  It is now sitting around 7 per cent.  We're seeing both types of participation that you want to see in equity research, not only the numbers of students, but the proportional numbers of students, so that’s really good.

The second question was, will the research look at the ability of students with a disability to actually participate in campus life?  Yes, absolutely.  We’re going to be looking across not only the things that spring to people’s minds, such as curriculum support or technological support or physical support for these students on campus, but we're also looking at systemic support; in other words, how the system is set up, how the university’s bureaucracy is set up, can this assist students, and we're also looking at the social aspects, the social being not only can students participate in the social life of a university, the question here was asking, is there a link between that and retention?  Yes, absolutely.  If the student feel they belong at the institution, they're more likely to stick, but it's also in terms of attitudes, attitudinal attitudes by people without disability looking at students that do and feeling like they belong as well.

A lot of questions raise the issue about online.  We have a particular focus online and again, just to tag onto that idea of social, online study for some students with disability solves certain issues, but creates some issues in the form of isolation. So, that’s a particular focus.

And the final thing before I move on, someone said, has the NDIS had an impact on the above?  Short answer - it's too early to tell.  We're specifically looking at the intersection of people coming through with NDIS plans and how they transition from that into higher education and how that can be potentially complex for them.

So, moving to the next slide.

-  That's really useful stuff, Tim.  Thank you for picking up the point about participation in campus life.  I think that is crucial, and the sense of belonging, I agree, underpins people's experience at university and we were speaking about the array of resources that are available, and the university can provide guidance with accessing these and so, I would be interested to know, in your opinion, where is the best source of careers information and please be as courageous as you like with your comments.  Is it inside the university?  If so, where, or is it outside?

-  Tim, I think this is a poll as well.  We can put the poll up as well, if you’d like. You have given some options there.  Jane, do you want to put the poll up? People can either participate in the poll or chat to us through the chat box. The poll has gone up and the choices are: career office, disability support office, lecturer, tutor, work-integrated learning office, other sources not listed.  We will collate all of those and put it as a part of the information we present to everybody.

-  There’s some chat there as well about universities struggling to provide extracurricular experiences for students, especially distance students, whether or not people have disability, that is a key challenge of online learning.

-  We might stop the poll now. Jane, are you happy to stop the poll and publish it?  People have said careers office, 49 per cent; disability support office, 22 per cent; lecturer 0; tutor work integrated learning office, 6 per cent; other sources not listed, 23 per cent.

- A significant amount of support coming from other parts of the university or outside the university altogether.  Feel free to chat information about those non-university sources to us, but I think what this shows us is that while almost half of people go to the careers office for information, the quality of information that they receive is important, and whether or not people feel comfortable going there, a significant number of students we have seen, or a significant amount of opinion indicates that people are more comfortable consulting with disability support providers about careers education matters.  There are very interesting and very valid reasons for that as well.  I think one of the issues to interrogate in the research project is the extent to which these typically separate domains of disability support and careers education can be successfully joined.  Indeed, the experience through the UCEP program is demonstrating that that is a useful partnership and at Swinburne, with the accessibility hub, our relationship with the accessibility services area, as it’s called here, is a crucial part of students feeling comfortable coming to this service, because they feel that they will be understood.

Unless there are comments or questions about that, we might go to the next slide, which is an invitation from both of us to take part in our national consultation.  Please keep your eyes on ADCET, where we will be inviting you to take part in surveys, in discussions later this year.  We're both providing different results.  Tim, I will invite you to pop back in at this stage.  The project that I'm working on has the very deliberate deliverable of an open access toolbox containing guidelines, activities, connections, resources for all universities to use, and the best way of sharing this, because here I need to recall the point, Tim, that you drew on earlier, is that campus life is a crucial part of the success of any initiative.  We can have targeted services, but it seems likely, and this is what I would be interested to get data on, it seems likely that uptake, that experience of those services is influenced a great deal by the culture of the organisation that provides them, that that is what’s going to make people feel safe to take part in the services that are provided.  We also know from the literature that students with disability, typically, are very low users of services that are provided for them.

