



PROGRAM HANDBOOK

“The Observership Program is in my opinion an outstanding way for the future directors of all levels of Australian business to gain experience in what to do and indeed what not to do around the board table.”

David Gonski AC (Patron, The Observership Program)

VICTORIA 2025

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Observership Program acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging. We also accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart to walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Observership Program is committed to ensuring accessibility for people with disability. We will continue to work to improve the user experience for everyone and increase the accessibility of our Program using the relevant accessibility standards.



CONGRATULATIONS

WELCOME TO THE 2025 OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM

Congratulations on being selected for The Observership Program and welcome to a community of emerging leaders who are shaping Australia’s future through more diverse and representative boardrooms. Through your involvement in the Program, you’ll gain firsthand board experience and develop practical governance capabilities that will open pathways to future leadership roles and allow you to make meaningful contributions to Australian boardrooms.

This guide has been developed to provide information to help you prepare for the journey that awaits and to ensure that your experience is rewarding and enriching.

We trust the year ahead will be an exciting and rewarding journey.


JONATHAN GAVSHON
Founder and Chair


CATHERINE REISER
Director, The Observership Program, Victoria

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since 2014, The Observership Program has connected talented and accomplished individuals from diverse backgrounds with boards seeking fresh perspectives and contemporary skills. Through structured 12-month placements, the Program cultivates emerging leaders while enabling boards to benefit from next-generation thinking.

More than 1,400 Observers have gained valuable boardroom experience across 380 organisations throughout Australia. Starting in Sydney, the Program expanded to Victoria in 2017 and Brisbane in 2022.

GENERAL INFORMATION

THE PROGRAM RUNS FEBRUARY – DECEMBER 2025

Participation in The Program requires you to attend all training sessions, board and subcommittee meetings. You are an ambassador for The Observership Program and failure to demonstrate adequate commitment jeopardises opportunities for future candidates and participating boards.

Please confirm all board meetings and other key dates directly with your organisation and diarise meetings accordingly.

Please notify your employer of your participation in The Program to ensure their support when leaving the office early to attend training sessions or board meetings.

Your placement as an Observer will conclude at the beginning of December 2025 or with your attendance at your organisation's final board meeting for 2025. At the end of The Program, The Observership Program will liaise with each organisation regarding the placement of a new Observer for 2026, so any further involvement with your organisation will be based on mutual agreement and outside of the formal Program.

BOARD LIAISON

Each participating board is asked to identify a Board Liaison/ contact who is responsible for being the point of contact for the Observer and for The Observership Program. If your board has not identified one for you before your first board meeting, please contact your Program Director.

Please contact your Board Liaison/ contact with any questions about serving as an Observer on the board, including details for board meetings, board expectations of their Observer, behaviour in meetings and board culture. For further information about effective engagement with your Board Liaison, please refer to the starter information and video.

“The pay-offs of this program are enormous. Not for profits need access to ready-made board members and like every organisation, they need diversity around their tables. Within that, they need wise younger heads alongside wise older heads so the sector will prosper and beneficiaries of this training and experience will profit...and the skills that they acquire will be taken into their careers, further board appointments and volunteering, as a win for the broader community.”

The Honourable Linda Dessau AV CVO, Former Governor of Victoria



PREPARATION FOR PROGRAM COMMENCEMENT

Prior to your first board meeting or The Observership Program's first session, whichever occurs earlier, please make sure you have completed the following:

1. Police Check: Provided your proof of identity documents, uploaded your consent form and completed the online form following notification provided by The Program.
2. Familiarised yourself with the confidentiality terms of The Program.
3. Diarised all board meetings and training sessions for the year.
4. Informed your board Chair/Board Liaison of any conflicts regarding board meetings.
5. Informed The Program of any extenuating circumstances preventing attendance at any training session.

If a board meeting and training session are scheduled for the same time, please inform The Program and your board contact. In case of this conflict, while the final decision will be yours to make with your board, The Program recommends attending the board meeting. Please feel free to discuss with Catherine Reiser, Director, The Observership Program, Victoria



2024 Observer cohort with Catherine Reiser, Director and Jeena Fernando, Operations Lead, Victoria.

FOR OBSERVERS EXPECTATION AND ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:

- High level training for not-for-profit directors delivered by partners including the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) and The Ethics Centre as part of a program that includes networking sessions with high profile guest speakers and alumni.
- A year-long program to build your experience and confidence in serving on a not-for-profit board or government board.
- Access to experienced board directors from both the not-for-profit, government and for-profit sectors.
- Possible involvement in a strategic project or board subcommittee.
- Networking opportunities with fellow observers and alumni in the Program. The Observership Program will connect you with the previous year's observer on your organisation's board.
- A rewarding professional development experience that facilitates your contribution to society in a meaningful way.

Establishing open and direct communication early on with your Board Liaison/ contact is the key to a successful Observership. Take responsibility for asking questions, clarifying expectations on both sides and in the event of any issues arising or advice needed, please contact your Program Director.

NEED TO KNOW:

- Discussions that occur at board meetings are confidential. It is essential that Observers understand and respect this confidentiality. As part of your application to The Observership Program you accepted a confidentiality agreement and it is essential that you abide by the terms of this agreement.
- Please handle your role with sensitivity and only speak if either the Chair invites you to contribute or if it becomes clear that your opinion is welcome in general boardroom discussion. We encourage you to check in with the Chair or your board contact person prior to your first board meeting to discuss expectations, content and delivery of your contributions.
- Your presence at board meetings is at the discretion of the Chair. There are some circumstances where it will not be appropriate for you to attend or participate in a board meeting or discussion. We have agreed with each Chair that in certain circumstances, the Observer may be asked to leave. Please handle this request sensitively.
- We encourage you to ask the Chair or board secretary to minute that you are attending each meeting by invitation in the capacity of Observer.
- Do NOT vote in any voting matters even if asked to do so by the Chair.
- Make it clear in all dealings that you are an Observer. For example, it is recommended that when contributing to discussions you highlight your role in the following way: "In my capacity as Observer, I think that..."
- While being offered a formal board position at the conclusion of The Program can happen, it is not a pre-requisite for not-for-profit or government board participation in The Program and should not be an expectation of Observers.
- Our training course is designed to provide an overview of the key topics relevant to board governance, as part of a combined experience of the theory and practice of board directorship. AICD runs more in-depth courses for those interested.

“My time as an Observer was one of the most productive professional development experiences I have ever had. The ability to gain an insight into a Board operation and to be so well looked after and mentored by The Chair will absolutely stay with me as I progress professionally.”

Tara Prowse, Observer, Victorian Program



PLEASE CONTACT US IF:

- You are having trouble fulfilling your obligations to attend training and/or board meetings
- There is anything untoward, including inappropriate behaviour that occurs at your meetings that is cause for concern
- You are being asked to excuse yourself from meetings on a frequent basis
- You are not receiving a full set of materials
- You have any general concerns about your participation

We will treat the matter with utmost confidentiality and contact the organisation on your behalf to resolve these matters if appropriate.

FEEDBACK

Throughout the year we will be conducting feedback via online surveys, during the training sessions and via scheduled feedback calls to check your Observership is on track. We appreciate your provision of any feedback requested in the specified time. Your feedback is critical for the future success of The Program. We will do the same with the participating organisations.

We also encourage you to contact us directly with any specific feedback or questions you have at any time throughout the year.

Catherine Reiser, Director, The Observership Program, Victoria



“The training program was fantastic, and I have been highly recommending it to friends and colleagues. The content was relevant and timely and enhanced the board observation. The training has also been relevant for my day job and provided me with a new perspective and approaches to consider in my work.”

Evelyn Du Mont, Observer, Victorian Program

KEY DETAILS

The training program consists of eleven sessions throughout the year, including the launch event. In-person CBD sessions run from 6:00pm to 8:30pm (arrival from 5:30pm), while online sessions are 90 minutes, starting at 6:00pm.

Training sessions encompass key subject areas essential for not-for-profit governance, including:

- Directors' duties and responsibilities;
- Finance;
- Strategy;
- Risk;
- Ethics; and
- Theory of Change

Guest speakers with significant board experience on not-for-profit, government and for-profit boards are invited to share personal and professional insights with Observers at training sessions.

All sessions are **MANDATORY**. A Certificate of Attendance will be provided to those Observers who complete the training program in full.

