

Yoland Wadsworth – 2022 Bio profile

Key career foci (1972-2022)

Action & practice-based co-inquiry, social research, evaluation, research design/methodology, theory-development, strategic change, systemic improvement
Transdisciplinary meta-epistemology of human inquiry for living systems

Profile:

Pioneer in Australia over 42 years of field-based critical interpretive methodology, participatory action research, complex systems thinking, developmental and dialogic evaluation; in government, non government organisations and community settings; across a wide range of health and human services. National and international reputation for high quality leading-edge research theory and methodology, original thinking, writing, consultancy & co-inquiry facilitation

Highlights:

Author of Australia's best-selling social research and evaluation methods books: *Do It Yourself Social Research* and *Everyday Evaluation on the Run*, 3rd editions 2011 (58,000+ copies), and *Building in Research and Evaluation: Human Inquiry for Living Systems* 2010 (2012 runner-up Outstanding Book of the Year Award American Educational Research Association Qualitative SIG) Allen & Unwin Australia/Asia, Routledge/Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, Calif. worldwide

Appointed judge, Australasian Evaluation Society national Awards Committee (2010, 2012, 2013, 2014)

Elected a Fellow of the Australasian Evaluation Society (FAES) (2007)

Recipient of the Australasian Evaluation Society's ET&S Award for an 'outstanding contribution to evaluation in Australia' (1996)

Recipient of the AES National Policy & Systems Award for the NEAR (Narrative Evaluation Action Research) organisational capacity building project for integrated health promotion (with Karen Goltz, Department of Human Services and Ani Wierenga and Gai Wilson, University of Melbourne) (2007)

President of the international Action Learning, Action Research & Process Management Association (2001-2004)

Distinguished Fellow, Action Research Center, University of Cincinnati (2009-)

Faculty Partner, Relational Coordination Research Collaboration, Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University, (2013-2016)

Churchill Fellow (USA/UK) 'Building in Practice Research and Evaluation to Community Services' (1995)

Recipient of the Australia and New Zealand Mental Health Services Gold award for a Partnerships project (the U&I research team VMIAC, the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Victorian Department of Human Services, Mental Health Branch); and of the AES Caulley-Tulloch Prize for Pioneering Evaluation Literature (with Maggie McGuinness and Merinda Epstein) for 'Understanding, Anytime' and 'Understanding & Involvement - Consumer Evaluation of Acute Psychiatric Hospital Practice' (1995-1997)

Invited keynote papers to ALARA World Congresses and CARN International conference for action research: 2012 Kent UK, 2010 Melbourne, 2006 Groningen, The Netherlands

Qualifications & working career:

PhD (by research) Monash University 1985

BA (Sociology & History) Monash University 1972

Early career (1970s)

State and local Government (state-wide reviews, community research and program evaluation) in early childhood, family, women's, community-based service development

Mid-career (1980s)

Teaching and workshop facilitation, doctoral studies, epistemology/ theory of methodology, State government policy development (children's, health and community services), policy monitoring (all portfolios); national profile, evaluation and research consultancy; community health and welfare, disability services and deinstitutionalisation.

Recent career (1990-2000s)

Research resource development (projects, theory/writing, teaching/networks, publishing, consultancy, consumer participation); complex 'whole systems' research and culture change projects; mental health services, hospital QI practice, education, welfare settings research; overseas study/work tours, international profile, academic action research programs.

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Current career

Writing/publishing, small group Q&As and consulting re living systems meta-epistemology

Positions held

Hon. Senior Strategic Research Adviser (D4)

Centre of Excellence in Innovation & Prevention Science, Melbourne (2012-15)

Adj Professor & CI (D4) Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University (2008-)

Hon. A/Professor & Principal Research Fellow (D3), Centre for Health Equity, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health (2014-), McCaughey VicHealth Centre for Community Wellbeing (2008-13) and Youth Research Centre (2006-08), University of Melbourne

Adj Professor & Program Convenor (D2), Action Research Program, Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University of Technology (2001-06)

Visiting Fellow (SRF3) & Public Health Resident (D1) National Centre Epidemiology & Population Health, Australian National University (1990-01, 2003-05)

Senior Project Officer (SRF3) VicHealth (2001) *Co-ordinator & Projects Manager*, Action Research Issues Unit & *Senior Academic Associate*, Dept of Social Inquiry & Community Services (2000-01) and

Research Fellow, Psychology Dept, Victoria University of Technology (1996-2000) incl. *Visiting Ass Professor*, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia (1998)

Churchill Fellow (1995)

Design Consultant & Chief Investigator, Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (1987-89, 1990-92, 1993-1996)

Co-ordinator & Projects Manager, Action Research Issues Centre (1988-2001)

Senior Policy Adviser and Deputy to the Director, Policy & Research Branch, Department of Premier & Cabinet (1985-8)

Project officer & Consultant, VCOSS, State & local governments, NGOs (1976-1984)

Research Director, Melbourne City Council (1978-1979), *Research Director* RANF (1979)

Research Sociologist, Department of Health, Victoria (1972-78)

Key skills and experience

Research & evaluation innovation

- Participatory/collaborative methods
- Data collection techniques

- Design, Questions/sequencing
- Stakeholder & Stakeowner engagement
- Reflection and meaning-making
- Theorisation/analysis/sense-making
- Identifying implications for new practice/generative discovery
- Co-construction of knowledge
- Culture change/innovation
- Organisational change/development
- Integrated service development
- Quality improvement (QI-QA) cycle

Specialist substantive experience

Community health/Health promotion
Mental health services
Nursing services
General hospitals
Early childhood services
Family and community services
Community arts/cultural development
Community/capacity building
Community/consumer participation
Local, state and federal government
Disability services
Non government organisations
Communities-of-interest/self-help groups

Methodologies & techniques

- ‘Whole systems’/systemic research
- Inquiry group facilitation
- Strategic questioning
- Dialogue/multilogue
- Workshop/group facilitation
- Strategic knowledge-development
- In depth interviewing
- Questionnaire and survey design
- Memory work
- Co-generative thinking
- Appreciative inquiry
- Use of MBTI® (accredited)
- Meta-consultancy/train-the-trainer



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