- Just jumping in there - absolutely.  Going forward, what David and I have agreed to do, because we are aware we cannot do this survey without both people with disability and those that support them, so, in their own way, having real and lived experiences of having disability or supporting students.  We're also aware that people have exhaustion and there are so many things that impose upon your life, so rather than us independently sending out surveys, we have joined together. That means that we will send one survey to students asking them to give us their thoughts, advice, feedback and insights and we’ll be sending one joint survey to staff as well.  This also means we can do a comparative cross. So, for instance, from my perspective, I’m very interested to know what challenges or issues or positive experiences students with disability in regional Australia face, but that needs to be contextualised against students with disability as a whole.  So, absolutely, we're really asking you to support our research over this 12 months.  We can't do it without you.  We really need to do it with you, but we will try and make it as painless as possible.

Anything to add?

-  I think that rounds things off nicely.  We look forward to being in touch.  As Tim said, we cannot do this without you, and we look forward to working with you to help progress these issues and to make a difference to our policy makers as well as our own organisations.

- I encourage people to ask any questions.  The feed has been quite enormous, so it is going to be difficult for me to go back and work through them, but maybe if you've got questions at this point in time, add them to the question pod and I'll ask them — the chat pod, and remember to put all panelists and attendees.

Tim, did you want to run your poll while we're waiting for some questions or has that gone past now?

- Is that the poll regarding categories?

- Categories, yes.

-  Yes, that's fine.  The reason I didn't put it was because the new categories have come out, so it has become a little redundant.

-  No, that's fine.  I'm just trying to work my way through the questions.  There was a question in regards to using the term "university" versus "higher education providers".

-  I have responded to that.  It was just a slip of the tongue.  I fall into university, … higher education providers.

- Very good. We have received questions prior to the webinar which we’re probably not going to get to today, they were answered throughout the presentation, or we’ll look at them at the end of this presentation to see how we go.

-  We’ve had one question come through - where can those who would like to contribute to the research register their interest?  Darlene, is it possible through ADCET or, if that’s not possible, could you make our contact details available and we can keep a list of registers?  We would rather someone got a request two or three times than not at all.

- It’s Jane here, Tim, I can just adapt the survey now to have an information box in there.  Will that do?

- That would be wonderful.  If they could just indicate whether they would like to participate as a staff member, student or both.

-  I’m having a difficult time finding the questions through all the chatter in response - we have had so many people providing feedback, generally throughout…

- It’s Jane, again, David and Tim, if you want to scroll through and see if there's any there that you would like to answer…

-  We have some pre-submitted questions.  Shall we work our way through those as well?

- Yes, I can do that. Some of these questions, you may have answered.  There was one around international students, what opportunities are there for international students with disability within these studies?  Are you looking at mostly domestic students?

- We are looking at mostly domestic students, that’s because the reality of the sector is that 97 to 98 per cent of students with disability in the sector are domestic.  However, we're not going to exclude international students.  What I meant from that comment is it's an acknowledgment that the findings we will make and the things that we will discover, we have to qualify that this is indicative of the domestic student experience, just the numbers mean that we can't necessarily generalise and extrapolate to international students.  International students will absolutely be invited to participate.

-  I might add that the international student experience is relevant and the employability challenges there are simply a variation on the theme.  They're different, but very much related challenges that international students face and from a careers education point of view, I think the toolbox and the guidelines and the annual summit that we hope we will be able to use at the end of the year to help universities provide resources and services will deliberately include international students.

-  I’m just going to jump in on a couple more questions that were asked in the chat. There is a big discussion around social capital or word of mouth, in other words, finding jobs afterwards, and I said that social capital is increasingly important and there was a response saying social capital for students with disability can be very challenging, therefore, better supports and resources need to be put into the industry.