If due to extenuating circumstances, Observers are unable to attend any of the sessions please contact us. This includes arriving late or leaving early. Access to the training venues after hours can be restricted so latecomers will not always be able to enter easily.

We will send you details of all training sessions and notify you of any changes. Special events will be communicated separately.

“It is the theoretical, tailored training component, added to the practical experience of sitting on a board as an Observer for a year that makes The Observership Program unique in this country.”

Cathy Robinson, CEO,
The Observership Program

OUR TRAINING PARTNER (AICD)

AICD develops the content and materials for The Observership Program training sessions and provides expert facilitators.

AICD's purpose is to strengthen society through world class governance and to be the independent and trusted voice of governance.

Where available, links to webinars and other course materials will be distributed via AICD's database.

AICD contributes to The Observership Program as a Strategic Partner.

AICD's principal activities include:

- Education;
- Conducting professional development programs and events for boards and directors;
- Producing publications on director and governance issues; and
- Developing and promoting policies on issues of interest to directors.

The AICD has more than 51,000 members. Members include directors from such diverse organisations as ASX-listed companies, government bodies, not-for-profit organisations, public sector entities, family-owned/private companies and entrepreneurial ventures.

To find out more about the AICD, visit www.aicd.com.au



Naomi Edwards FAICD, Chair, AICD

OUR TRAINING PARTNER (THE ETHICS CENTRE)

The Ethics Centre is proud to contribute to The Observership Program as a Strategic Partner and a provider of specialist ethics training for the Observer cohort. The Ethics Centre is a non-profit organisation founded 30 years ago to raise the ethical standards of Australian business. The organisation has grown to encompass a broad spectrum of activities including consulting, education and training, counselling, thought leadership and major events. They've provided ethics tools and training to the military, primary schools, trade unions and non-profits. Many of Australia's largest companies have called on The Ethics Centre for specialist advice and insights.

For the past decade, The Ethics Centre has presented the popular IQ2 debate series and the internationally renowned *Festival of Dangerous Ideas*. The Ethics Centre operates Ethicall – a free helpline available to anyone struggling with an ethical dilemma – and they recently launched a new corporate membership program, The Ethics Alliance. To find out more about The Ethics Centre, visit www.ethics.org.au



VICTORIA 2025 TRAINING TIMETABLE

Timing for our training sessions are below: (Except for the Launch event)
IN PERSON SESSIONS: 5.30pm arrival for networking and light refreshments for a 6.00pm start. Session concludes at 8.30pm, unless advised otherwise
ONLINE SESSIONS: Log in at 5.50pm for a 6.00pm start. Session concludes at 7.30pm

DATE	TOPIC	LOCATION	GUEST SPEAKER / FACILITATOR
TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY	2025 Program Launch Event	The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), St Kilda Road	Ro Allen, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner
EARLY MARCH (TBC)	Networking Session	Melbourne CBD	Catherine Reiser, Director, Victorian Program
WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH	AICD Duties and Responsibilities for NFP Directors	Online session	Trent Bartlett, AICD Facilitator
WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL	AICD Finance for	Online session	Roslyn Jackson, AICD Facilitator
WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL	AICD Strategy for NFP Directors	Online Session	Rosina Hislop, AICD Facilitator
WEDNESDAY 7 MAY	AICD Risk for NFP Directors	Online session	Nic Carr, AICD Facilitator
LATE MAY (TBC)	AICD Q & A Session NFP Director	Melbourne CBD	Panel of Directors
THURSDAY 12 JUNE	Ethics in Governance	Online session	Dr Simon Longstaff AO, Executive Director, The Ethics Centre
WEDNESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER	Theory of Change and Leadership	Melbourne CBD	Elise Sernik and Barbara Barkley, Leadership Space
LATE OCTOBER (TBC)	Next Steps to Board Directorship and Networking	Melbourne CBD	Panel of Alumni
EARLY DEC (TBC)	End of Year Networking event with Guest Speaker	Melbourne CBD	Guest Speaker TBC

NOTE: Final date and venue confirmation will be provided prior to each session

THANK YOU

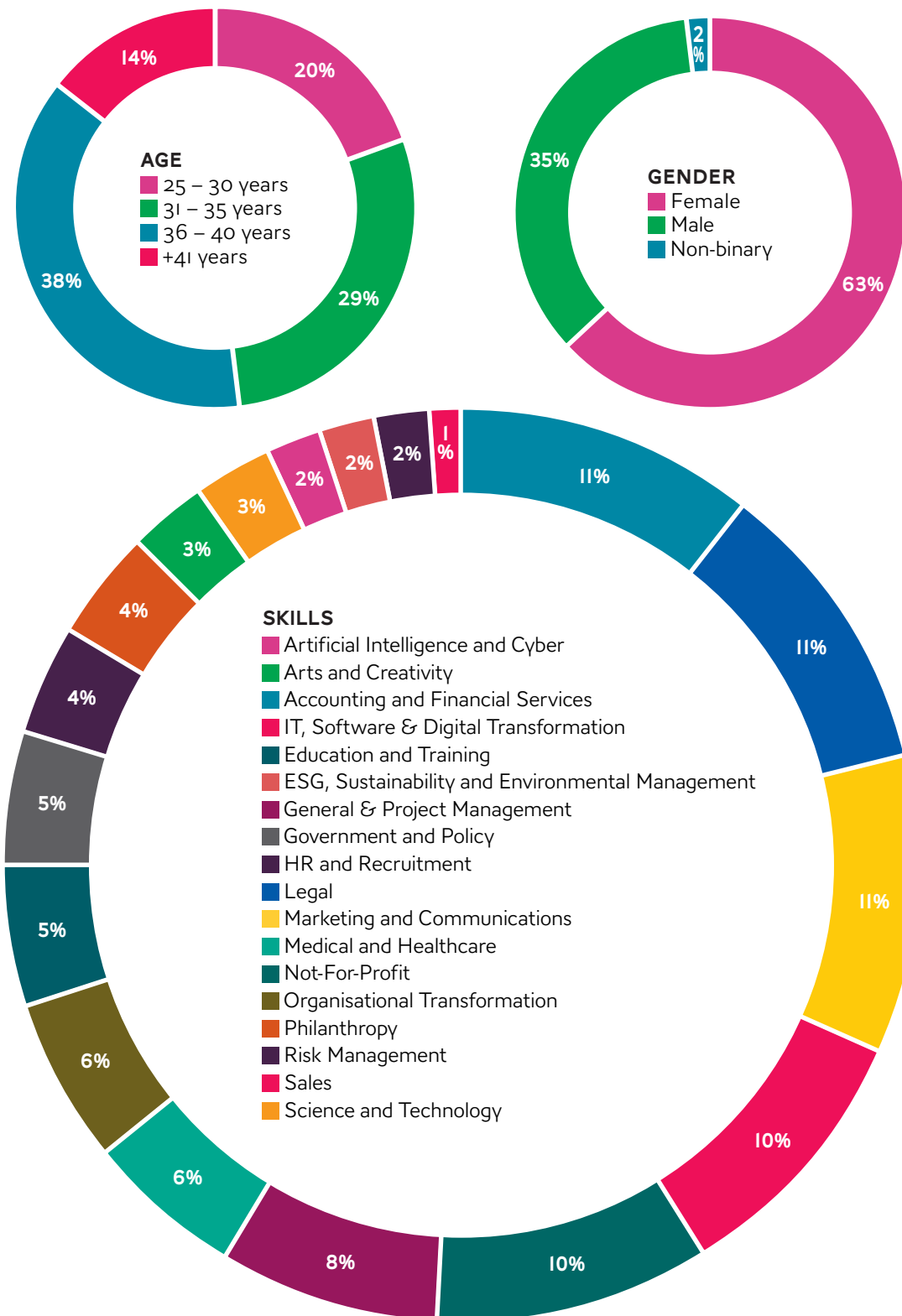
The Observership Program relies on the generosity and support of our network for every aspect of our work: current and former Observers; company directors, philanthropists, foundations, businesses, not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises who share our commitment to create a passionate, motivated and diverse community of future leaders.

