This program is engaged in a range of research projects that investigate cultural aspects of globalization in local and global forums and in cities around the world. It brings together theoretical inquiry with empirically grounded and socially engaged research. Program members use diverse methodologies in order to understand how globalization impacts upon cultural expression and how culture manifests in urban settings. Culture is understood broadly as shared webs of meaning through which we experience and interpret the world around us. Culture manifests in symbolic acts, everyday routines, identities and desires. It shapes our social relations, built environments, and relations with the non-human world. The program investigates culture through a range of social phenomena, institutions and symbolic expressions. Crucially, it examines the tensions and complexities of transnational cultural flows in terms of homogenisation, fragmentation, hybridity and commodification. Analysis is focused on urban arenas for cultural contestation and ideological dissent. The program envisages creative solutions to global challenges by encouraging long-term thinking and designing alternative global futures. This approach enables research in such areas as ethical global visions, global governance, and imaginaries of hope.

Research within the Globalization and Culture Program is clustered into three broad themes:

1. Transforming Identities & Subjectivities

This theme concerns the transformation of identities in Asian-Pacific cities through processes of globalization. Cities are nodes in vast global networks of people, governance, ideas and industry as well as distinctly local places that generate diverse responses to globalization. As the world becomes increasingly urbanised, city life shapes our sense of self in new ways. As we move between cities, we experience new modes of trans-local belonging. Accordingly, we ask how various global processes such as migration, economic development, or technological change manifest in cities and impact upon our subjectivities. This theme addresses the means through which identities are shaped and contested, from modes of governmentality to forms of artistic expression. The ideologically induced transformation of citizens into neoliberal subjects constitutes one potential area of inquiry. Of equal interest are the social movements and cultural currents that resist subordination to hegemonic norms and enact alternative subjectivities.

2. Culture and Ideology

Key questions in this research theme include: what is the relationship between globalization, culture and ideology? How do social imaginaries, narratives, metaphors, symbols and myths contribute to ideological change? How do language and space intersect in the cultural milieus of Asian-Pacific cities? Hierarchies based on sharp distinctions between local, national, regional and global scales no longer hold in the global age. Established boundaries are defended, erased, or redrawn. Consequently, we investigate the transformation of our conventional cultural-spatial frameworks into multi-directional constellations and multi-nodal networks. The shifting grounds of discourse emerging in advance of clearly articulated ideological platforms are also key sites of inquiry. This theme recognises cities as principal hubs for the construction, dissemination and contestation of cultural and ideological discourse.

3. Material Cultures

This theme approaches material culture as an expression of the critical disputes and tensions characterising globalization and global cities. We investigate the conditions for the creation of new cultural spaces and the role of technology in cultural production. How do text and image, art and performance, media and communication combine to construct new cultural forms? Potential areas
of investigation include critical analyses of art-works, urban screens, advertising, global-branding, media representations and alternative forms of communication.

CALL FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS FOR 2010.

The Globalization and Culture Program invites applications for research funding for 2010 in one of two areas:
- financial support for the submission of substantial grant applications (Categories 1-4). Grant applications must be submitted by end 2010.
- financial support for research activity leading to high-level publications. Publications must appear or be accepted by the publisher by the end of 2010.

Individuals may apply for up to $5000 and groups for up to $12 000. Applications should be submitted as an attachment to anne.mcnevin@rmit.edu.au by 30 September 2009.

Applications should be 1-2 pages in length and address the following:

1. An outline of the grant or research activity for which funding is sought including project methodology.
2. A statement on how the grant project or research activity addresses one or more of the themes of the program (see reverse)
3. The sum of money you are applying for and a brief budget for how you will spend it.
4. A list of concrete outcomes (publications and/or grants to be submitted and a timeline for doing so).

If you are successful you will be required to provide a brief report (1 page) at the completion of the research activity.

PLEASE NOTE:

Globalization and Culture is one of six programs within the Global Cities Research Institute (GCRI) GCRI is one of four University-wide research Institutes (the others are: Design Research Institute, Health Innovations Research Institute and Platform Technologies Research Institute). Globalization and Culture is allocated funding from the University on the basis of its research outcomes (publications and research grant income). It is therefore essential that any research outcomes arising from program funding are attributed to the program. This means that if you are awarded funding from Globalization and Culture you MUST identify yourself as a member of the Program (and hence of the GCI) and you MUST attribute your outcomes to this AND ONLY this program.

At present, the University’s reporting mechanisms do not allow you to split your total research outcomes for the year across different programs within the GCI, nor across different research institutes. For example, let's say your total research output for the year is two publications and that Globalization and Culture provided you with financial support for one of these publications. You cannot attribute one of your publications to Globalization and Culture and the other publication to Human Security. Nor can you attribute one of your publications to Globalization and Culture (and hence the GCI) and one of your publications to the Design Institute. In other words, accepting funding from Globalization and Culture implies that ALL of your research outcomes (publications AND income from grants) over the year will be attributed to Globalization and Culture EXCLUSIVELY. This means you must make a decision about which Institute and Program you want to belong to.