

Kate Cranney

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Summary

As a subject matter expert in science communication and sustainability, I synthesise and communicate complex science, broker and maintain stakeholder relations, manage projects, and connect people, ideas and organisations for positive impact. I have a track record of successfully training technical professionals to communicate their work to diverse audiences. I have 15 years' experience across research, not-for-profits, government, and academia, with a recent focus on industry partnerships with the energy sector.

Skills

Exceptional skills in communicating complex scientific content

- Skilled in developing and implementing communications strategies, identifying key messages and target audiences, and pursuing high-impact opportunities to broadcast content across multiple platforms.
- Writer: Strong experience in, and knowledge of, both internal and external communications. I've created engaging, accessible written content—including 50+ stories—for 800+ scientists working across diverse, often contentious topics, from bats to battery technology. Co-editor of CSIRO's sustainability hub, ECOS.
- Media liaison: Demonstrated success in pitching stories to journalists and building media networks. I've written 30+ issues-rich CSIRO media releases, resulting in high pick-up. A 2020 CSIRO/Microsoft/Indigenous ranger announcement about AI and turtles led to stories seen by 6M people and won a Mumbrella Award.
- Trainer: I developed and delivered storytelling and media training to 300+ scientists, including senior management, travelling to regions to deliver in-person. I received highly positive feedback on this training.
- Public Speaker: Comfortable speaking to large crowds, with an engaging presentation style. I received one of six annual, national OEH/ESA Prizes for Outstanding Outreach in Science, partly due to two Laboratory talks.
- Tech savvy: I can quickly and easily pick-up new communications techniques, tools, and technologies.

Subject matter expert on the interface of science, industry, and philanthropy

- Post-graduate qualification in science, including ecology, law, and Indigenous natural resource management.
- Solid knowledge of both Commonwealth and state environmental law and policy. I studied law while working for the Queensland government's water planning team, where I applied and amended water law/regulations.
- Wide-ranging networks across the not-for-profit, government, and science fields, in Australia and abroad. For example, I brokered relationships between government funding bodies, Torres Strait Islander rangers, university researchers and private consultants, leading to the ranger program's continued expansion.
- Coached and mentored 30+ scientists on how to talk to the media. As an example, after coaching Michael Ambrose and promoting his work, he is now ABC TV and Radio's go-to expert on energy efficient homes.
- In 2021, in recognition of 'exceptional efforts' and 'the valuable contribution made to the Corporate Affairs team' at CSIRO, I was the recipient of one of two annual Performance Cash Rewards.

Demonstrated stakeholder liaison and people management skills

- Built positive relationships with 800+ scientists. In 2021, in recognition of exceptional outcomes from my work in promoting their science, I received five extraordinary performance bonuses from internal clients.
- Demonstrated ability to identify and engage with a wide range of stakeholder groups. For example, in my work with NGO Bush Heritage, I showcased the work of farmers, philanthropists, shooters and scientists.

Excellent project management skills

- Accustomed to handling multiple tasks and tight deadlines, and to prioritising with little supervision.
- Self-starter with strong organisation skills. For instance, I led CSIRO's five-month, multifaceted social media campaign for the Apollo 11's 50th anniversary. I was the roving reporter during the open weekend event at Parkes Observatory, where 19,500 visitors toured 'the Dish'. The social media posts I created were viewed 4.1M+ times by 2.7M+ people. I also helped to facilitate the 3400+ media stories.
- On the basis of being able to deliver to tight timeframes, I was promoted to my current role with CSIRO.

Education and Training

- Master of Science with Distinction (Majors: Botany, Communication, Modelling), University of Melbourne
- Bachelor of Law (Honours) / Bachelor of Environmental Science, Griffith University

Other courses / awards include:

- 2022: Received the 'Communication of Science Award' for the CSIRO Energy division
- 2021: Received the 'Excellence in Support Award' for the CSIRO Land and Water division
- 2021: Building Cultural Competence course through the Office of Indigenous Engagement, CSIRO
- 2021: Co-founded a team to implement new Reconciliation Action Plan within Corporate Affairs, CSIRO
- 2018: Awarded one of five national fellowships, GAF Foundation, International Specialised Skills Institute
- 2017: Awarded one of six national OEH/ ESA Prizes for Outstanding Outreach in Science
- 2017: Volunteer science teacher with CSIRO's STEM Professionals in Schools program, Melbourne
- 2017: Selected to participate in Open Standards short course in Healthy Country Planning, Cape Tribulation
- 2016: Completed a Facilitation Training Course, Groupwork Institute of Australia, Melbourne
- 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010: 'Griffith University Award of Academic Excellence' (GPA above 6)

Employment

CSIRO | since 2018

Communications Advisor for the Land and Water / Energy divisions, Corporate Affairs

I deliver communication campaigns for 830+ scientists across two highly diverse CSIRO divisions: Energy, and Land and Water. I pitch stories to the media, write and edit articles, actively manage issues, and coordinate content-creation, including films and animations. I also run media and storytelling training for CSIRO scientists.

INTERNATIONAL SPECIALISED SKILLS INSTITUTE | 2018-2018

International Fellow through the George Alexander Foundation

Awarded one of five International Specialised Skills Institute fellowships. For 10 months I learned about best-practice science communications/ media from leading science organisations in Africa, Europe, Canada, and the USA. I brought that knowledge back to Australia to [foster more creativity in science communication](#).

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY | 2016-2018

Science Communicator for the Melanesia Program

I created educational materials, reports, and films for Indigenous ranger groups in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. I coordinated the week-long Nature's Leading Women workshop for 30 Indigenous women. I developed bespoke content for a high-net worth donor who funds the women ranger work in the Pacific.

BUSH HERITAGE AUSTRALIA | 2015-2016

Science communicator / Science and Conservation Systems Officer

I communicated BHA's science using engaging storytelling, film, and social media content. I was selected to be the 'reporter in the field', writing content and making films on research happening at remote locations in the Simpson Desert and Tasmania. I also reviewed monitoring reports, wrote reserve scorecards, collated scientific publications, liaised with partners on data sharing, and wrote stories for the BHA website and magazine.

RMIT UNIVERSITY | 2015-2017

Research Assistant, Centre for Urban Research

I worked as an entomologist on an insect ecology project between RMIT University and the City of Melbourne called 'Little Things That Run the City'. I also pitched, illustrated and co-wrote [a popular children's insect book](#).

TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY | 2011-2013

Project officer, Land and Sea Management Unit on Thursday Island

I managed the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) and the traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) projects. I facilitated the TEK database expansion; helped finalise new IPAs, organised community meetings, liaised with 55 rangers, coordinated management trips to remote islands, and managed contracts, budgets and reporting.

QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINES | 2007-2012

Policy Officer, Water Allocation and Planning Division

I wrote strategic policy and supporting documents, including material for two major amendments to water legislation in Queensland. I assisted planning teams, including regional staff, with complex legislative issues.

References

Available on request.