PROGRAM ALUMNI	COMPANY DIRECTORS; PHILANTHROPISTS; SOCIAL ENTERPRISES GUEST SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS	NOT-FOR-PROFITS; BUSINESSES; GOVERNMENT HOSTING PROGRAM TRAINING & EVENTS	VIDEO CONTRIBUTORS
Ronny Andrade Parra (Accessibility Advisory Committee) Nadina Brockhurst Sonia Clarke Victoria Crane Paul Devlin Ibrahim Elsoukmani (Accessibility Advisory Committee) Andrea Fernandez Justin Greenstein Kim Groizard (Accessibility Advisory Committee) Imran Khan Lotti O'Dea Laura Parr Giselle Pinto Anna Pitt Tahj Richardson Chris Sequeira Glenn Turnham Duean White (First People's Consultant)	Ro Allen Tasneem Chopra The Honourable Linda Dessau AV CVO, Former Governor of Victoria Kathryn Fagg AO Claudia Fatone Dennis Goldner AM Janet Matton AM Leonie Morgan AM Lucinda Nolan Llewellyn Prain Morgana Ryan Joseph Skrzynski AO Mike Sum Helga Svendsen Helen Szoke AO Michael Ullmer AO Moana Weir Kee Wong	Deloitte Australia Government House, Victoria Koorie Heritage Trust Microsoft Australia National Gallery of Victoria PwC Australia Quin & Lina Scalzo, Foods and Family Investment Trust	Dr Ronny Andrade Parra Nikita Bennett Lucy Duncan Jacob Gabriel Moana Leilua Wambui Migwe Tahj Richardson Chris Sequeira Callum Steele



2025 OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM – A SNAPSHOT

THERE ARE 112 OBSERVERS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.
A BREAKDOWN OF THE PROFILE OF THE COHORT IS BELOW.



STRATEGIC PARTNERS

AUSTRALIAN
INSTITUTE
of COMPANY
DIRECTORS



SUPPORTED THROUGH PHILANTHROPIC FUNDING, THE OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM AND AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY NETWORK ARE IN PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT OBSERVERS WITH DISABILITY TO DRIVE GREATER REPRESENTATION ON BOARDS.

CORPORATE PARTNERS



GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



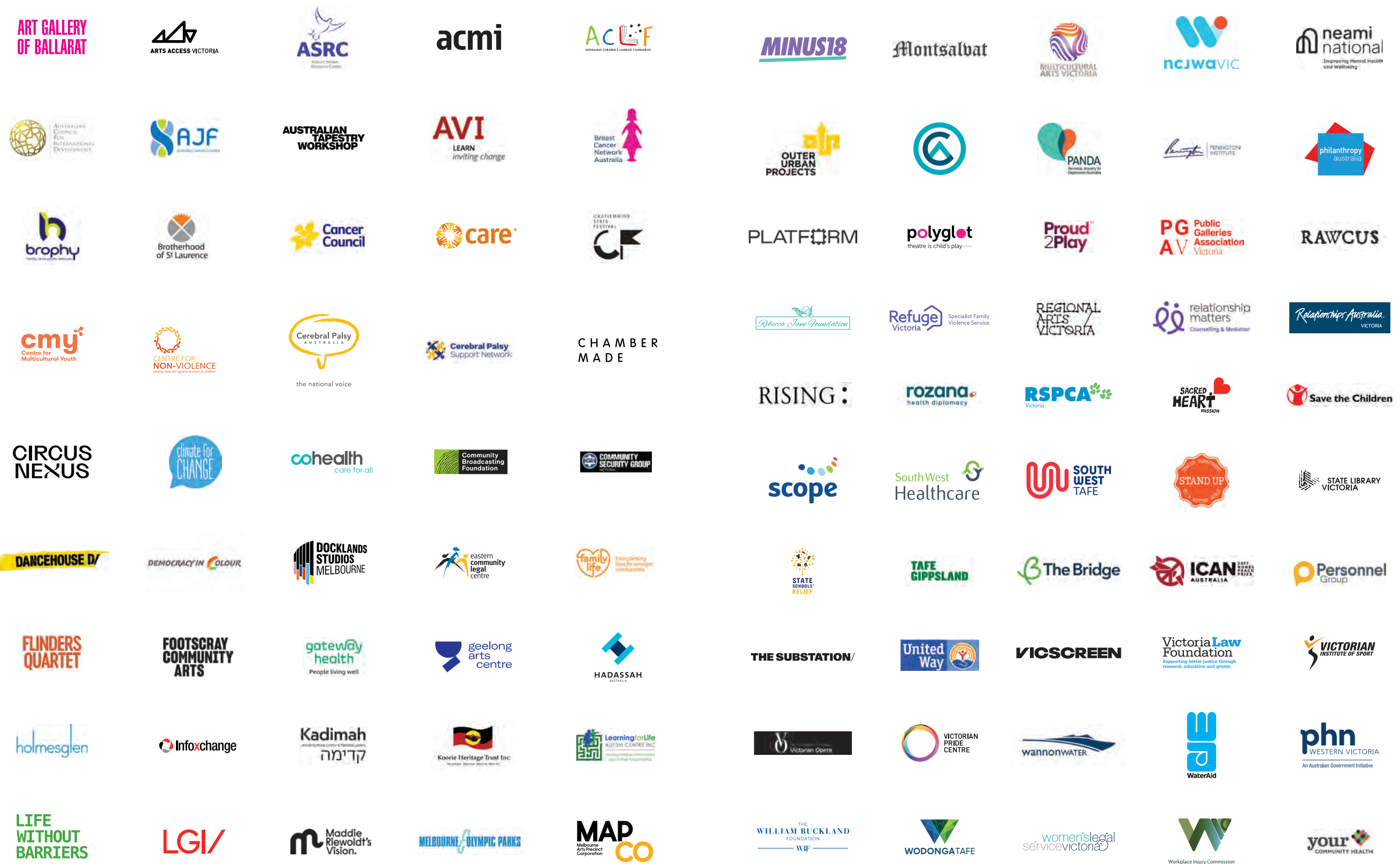
PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE PHILANTHROPIC FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM'S PATHWAYS TO BOARD DIRECTORSHIP INITIATIVE TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES INTO BOARD ROLES.

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE SKRZYNSKI FOUNDATION'S SUPPORT FOR THE ALUMNI AND BOARD SEARCH PROGRAMS.

PARTICIPATING BOARDS

THERE ARE 100 NOT-FOR-PROFIT AND GOVERNMENT APPOINTED BOARDS PARTICIPATING IN THE 2025 PROGRAM.





FOR NOT FOR PROFITS/ GOVERNMENT BOARDS

We are delighted to be working with you for the 2025 Program. This information is intended as a helpful summary of what's involved for a board participating in The Program. It also offers ways of maximising the value of participation for organisations and extending learning and development for Observers based on the experiences of boards participating in The Program over a number of years. We hope you find it useful.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

- Organisations are paired with Observers for a 12-month period. Observers are selected and carefully matched with organisations, based on nominated skills, profiles and interests.
- The Observership begins with the first board meeting of 2025 and finishes with the last.
- As part of the application, Observers agree to the Program's confidentiality terms. Organisations are at liberty to request a copy of the terms and/or to ask Observers to sign the organisation's own confidentiality agreement.
- All Observers undergo a Police Check, and are advised that organisations may require additional screening such as Working with Children Checks.
- During the Observership year, organisations facilitate Observers attending all board and any relevant subcommittee meetings as non-voting members so they can both contribute and learn about fundamental principles and functions of boards, the role of board members, the decision-making process and governance priorities.
- Where board meetings move between cities and or countries and board members are supported to attend these meetings in-person, we request that Observer attendance is facilitated and supported by the host organisations.
- Observers participate in a training program alongside their board Observership. AICD facilitates four sessions and The Ethics Centre, one session. Further training sessions are facilitated by The Program and feature keynote speakers. Opportunities for networking among Observers and peer-to-peer learning are provided via the in-person sessions. All training sessions are mandatory. Please refer to page 10 for an outline of the training program.

HINTS FOR ENGAGING OBSERVERS

Here are some examples of best practice and ways boards and Observers can maximise their contribution and governance learning throughout the Observership year.

- The Chair/Board Liaison meets their Observer prior to the first board meeting to induct the Observer into the organisation and the operations of the board;
 - If a board induction pack is available, do share with the Observer. A formal or informal induction, advising on both your board culture and expectations of your Observer's participation in meetings prior to the first board meeting is essential for learning and engagement;
 - Please discuss areas of potential contribution either prior to, or in the early stages of the Observership to set expectations and lay the foundations for the best possible Observership experience for all parties;
 - Joining a sub-committee and/or special strategic project at the beginning of the year provides an opportunity for the Observer to engage with meaningful work undertaken by the board and supports their engagement with and contribution to the organisation.

