



Member in profile

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Professor Chris Gibson

Chris Gibson's life in geography began as a small child, when he would stay awake in bed, torch in hand, flicking through the pages of an Atlas imagining distant places, rivers and mountain ranges. Successive outstanding geography teachers at Penrith High School helped seal the deal, so when he began a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, Chris inevitably signed up for a major in geography. He graduated from there with First Class Honours and the University Medal in 1995, and followed that with a PhD in Human Geography, again at the University of Sydney. Chris' PhD thesis combined his passion for geography with an equally engrossing passion for music, writing a thesis on the linkages and tensions between regional music scenes deeply embedded in local culture, and an increasingly globalised, and corporatised, music industry. Parts of that thesis became his first book, *Sound Tracks*, co-written with his supervisor John Connell, the first in a series of co-authored books on the relationship between music, place, economy and culture, culminating in their latest, *Outback Elvis: The Story of a Festival, Its Fans, & and Town Called Parkes*. After a stint as Lecturer in Geography at the University of New South Wales, Chris took up a post at the University of Wollongong, where he was instrumental in expanding the presence and visibility of geography, attracting research funding, staff and resources, and with Professor Lesley Head co-founding the Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research, for which he was Deputy Director between 2009-2013. Since 2013 Chris has occupied the role of Executive Director for the University of Wollongong, leading their Global Challenges interdisciplinary research program. Chris has been an active member of the Geographical Society since 2001, with stints on the Council, as Secretary, and as Chair of the Marketing Committee. Chris was awarded a Fellowship with the Society in 2016. Chris is currently Editor of the Society's academic journal, *Australian Geographer*, a role which has involved the redesign of the journal and the introduction of online submissions and social media marketing.