The comment I want to make on that is this is something that universities need to acknowledge more.  I conceptualise it of upstream and downstream.  Upstream is things that happens before the student enrols in the university and downstream is what happens to the student after they leave university.  Some universities still conceive their responsibility or ability to impact and support students is just happening in that midstream.  In other words, once the student hits our gates, up until the point they walk out our gates - that’s when we’re going to engage with the student. We know that's not the case.  There are things universities can and, in many cases, are doing well before the student engages with the universities to raise their aspirations and build their academic capabilities.  That’s a conversation we’ve been having for some time. We are increasingly having this conversation, this is where David’s research comes in about what we need to do to help that student.  It is, again — I’m going to pass over to David here, because he knows this much better than I do, it’s not just about saying go here and speak to this person, but about the capabilities that you build within the person.  Is that right, David?

-  That's really nicely put. Thank you. That speaks directly to another question that we have here about whether or not focusing on inherent requirements is a good enough way to communicate to students about what employers want from them on graduation.  I think what employers expect, we live in an employers' market, is a much richer communication from students than that and the good news for the students is that employability, the psychosocial motion of self, of how you understand the world and how you see yourself in it, is best informed by deep engagement with a student's core discipline.  That's where transferrable skills come from and that process marries those skills and those interests with the perennial career development question, which is, what does the student want to do with what they've learned?  So, the answer is not to become an accountant, but what kind of an accountant or what sort of organisation do you want to use your skills to support.

People have answers for these questions if we create the right space for them, and so I think, therefore, we need to create the right kind of space by allowing people a sense of belonging to it.

-  Another question was raised in the chat around the notion of identification, whether we're talking about the old categories or the new ones that will be coming in or more importantly, students themselves.  I just wanted to make an observation around that, because it is something that is very challenging in the area of critical disability studies.  Some people refer to it, and I refer to it, as the recognition redistribution paradox.  I come from a social science background and social theory background, and so I naturally fall into the redistribution side of things, which is not talking here about disability in specific now, but saying there are certain people who in society are disadvantaged, that there are social and economic barriers that are put in front of them, and the job of good policy, good public policy, is to remove, or if they can't remove, reduce those barriers.

That is from the heart and that is a positive thing to do.  However, it does breed into, sometimes, two things.  First, it creates deficit conversations, in other words, it sees the problems, it doesn't see the positive, and second, its ultimate aim, whether it expresses it or not, is to efface the difference.  In other words, this person is poor, we want to enact public policy so they are no longer poor.  That's why it is called a redistribution approach, because you're saying you don't have something, we want to give you. Society wants to be more equal.

Increasingly, from the late 80s onwards, there was a greater awareness of what they call the recognition side, and that was to say whether you're talking about being Indigenous, being female in a male environment, having a disability, this is a point of identification.  It is not a deficit.  This is something that you want to explore and embrace and problematise and make interesting.  The recognition side says I don't want to efface or make go away disability, I want to champion it and applaud it and support it.

Institutions have to work out how to reconcile those two things.  It is complicated, because you can't completely ignore social and economic barriers for people with disability, but you can't become consumed and obsessed by them.  What I'm saying going forward is that very much affects, every time we talk about, and you can probably see that this is something that I keep returning to because it is very important to me, particularly as a person who does not identify as having disability, so I'm aware that I'm talking about categories and putting categories on people.  Some of them feel comfortable about these categories and some of them do not.  We want to explore this further in our research.

-  Thank you for that, Tim.  There's another question here around universities often present themselves as a teaching institution and not as career providers.  Is there any suggestion on how you can integrate the two any better within our universities?

-  I think they have long been both, but I think that there are different opinions about where the locus of career education is in the institution.  Some decision-makers or senior management staff would think it is the business of the career officer.  No, it's not, they check the resumes. Or, this is the business of our internship office or professional placement unit.  I think the answer is that everyone has a stake in it.  We already contribute to career development in different ways.  Recognising it and integrating it seems to be a wise thing to do.

-  Anything from you, Tim, on that question?

- No, I’ll leave that to David.

- There's another question I missed earlier - can you please go over your definition of "meaningful work”?