- It is at the board's discretion to solicit input from the Observers during meetings. All Observers are briefed to contribute once invited to do so on the terms provided by the organisation. These could include:
 - As and when invited to do so by the Chair;
 - As and when the Observer feels they have something to offer;
 - Some boards set aside time at the end of the meeting for the Observer to reflect on discussions and to share perspectives.

THE PROGRAM STIPULATES THAT:

- Board minutes note that Observers are present in the capacity as Observers and not as directors. When a vote is taken, please make clear that Observers do not vote;
- Where a training session clashes with a board meeting, Observers are advised to prioritise Board meetings;
- Feedback calls with Observers take place early in the Program cycle to check everything is on track;
- A call will be scheduled with the Board Liaison for feedback on your Observer and to ascertain ongoing participation of your board in the next year's Program;
- Board Liaisons are asked to contact The Program if any issues arise, including any non-attendance other than due to extenuating circumstances for which an apology is received.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:

- Participate in developing the next generation of leaders in the not-for-profit and government board sectors;
- Inject a younger, diverse perspective into the boardroom;
- Looking at the year ahead, strategically select an Observer with a particular skill set eg: new technology, data analytics, digital marketing/communications, social media, law, finance, government policy etc. to assist with specific areas of board work;
- Engage through the "matching process" with a diverse pool of emerging leaders with a view to addressing any areas of board underrepresentation;
- Involve your Observer in a hands-on strategic project to deliver concrete benefits to the organisation;
- Invite your Observer to contribute in areas relating to their skill set through subcommittee involvement;
- Strengthen your board renewal strategy with no ongoing commitment to retain the Observer at the end of the 12-month Program;
- Retain the option to invite your Observer to join the board at the end of the 12-month period and/or invite them to stay on in an advisory or voluntary capacity;
- Recruit from the Program's 1,400+ alumni pool who are actively seeking ongoing and meaningful engagement with the not-for-profit and government board sectors;
- Use The Program as a tool to develop the organisation's own leadership stream by encouraging emerging leaders from within the organisation to apply to be placed with other not-for-profit boards.

Please contact:

DIRECTOR, THE OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM, VICTORIA:
CATHERINE REISER

Email: catherine.reiser@observership.com.au

OBSERVER PROFILES



JEREMY ABBOTT KOORIE HERITAGE TRUST

Jeremy is Director and majority Indigenous owner of InteriorCo RBA, a business delivering world class products and services to the commercial interiors market. With 18 years in corporate Australia, his expertise spans growth, strategy, partnerships, and marketing across diverse sectors including roles at the West Coast Eagles, AFL and Village Roadshow. A proud Aboriginal man of the Pini people, Jeremy advocates for our future Indigenous leaders and businesses. He serves on the Polly Farmer Foundation board and Bayside Council RAP Advisory Committee. Jeremy has a Bachelor of Business, Marketing and Sport Management and enjoys family time, travel, and weekend sports.



SABINA AHMED MULTICULTURAL ARTS VICTORIA

Sabina is an investment professional with extensive experience in asset management, throughout emerging and developed markets. Her biggest achievement is becoming the first female portfolio manager in Pakistan's asset management sector. Sabina is dedicated to leveraging her diverse background to drive strategic initiatives and impact. She is passionate about advancing gender and ethnic diversity, actively supporting various mentorship programs. Sabina's commitment portfolio construction has led her to design impactful investment frameworks across various asset classes. Outside of her professional life, Sabina is involved in community engagement to uplift diverse communities. Her interests include the arts and learning about new cultures.



NKECHI ANELE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MUSIC OFFICE / APRA AMCOS

Nkechi Anele is a Nigerian-Irish artist based in Naarm (Melbourne). Known for her soulful performances with Saskwatch, she has toured major music festivals globally. Beyond music, Nkechi has made significant contributions to Australian culture. She co-founded The Pin, a platform exploring race, identity, and culture, hosted Roots N' All on Triple J radio, and was elected for a second term to Music Victoria's Board. Working on stage, screen, and page, with notable roles in productions like Caroline, or Change and Rare Birds. In 2024, Nkechi returned to the Naarm music scene with Owelu Dreamhouse, a psychedelic, afro-cinematic soul jazz collective poised to take the festival circuit by storm in 2025.



MELISSA ANTO MELBOURNE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Melissa is an Associate Director at NAB, currently working on a digital transformation project. She has broad experience working across risk, product, and project management. Melissa is committed to formulating and implementing solutions for complex enterprise issues in ambiguous and challenging environments. Melissa is a CPA and holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) and Bachelor of Finance from the University of Adelaide. In her spare time, Melissa enjoys exploring new countries and cultures, eating good food, hiking and pilates.



SUNNY BAHUGUNA NEAMI NATIONAL

Sunny is a commercial business generalist with extensive experience across large corporations, technology and government sectors. He started his career in management consulting at EY, moved to product and growth-related roles with SEEK Group, and is a leader in the corporate strategy team at Australia Post. Outside of work, he hosts a men's mental health podcast, "Bottled Up", sharing the lived experience of men in the hope of inspiring others. He is particularly passionate about health and youth, enjoys challenging hikes and a strong coffee. Sunny holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne.



ALEX BALSILLIE AUSTRALIAN TAPESTRY WORKSHOP

Alex has a background in finance, with experience in relationship building and impact assessment across the private and non-profit sectors. A philanthropy specialist with a passion for community-led initiatives and social change, Alex enjoys facilitating collaborative funding projects and participating in philanthropic networks such as Community Foundations Australia and the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network. Alex currently sits on the Board and Fundraising Subcommittee of a youth-led non-profit, providing strategic fundraising advice with a focus on building capacity for grassroots movements. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne and has recently commenced her Master of Financial Technology. Alex lives and works on Wurundjeri Country.



SHIVAA BARDOLIA PUBLIC GALLERIES ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Shivaan is a Director at Yamagigu Consulting. Prior to this Shivaan held executive positions in the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) leading economic development initiatives with a focus on inclusive economic growth and recovery. Shivaan has extensive experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, organisations and communities across Australia. He has advised Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, major corporations and not-for-profits to enhance policy design and implementation, and to maximise social impact.



STACEY BARNES SOUTH WEST TAFE

Known for her infectious energy and passion for regional communities, Stacey has public, private and non-profit sector experience largely within arts & culture, tourism, economic development & events. In local government Stacey built community capacity and grew the visitor economy through events, also representing the Grampians as a Business Events Victoria board member. She led marketing and communications for two arts venues, and currently oversees delivery of the South West Creative Industries Strategy at Regional Arts Victoria. With a BA (Hons) in English with Creative Writing, Stacey values communication, collaboration and relationship-building, and enjoys cooking, travel and numerous creative pursuits.



GEORGIE BELFIELD MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (MIFF)

Georgie is an experienced strategic and operations professional with a BSc, MBA, and over 10 years in the Arts and NFP sectors. As Operations Manager for the Siddha Yoga Foundation, Georgie brings experience from roles at Her Majesty's Theatre, The Australian Children's Choir and The Falls Festival among others. Georgie has strong NFP experience, having reported to boards and served on committees of management, including as President and Secretary of the Melbourne University Choral Society. Her leadership is defined by values of service and integrity and an innate drive to contribute to creating a community with greater equity and engagement.



TINA BIGGS COMMUNITY BROADCASTING FOUNDATION

Tina is a community development professional with extensive experience in local government processes. Tina is committed to supporting community groups and organisations to achieve community health and wellbeing goals. She recently supported the delivery of National Reconciliation Week and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaigns in Glenelg Shire. She has worked previously in the Arts and Culture sector and holds a Bachelor of Arts from Deakin University, specialising in visual arts. Outside of work, she enjoys days at the beach and holidaying with family.



SOPHIE BLACKHIRST CENTRE FOR NON-VIOLENCE

Sophia is a senior solicitor and legal manager with broad experience across public, private and not-for-profit sectors. She specialises in helping survivors of institutional child sexual abuse secure redress, compensation and justice. Sophia has worked extensively with people facing intersecting disadvantage and is committed to the principles of restorative justice, trauma-informed practice and human centred design. Sophia enjoys collaborating with non-legal services to enhance sector capacity and improve outcomes for survivors. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Politics and History and a Postgraduate Bachelor of Laws. Outside of work, Sophia enjoys traveling, food, yoga and is an aspiring surfer.



IMELDA BONNETT STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA

Imelda is a Change Manager and Senior Consultant with experience in leading transformation initiatives and developing tailored change management frameworks. With over 14 years of experience in financial services across Australia and Asia Pacific, Imelda has a strong track record in risk management and stakeholder engagement. She has also significantly contributed to the not-for-profit sector, including as a volunteer with Peninsula Health. Imelda holds an MBA in Change from AGSM @UNSW Business School and is an Associate member of the Governance Institute of Australia. She enjoys kayaking and is an avid reader who is passionate about continuous learning and personal growth.



NARELLE BRUHN STATE SCHOOLS RELIEF

Narelle is a Senior Specialist Manager at Microsoft. With over 20 years of experience, she has driven successful sales strategies and managed key accounts across Health, Education and the Public Sector. Narelle brings a unique blend of expertise in primary teaching and IT ensuring employees, teachers, and students are equipped with the necessary technology to achieve superior outcomes. Narelle actively volunteers in community initiatives, such as the Magpie Nest Café and the Royal Children's Hospital Xbox Gaming Workshop for children with disabilities. Outside of work, Narelle enjoys travelling, watching tennis and spending quality time with her family.



SAIR BUCKLE WOMEN'S LEGAL SERVICE VICTORIA

Sair Buckle is a seasoned professional with over 15 years of experience in product management, marketing, and entrepreneurship. She has held positions at prominent companies like Tesla and Carsales.com.au, demonstrating her expertise in product development, working across complex technology, while delivering streamlined customer experience. Currently pursuing a PhD in behavioural science at Charles Sturt University funded by the AI & Cyber Futures Institute, Sair focuses on creating inclusive environments by harnessing innovative technology. The combination of her ADHD lived experience, academic pursuits, professional experience and passion for gender equity and neurodiversity makes her a valuable contributor.



KARA BULLOCK CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

As a Human Resources professional, Kara holds extensive people and culture experience within fin-tech, medical and consumer goods multinationals across Asia Pacific. Kara also partners with the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health organisation providing both strategic and tactical HR guidance. Commercially, she was recently part of a significant transformation project at Square (Block Inc.) following Square's acquisition of Afterpay. She has an interest in diverse cultures, economics and analytics and holds a Bachelor of Business (Economics and Finance) and a Master of Commerce (Human Resource Management). She enjoys time with her family, hiking and cooking.



ANUSHA CAMPBELL FLINDERS QUARTET INC.

Anusha is a Director in EY's Enterprise Risk Practice, providing governance, risk and internal audit services across the Health sector, with a passion for working with for-purpose organisations to help drive improvements and coordinate major fundraising events. She is a Chartered Accountant, a mentor with CA ANZ and RMIT, and holds a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) (Hons) from RMIT. Anusha is an advocate for promoting equal opportunities and empowering young women. She is also a keen open water swimmer and a Sharkbait recipient for the Lorne Pier to Pub.



LUCY CAVALLARO VICTORIAN OPERA

Lucy is a highly motivated and influential senior leader with a passion for continuous learning and development, and growing future talent. She is currently the Head of Commercial Finance at Country Road Group with previous experience across multiple industries including profit-for-purpose (Who Gives a Crap), medical technology (Stryker) and fast-moving consumer goods (Coca-Cola Amatil). As a Chartered Accountant, Lucy recently completed her MBA Executive, graduating with Excellence, at UNSW's Australian Graduate School of Management and Yale's School of Management. She is actively involved in several not-for-profit and community initiatives, upholding core values of integrity, equality, social impact, diversity and inclusion.



ANK CHATURVEDI MELBOURNE ARTS PRECINCT CORPORATION (MAPCO)

Ank is a highly experienced, commercially astute, and outcome-driven Data Analytics & Delivery Leader with over 16 years of experience working companies such as Telstra, Australia Post, AGL, and Energy Australia. He has a proven track record in leading integrated data strategies and enhancing data analytics capabilities within large organisations, including government. Ank excels in collaborating with IT and functional teams to drive efficiencies and deliver significant business value. Skilled in strategic engagement, he develops business solutions and guides teams to achieve project outcomes. Ank holds a master's degree in computer science from Victoria University and enjoys swimming and traveling.



LAINE CHEW ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA

Laine Chew is a Conciliation Manager at the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), where she leads a team of specialist conciliators. With over six years in alternative dispute resolution, including roles at AFCA and its predecessor, the Financial Ombudsman Service, Laine excels in integrating trauma-informed practices into dispute resolution. She also volunteers at Fitzroy Legal Service, advocating for access to justice. Previously, Laine specialised in Intellectual Property Law in Tokyo before returning to Melbourne to focus on equitable legal services. Her commitment to fostering a fair and compassionate legal environment is evident in both her professional and voluntary work.



JANA CHRISTODOULOU MINUS18

With over a decade of experience in facilitation, Jana has guided individuals from diverse backgrounds through interactive workshops on leadership, connection, grit, and resilience. Passionate about celebrating human diversity, Jana also produces and hosts her own podcast, exploring personal growth and providing a platform for authentic conversations. They leverage boldness and confidence to empower leaders, creating environments where people can recognise their limitless potential and appreciate others. Combining wit, fairness, and genuine care, Jana fosters spaces where individuals feel safe to be themselves, embrace challenges and find joy in their journey.



VERONICA CLARKE VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT

Veronica is an effective business operator and experienced in-house lawyer, responsible for key strategic projects at Novotech, a clinical research organisation. She recently returned from London, where she worked as commercial and investments counsel at Mercer and completed an MBA from IE Business School in Spain, while taking every opportunity to explore that region. Veronica is a global citizen who is able to bring a multi-disciplinary perspective to drive innovative solutions. Veronica is an Affiliated GIA with the Governance Institution of Australia. Veronica loves sport, representing the U21 Singapore national netball team and now enjoys running and swimming.



DAVID CLEARY RELATIONSHIP MATTERS

David is an established lawyer and social worker with experience in frontline service delivery, people management, project management and strategic planning. He has experience working in statutory child protection, mental health, family law and family violence service contexts. He is committed to assisting organisations with research, strategy and planning to promote high-quality and accessible services for marginalised communities. David holds a Bachelor of Social Work (UQ), a Bachelor of Laws (QUT) and a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (ANU). He enjoys hiking, visual and performing arts and science fiction movies.



DANIEL COCKING WATERAID AUSTRALIA

Daniel is a Senior Project Officer at the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, leading a high performing team that supports 500+ regional staff implementing policy on the ground. Daniel is committed to working with values-driven organisations that are accelerating the energy transition and reducing the impacts of climate change. This has included agricultural development in Fiji, delivering climate adaptation programs in regional Victoria, modelling the energy efficiency of buildings and selling electric cars. Daniel holds a Bachelor of Environmental Engineering and Arts from Monash University. He loves the high country where he rides, runs and skis.



LOTTY COOK SOUTH WEST HEALTHCARE

With a commitment to creating positive change both in the workplace and within the broader community, Lotty Cook is a Senior HR Professional who embodies a passion for promoting equality, empathy, and respect for all. Through her work and personal values, she exemplifies the profound impact that compassion and inclusivity can have on shaping a brighter future for individuals and society as a whole. Beyond her professional endeavors, she is a massive animal lover, a voracious reader (especially of crime thrillers), and enjoys embarking on family adventures.



JOSHUA COOTE REBECCA JANE FOUNDATION

Joshua Coote is the Principal - Operational Excellence at TelstraSuper. Joshua has successfully delivered multiple transformational programs including Cloud Migrations and most recently a Digital Transformation across the Fund Administration capability. Astrong advocate for the Profit for Member sector of the superannuation industry Joshua speaks regularly at conferences on member centric operating models and how technology can be used to solve problems in this space. A keen sports person Joshua is currently serving on the Board as Treasurer for the Altona Hockey Club and has played & coached at the Elite level.



CATE CORBET MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Cate is a business analyst and change manager with extensive experience in digital transformation and process innovation. She excels in stakeholder engagement and strategic planning, having recently been involved with significant ERP implementations for local councils. Cate is dedicated to optimising business processes and leveraging technology to drive efficiency. She holds a Bachelor of Middle Eastern & Central Asian Studies and a Graduate Certificate in Project Management. Cate's unique perspective, shaped by her diverse roles and rural living experience, informs her commitment to meaningful community impact. She enjoys baking, learning foreign languages, gardening and arts and cultural experiences.