-  Meaningful work is work that the student wants, that is related to their degree, typically because of the transactional approach that government takes to the employability of graduates with disability, any job will do.  So, to give an example, I don't think it's particularly meaningful for somebody with a degree to be doing menial work.  It does get that person off the unemployment statistic for a short while, perhaps, but it's not meaningful for the student and I think that, as with any other student, a person with a disability should have the right to aim to be, or at least to start with the idea that they can be the architect of their own career.   That's not the same as entitlements.  We're all smart in different ways and we all have capabilities and we all have limitations, and I might want to be a doctor, but I'm not smart in that way, and so, this is not an argument for entitlement other than the entitlement to be able to engage with and construct plans that progress your aspirations and help you confront your aspirations instead of being told that you belong over here.

-  We also had a question, David, about career awareness from primary school onwards, so there’s a stronger base of skills and awareness of work. That's probably a bigger question for your fellowship, but how far will you go down as far as understanding what career support advice that students with disabilities have got throughout their time?

-  My project focuses on the decisions that universities make to support their existing students.  I think further down the track, there's scope for investigating that question that you raise more specifically, but certainly, and I hope I'm not about to make people's skin crawl, because I'm not saying that we should be teaching careers education to primary school children, unless we do it in a sophisticated way, that is married with a sense of the young person's sense of the world as a fascinating place which they can explore safely and with a sense of belonging.

-  Thank you for that.  There's a few questions that we had come through around adjustments within universities. Somebody wrote, why does each university have their own policies and procedures for adjustments, and not many appear to be student centred?  I don't know if that is something that you're able to answer at this stage, Tim?

-  It's interesting.  That question has two parts to it.  The first part, there's a reason, and that is because the universities have different approaches, because the focus should be on the functional adjustment required.  The functional adjustment, in other words, it's not about this person is in a wheelchair or this person has a learning difficulty.  It is, this person is a better aural learner or this person works with better lighting in the room.  So, you focus on the functional adjustment.  Given that there are so many variables in terms of not only the person with the disability, but the institution, the actual built, social and technological infrastructure of the institution, you do need individual institutions to adopt.

The second part of the question is the critical one, this is what we want to explore.  By all means, have individual approaches to student support, but these approaches should be based upon best practice.  Best practice should be shared between the institutions.  You should not be constantly trying to re-invent the wheel.  I bet a lot of people are logged in right now and do demonstrate best practice and they're listening and saying, "I'm trying to get this information out to other sectors.”  That's what we need to work on.  That's why David and I were really eager to engage with you early so we don't run around saying you should be doing this and that, but saying this is something good that other people should be aware of.

- Thank you for that.  Looking at the time, we’re coming to the end. I will hand over to Sarah in a minute to round up the presentation and to thank our speakers.

Just before we do that, I wanted to give a plug for the next webinar for ADCET.  That will be in April on Autism Acceptance Day and it will be a student panel of students who are currently at TAFE and university studying, students on the autism spectrum.  Sarah, I’ll hand over to you to wrap this up.

-  Thank you, Darlene.  I think you will agree, that was two terrific presentations.  The engagement from the audience was phenomenal.  I'm looking at the chat at the moment, 148 people who have contributed, 149 now.  So, I'd just like to take the opportunity to thank David and Tim for a really interesting presentation on both their projects.  Again, just to flag that both David and Tim are National Centre fellows and the National Centre is funded by the Department of Education, Employment Skills and Training.  The Department is facilitating this really innovative and cutting-edge research.  For those who are not already subscribed to the newsletter, I suggest you pop on to the website and get subscribed and follow what we do here.  But thank you, David and Tim, and thank you, ADCET, for facilitating this terrific webinar and we look forward to partnering with you again in the future.

-  Thanks, Sarah, and thanks, everyone, for joining us today.  I do apologise for not managing the questions well. When there’s going to be a lot of questions, I will have someone cutting and pasting for me, but who would have thought we would have such interest.  What a great sector we work in. Have a good day, everybody.  We will chat again in April.