ADRIAN CROSLAND PLATFORM ARTS INC

Adrian is a seasoned product management and digital experience professional with over 9 years in diverse industries. He excels in community engagement and optimising operations through digital technology. Recently, Adrian spearheaded strategic initiatives at Jetstar as the Product Strategy and Innovation Manager, and is also a Future Skills Mentor at RMIT Online. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Economics from Monash University and a Graduate Certificate in Information Systems from Deakin University. Adrian champions diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts passionately. In his spare time he loves to bake.



SHABNAM DALIRI REFUGE VICTORIA

Shabnam has many years of experience working within non-for-profit sector, especially with women and children who have experienced trauma and family violence. She is passionate about women's and children's health and well-being with strong commitment to sustainable structural change and social justice. She has a very engaging approach and has constantly advocated for women and children ensuring they receive equal and fair opportunities and are respected, empowered, safe and thriving. Shabnam holds a Master of Social Work from RMIT and a Master of Arts-French Language and Literature from Iran.



SIBA DIQER AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Siba is an Investment Manager at Litigation Capital Management where she is responsible for sourcing funding opportunities, conducting due diligence on applications, structuring, documenting, and managing investments to a successful resolution. As a lawyer, Siba has extensive experience in dispute resolution having acted for financiers, borrowers, directors and major corporations at international top tier and magic circle firms. Siba is a non-executive director of StreetSmart Australia, a graduate member of the AICD, and a committee member of the Turnaround Management Association and Law Council of Australia. She has a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Science (majoring in Psychology).



CIARA DUNLEA BROPHY FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES INCORPORATED

Originally from Ireland, Ciara Dunlea has spent the last 17 years in Australia, attaining her Masters of Applied Commerce (Accounting) at the University of Melbourne, then going on to accept a Graduate position with Deloitte and completing her Chartered Accountant's qualification. Ciara moved into industry and was employed by Asahi Beverages Australia in various roles in the Group Finance team. Ciara loves music, particularly singing and says that moving to the beautiful coastal city of Warrnambool with her family was the best decision she has made. Ciara now teaches Accounting and Bookkeeping at South West TAFE.



CLAIRE ELLIS REBECCA JANE FOUNDATION

Claire is an experienced workplace relations and employment lawyer who is committed to social justice and serving the not-for-profit sector. Claire is currently a Senior Associate at PwC Workplace Law where she provides legal and strategic advice to a wide range of clients across different sectors. In her previous roles, Claire has worked closely with not-for-profits in the Live Performance industry at the Australian Entertainment Industry Association. Claire has also volunteered at a number of not for profit community legal centres. In her spare time, Claire loves to read, go for walks, antique shopping and spending time with her cats.



ADNA FARAH WILLIAM BUCKLAND FOUNDATION

Adna Farah is a Senior Project Officer at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), with a focus on public health and community engagement. Adna has co-founded Muslim Public Health Professionals and is committed to promoting health equity within communities. She has successfully led culturally tailored health initiatives and advocates for inclusive healthcare practices. Adna holds a Master of Public Health and a Bachelor of Biomedical Science. Her personal interests include exploring cultural diversity, engaging in community service, and advocating for social justice. Adna is passionate about creating positive change and fostering inclusivity in public health.



CHLOE FAST MADDIE RIEWOLDT'S VISION

Chloe is the EGM Corporate Affairs, Employer Brand and Sustainability for CAR Group Limited. She has over 12 years' experience driving employee engagement, building high performance teams, nurturing diverse and inclusive cultures, and supporting organisations through periods of transformational growth and change, before most recently specialising in sustainability and corporate affairs. Chloe has worked across a range of industries including technology, hospitality, and health and holds a Masters in Human Resources Management, Bachelor of Applied Science (Health Sciences) and Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics. She is an avid reader, enjoys the arts and is a passionate miniature schnauzer owner.



ELVIS GABOYO COHEALTH

Elvis is a senior credit risk and data manager with extensive experience in delivering high impact, value add data driven insights for risk aversion strategies in the Australian financial industry. He is committed to helping organizations streamline processes and enjoys working through complex problems. Elvis recently led the successful building of the credit risk engine at Judo Bank. He values coaching and mentoring other people. Elvis holds an honours Bachelor of Engineering (Civil and Project Management), Master of Analytics, Master of Astrophysics and Financial Markets Certificate. He is an avid sports fan and enjoys learning new skills, puzzles and hiking.



ZACK GARKAWE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH FUNDERS

Zack is a marketing professional with experience in the major events and entertainment industries, currently working as a Project Manager at The Walt Disney Company. He has a passion for community demonstrated through involvement on various committees focused on student advocacy and international bilateral trade. He recently served on the Young Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce committee leading the organisation's mentoring program and facilitating business events. Zack holds a Bachelor of Commerce from Monash University, specialising in Finance and Marketing.



CADEYRN GASKIN SCOPE GROUP

Cadeyrn Gaskin is an experienced social scientist working across the healthcare, physical activity and sedentary behaviour and disability fields. He works in the university sector, as well as independently providing research services to government, healthcare providers, and not-for-profit organisations. Cadeyrn's governance experience includes board roles with two not-for-profit disability service providers. He has a doctorate in exercise psychology and postgraduate qualifications in business and psychology. Cadeyrn is passionate about championing the human rights of people with disability and is an avid sports fan.



LESLIE GURUSINGHE FOOTSCRAY COMMUNITY ARTS

Leslie has dedicated his career to the arts and culture sector, with extensive experience in museums and film. Currently the Development Manager at the Hellenic Museum in Melbourne, he plays a key role in fundraising, stakeholder engagement, and business development. At the Human Rights Arts & Film Festival, he enhanced community involvement and fostered inclusive artistic practices while also creating pathways for emerging artists. A passionate supporter of visual arts, theatre, and literature, Leslie is devoted to promoting cultural enrichment, accessibility, and community engagement within the arts. He was also admitted to the legal practice in 2020.



TIM HANNAN RSPCA VICTORIA

Tim is a strategist, innovator and behavioural scientist leader in the not-for-profit sector. Tim has broad professional experience, having worked as a management consultant at PwC and a behavioural science specialist in the Victorian Department and Premier and Cabinet before ultimately drawn to Oxfam Australia to pursue his passion for disrupting systems that drive economic and gender inequality. Tim is committed to designing strategies that initiate change to improve the lives of others. Outside of the office, Tim loves trail running, travelling to fossick for sapphires and connecting with his regional roots with his pet dog Myfanwy.



WILL HENDERSON CASTLEMAINE STATE FESTIVAL

Will is an Engagement Manager at McKinsey & Company, with extensive experience supporting both public and private sector clients through large-scale transformations, helping them build more resilient and high-performing organisations. He has a particular interest in how leaders and management teams respond in times of uncertainty and crisis. Will holds a Bachelor of Aerospace Engineering and a Bachelor of Science from Monash University, and a Master of Business Administration from Melbourne Business School. He cares for an ever-growing flock of chickens and enjoys cycling and gardening.



EMMA HENNINGSEN BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAURENCE

Emma Henningsen is the Head of Consulting and Acting Head of Member Services, part of the Executive Leadership Team at Australian Disability Network. Emma has 20+ years' experience working in the Not-For-Profit sector in both the disability and housing and homelessness fields. Emma's career path has shown her that there can be no real change for the individual without first breaking down the systemic barriers that impact their situation. As a woman with disability, Emma is passionate about disability representation and seeing her community thrive. Emma also happens to be a trained yoga and meditation teacher.



METHMIE HERATH CARE AUSTRALIA

Methmie brings extensive knowledge in operational and cultural transformation with over a decade of experience in the Finance industry. She is a purpose-driven leader, who has successfully orchestrated numerous cross-business process optimisation workshops to deliver tangible business outcomes and operational efficiency. Methmie holds a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from Melbourne Business School, with an exchange semester at IE Business School in Madrid as well as a Bachelor of Commerce from The University of Melbourne, majoring in Accounting and Marketing. She enjoys travelling, sharing a meal with loved ones and spending time with her two kids.



JESS HERNE RISING MELBOURNE

Jess Herne is the Strategic Projects and Operations Manager at Centre for Australian Progress, where they lead the organisations' major events and conferences, as well as coordinate messaging research roll-out and managing internal operations. Jess was previously National President of UN Youth Australia, leading the organisation in its delivery of educational programs for thousands of young Australians and has a background in theatre and live production, primarily working with young people in high school and university.



MOLLY HOFFMAN VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION

Molly is a government social policy specialist with experience across education, family violence and gender equality. She is currently the Senior Policy Officer in the Department of Premier and Cabinet leading on school reform and funding policy, providing expert advice to the Premier of Victoria and senior executives. Molly is passionate about progressing gender-responsive policy and programs, and using social policy as a tool to drive equitable access to services. Molly holds a Juris Doctor and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Melbourne. She loves choral music and is an AFL and AFLW tragic.



CAITLYN HOGGAN WANNON WATER

Caitlyn has worked in the non for profit sector for over a decade and has largely focused on social justice issues. Caitlyn is passionate about equity and working to ensure the voices and needs of those who experience the greatest disadvantage are prioritised. Caitlyn has worked at two women's health organisations, both at a regional and national level working with the media, sporting clubs, the education sector and local government to increase gender equality and respectful relationships in these settings. Currently Caitlyn is working in healthcare and is addressing food insecurity at a regional level.



REBECCA HOLMES UNITED WAY GLENELG

Rebecca is a Personal Banker at the Heywood & District Community Bank and enjoys her role working with community groups, small businesses and the local community to assist them with their banking needs. Rebecca has held a variety of roles on community and sporting club committees with a focus on finance, strategic development and goal setting. Rebecca has a Bachelor of Management with major studies in Tourism, Events and Japanese Language and has worked in Tourism & Events in Queensland and Victoria. Rebecca is passionate about all things travel and sport and enjoys spending time with her family.



NATHAN HOWLETT OUTER URBAN PROJECTS

Nathan Howlett is a risk consultant specialising in risk and compliance reviews across finance, payroll and operational functions. He provides internal audit services to government, education and not-for-profit sector boards. Nathan has worked with notable clients across these sectors including Uniting, Oxfam and Scope. He holds a Juris Doctor from Monash University and a Bachelor of Commerce and Diploma of Languages from the University of Melbourne. Nathan is deeply interested in the arts, regularly attending many performing arts companies' seasons and is a member of the NGV.



ELLA HURT LUCY GUERIN INC.

Ella is an curious and enthusiastic professional with a diverse range of professional experiences across philanthropy, publishing and education. Focusing on project and program execution, she is currently part of the NAB Foundation team where she leads the Community Grants program and impact measurement activity. In her spare time, Ella enjoys reading contemporary fiction, swimming and volunteering.



GAMZE ISITMAN YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH

Dr Gamze Isitman is a Global Senior Project Manager at CSL developing and leading innovative therapies through clinical trials across diverse teams to address unmet patient needs. She has worked in life sciences for over 20 years and with experience across industry and academia, both locally and internationally. Gamze completed a Bachelor of Science (Honours) and PhD in immunology at the University of Melbourne and undertook postdoctoral studies at McGill University in Canada. Gamze's skills and experience encompass research, clinical development, strategy, project & portfolio management and governance. She is a passionate advocate for education and cultural and linguistic diversity.



NEHAL JAIN CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

Nehal Jain is the Co-Founder of After, a sustainable textile recycling startup that has diverted over 12 tonnes of textiles from landfills. She is passionate about systems change and the circular economy, and is initiating Trishlaa - a clothing swap movement. With extensive corporate experience, she has grown a community of technology startups at Microsoft and built SaaS products at Atlassian. Nehal also managed product initiatives at Phantm, a climate tech company. Her extensive corporate experience is complemented by her involvement in various NFP initiatives over the years, including TechFugees and Planet Ark. She enjoys cooking, dancing and travelling.



ISABELLA JONES ART GALLERY OF BALLARAT

Isabella Jones is a senior marketing manager with over 10 years of experience in marketing strategy, brand management, growth and digital marketing, and communications. Currently at the Australian Business Growth Fund (ABGF), Isabella manages the brand and digital channels, leading strategy, performance, and ROI, while providing strategic marketing advice to ABGF's portfolio companies. Completing her MBA at Melbourne Business School and Columbia Business School, she advocates for gender equity as President of the Women in Management Club. Passionate about social impact, Isabella leverages her diverse skills as marketing leader, advisor and DEI advocate to contribute meaningfully to the NFP sector.



SHANNON JOSEPH POLYGLOT THEATRE

Shannon is a finance leader with over a decade of experience in finance and accounting across the US and Australia. She has supported high-growth companies in various sectors, holding roles at Deloitte, Coinbase, Block, Spotify, and Morgan Stanley. Shannon has navigated complex finance and operational challenges and supported successful venture investments, acquisitions and IPOs. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce from The University of Melbourne, a CA certification and has passed CFA Level I. She is passionate about emerging technologies, advancements in health and wellness, exploring new cultures through travel, supporting gender equality and fostering growth within the startup ecosystem.



KAROLINA KARON THE SUBSTATION

Karolina is a Senior Marketing and CX Leader with over 18 years of international business experience garnered in ASX-listed companies, agencies, and for-purpose start-ups. Known for empowering high-performing teams to drive transformational change, Karolina excels in creating insight-driven strategies, compelling customer value propositions and the CX initiatives that enable them. She has significant experience in complex regulatory environments, including finance, health insurance, education and technology. Karolina is deeply committed to social justice, leveraging her expertise to create positive change. Passionate about the arts and culture, she is also an avid reader, amateur Latin dancer, art enthusiast and foodie adventurer.



JARYD KELLMAN HADASSAH CHARITY LIMITED

Jaryd is responsible for strategic corporate development opportunities for CVS Lane and recently led the development of its ESG policy. Jaryd is a Chartered Accountant with over 16 years' experience across property investment, banking, business turnaround and restructuring. Prior to CVS Lane, Jaryd was part of the Commonwealth Bank's Corporate Finance team, providing leverage and acquisition finance to mid-market clients and held senior positions at Deloitte and Ferrier Hodgson in their turnaround and insolvency teams. Jaryd has a passion for mentoring young professionals at the early stages of their careers and loves to spend time with his wife and four kids.



ANNIE KENT KOORIE HERITAGE TRUST

Annie Kent is a dedicated leader and passionate advocate for First Nations voices and social justice. A Wirangu woman, Annie is the First Nations Engagement Lead at the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Annie excels in internal and external engagement with First Nations stakeholders, providing strategic advice and support and mentoring staff. With a background in education, disability and First Nations leadership, Annie has made significant contributions across a broad spectrum of community services. As a mother of two young girls in inner-city Melbourne, Annie is committed to fostering an inclusive and dynamic community for her family and others.



KEN KNIGHT PHILANTHROPY AUSTRALIA

Ken is a leader, educator, and practice specialist in research impact, knowledge translation, and consumer involvement. He is Head of Research Impact and Consumer Involvement at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and an Honorary Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne. He was part of the leadership group that co-developed the first Impact Framework for the Australian health and medical research sector. With a strong commitment to social justice, Ken chairs the Melbourne Children's LGBTIQA+ Collective, advocating for rights-based approaches to health equity. He is an enthusiastic amateur potter, and a doting uncle to a lively niece.



ARVIND KRISHNAMOORTHY AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEERS INTERNATIONAL (AVI)

Arvind is a professional with extensive experience in reviewing and solving complex risk, compliance, and broader organisational problems. He is committed to helping reporting entities in the financial services and gaming industries to identify and mitigate their financial crime risk, as well as report potential instances of money laundering and terrorism financing. Arvind has led numerous projects in implementing anti-financial crime measures within financial institutions. He holds a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Commerce from Monash University, majoring in Finance.



LA VERNE LEGASPI DANCEHOUSE INC

La Verne is a strategy and transformation consultant with deep expertise in commercial finance, technology, and service design. She is motivated by helping clients shape organisations and ecosystems that create and sustain value in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive environment. She has worked with a broad range of clients, including ASX-listed companies, private firms, local councils, and higher education institutions. La Verne holds an MBA from Melbourne Business School. Despite her serious corporate job, she is a bohemian at heart, with a soft spot for modern art, theatre, and literature.



BIANCA MACIEL PIZZORNO DEMOCRACY IN COLOUR

Bianca has worked on many sides of the social sector including service delivery, law, advocacy and campaigning. She is the current grants manager at the Inner North Community Foundation, which focuses on partnerships with local community groups. Bianca facilitates grant programs that support cohesive communities. This includes the facilitation of community advisory panels and committees to support positive outcomes via the co-creation of supportive systems. Her interest is elevating community voice, truth-telling and reparations of First Nations people. In particular, the commitment to learn how to walk in good relationship with Country and each other.



CHLOE MACKALLAH LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS

Chloe is a queer and trans climate data scientist with expertise in producing and interpreting climate information for both Australia and the international science community and experience in advocating for improved inclusion and belonging for diverse communities in the STEM sector. Chloe is passionate about making change in her social and professional community by supporting robust and transparent structures that empower individuals to achieve their goals, build strong communities, and foster diversity through social safety. Chloe holds a PhD in Astrophysics from Monash University and works at CSIRO where she is working to formalise data governance across the organisation.



ED MADOUR FAMILY LIFE

Ed is a seasoned technology leader with extensive experience in not-for-profits and top-tier technology consulting. As the Head of Technology at CARE Australia, Ed drives strategic initiatives, manages operations, and ensures robust cybersecurity to support the organisation's global mission. He is passionate about leveraging technology to create positive social impact, enhance operational efficiency and drive innovation. Ed is dedicated to continuous learning and professional growth. In his spare time, he enjoys exploring new technologies and mentoring aspiring tech professionals.



NUSY MAGDALENA WORKPLACE INJURY COMMISSION

Nusy is a CPA and MBA-qualified finance and investment leader with 14+ years of experience across government, telco, education, and financial services. As Board Observer at the Workplace Injury Commission, she is contributing to governance, strategy, and financial oversight. She has led commercial and investment strategies at Monash University and the City of Melbourne, managing projects exceeding \$1.5bn. A recipient of multiple CPA awards, Nusy excels in financial governance, risk management, and stakeholder engagement. Passionate about economic empowerment, health & safety, and education, she has served as Chair of IndoAustay, a Committee Member of the Australia-Indonesia Association of Victoria and a mentor to emerging professionals in the community.



INDIA MCKENZIE PROUD 2 PLAY

India is a strategic design consultant with broad experience across federal government and creative industries. In her current role at the Australian Taxation Office, she draws from design, research and systems thinking methodologies to improve services, products, policies and organisational effectiveness. She has previously worked at Australia Post, Administrative Appeals Tribunal and a number of design agencies. India holds a Bachelor of Environments (Architecture) from the University of Melbourne and a Masters of Design Futures from RMIT. She is an avid outdoor enthusiast and in 2022 spent five months thru-hiking 4265km on the Pacific Crest Trail.



ZANE MCKENZIE CEREBRAL PALSY AUSTRALIA

Zane McKenzie began his career as a freelance public speaker and disability advocate in Geelong, Victoria. Living with Cerebral Palsy, Zane's dedication to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities stems from both professional commitment and personal experience. After commencing a combined Arts/Law degree and pursuing various professional opportunities, Zane joined Scope Australia in 2013, progressing from Community Educator to Client Partnership Lead and now serves as Workforce Strategy Lead. Zane's role focuses on inclusive workforce initiatives, including the Disability Inclusive Workforce Strategy. He also Chairs the board of Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service and has recently joined the board of Cerebral Palsy Australia. Outside of work, Zane is a devoted husband, father, singer, musician, and public speaker.



CALIN MILES EASTERN COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE

Calin is a strategic consultant at Boston Consulting Group with a background in commercial law, complemented by extensive volunteer experience with a particular commitment to queer advocacy. Calin's achievements include developing publicly accessible materials to assist individuals seeking gender-affirming care, and assisting in a landmark modern slavery claim that resulted in an award of \$500,000 in compensation to the client. Calin has volunteered with a number of not-for-profit organisations, including the LGBTIQ Legal Service Southside Justice and the Statelessness and Citizenship Review and was previously on the board of United Nations Youth Victoria, as a Director and the Public Officer.



ROB MILLER KADIMAH JEWISH CULTURAL CENTRE & NATIONAL LIBRARY

Rob is an experienced educator, manager and community leader, as well as a qualified solicitor. In his current role as Head of Co-curricular Jewish Education at Mount Scopus Memorial College, Rob is responsible for leading the effective design, implementation and delivery of high-quality educational programming for over 700 students. Driven by a strong sense of purpose, Rob is passionate about social impact, as well as leading with empathy and utilising his strong communication skills to foster cultures of connection and environments where individuals and groups thrive. He enjoys distance-running, trivia, good coffee and good podcasts.



HANNAH MILLS PANDA

Hannah is a proud Nharangga woman and a Senior Manager with consultancy firm, Yamagigu. Hannah has a strong legal background with extensive experience in project management and community engagement. Hannah is passionate about consumer advocacy and economic development and leads projects relating to the self-determination of First Nations people in areas such as justice and cultural heritage. Previously, she worked for the Federal government managing large-scale investigations, involving allegations of financial services and consumer law breaches. Hannah recently became a mum to her first son and is enjoying all motherhood has to offer.



ZIGGY MIODUSZEWSKI CANCER COUNCIL VICTORIA

Zbigniew (Ziggy) is a product strategist and innovator with over 15 years' experience in healthcare and medical devices. Currently at the not-for-profit World Mosquito Program, he leads the digital transformation of global mosquito production to tackle the burden of mosquito-borne disease. Previously, he was an Innovation Program Manager at Leica Biosystems and an Associate Principal Systems Engineer at Invetech. Ziggy holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Mechatronics) and a Bachelor of Computer Science from the University of Melbourne and is pursuing a Global Executive MBA at Monash University. His hobbies include regular exercise, cooking and playing with his two young children.



LAURA MOLLER THE BRIDGE INCORPORATED

Laura is a Senior Digital Accessibility Analyst, ensuring websites, apps and other technology are accessible to everyone. Laura has worked across large organisations, in finance (NAB) and retail (currently Coles). She regularly shares her accessibility knowledge at conferences and events. Laura has recently completed the Disability Leadership Institute training course called Future Shapers and has generated new research on how to make websites and apps accessible for people with mental health conditions. She enjoys writing poetry, and loves to challenge herself by entering a new category at the Royal Melbourne Show art competition each year.



CLEM MURPHY PENINGTON INSTITUTE

Clem is an IT executive with over 15 years' experience in the computer software industry. He helps organisations transform with the adoption of business applications across finance, supply chain, sales, marketing and digital. In his role at Microsoft, he is helping organisations understand AI - the risks and benefits. He works with large commercial enterprises in Australia. Clem holds an MBA from Deakin University and is serving on school council for his local Primary School as Treasurer. A father of three, Clem enjoys spending time with his young family, surfing, golf and tennis.



ADEEL NABEEBUX ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA

Adeel Nabeebux has over 10 years' experience across financial services, leading both strategy development and delivery. In addition to his legal background, Adeel brings experience in people leadership, project management, policy and strategy. Adeel has worked closely with boards and Federal Government to establish two not-for-profits - the Australian Financial Complaints Authority and Compensation Scheme of Last Resort. Adeel is a passionate advocate for diversity, inclusion and belonging at work with a focus towards colleagues from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Adeel holds Bachelor of Commerce and Laws from Melbourne University and Masters in Risk Management and Business Law from Monash University.



NITHURSHAN NADARAJAH HOLMESGLEN TAFE

Nithurshan is a Deputy Director of Innovation and Growth. He has a background in engineering and business management with extensive experience in consulting. He is a lifetime learner who enjoys gaining new perspectives from people, books and experiences. He has a deep involvement in the not-for-profit sector through social organisations and industry groups. He has a strong interest to contribute to the healthcare and education sectors. In his spare time, he enjoys reading (non-fiction), running, cycling and spending time with his friends and family.



BEN NIELSEN VICTORIAN OPERA

Ben Nielsen is a corporate affairs specialist, currently working in the higher education sector. He has previously worked in journalism and government. Ben is passionate about LGBT+ equality and is a member of The Pinnacle Foundation Victorian state committee and the Victorian Pride Centre Community Reference Group. He is a classically trained trumpet player and a legally authorised civil marriage celebrant, specialising in inclusive marriages. Ben is a serial hobbyist and is currently honing his bouldering skills. He loves cooking, musical theatre and playing with his Labradoodle puppy, Franklin.



PEGGY O'BRYAN-GUSAH VICSCREEN

Peggy O'Bryan-Gusah is a lawyer with a passion for promoting social equity, access to justice and addressing disadvantage through and within the law. Peggy started her career in commercial law, working for corporate and government clients based across Australia and overseas whilst maintaining a strong pro bono practice. She later worked at the Federal Court of Australia as a Judge's Associate. Peggy is a skilled communicator who strives to achieve positive outcomes through her work and within her community. A co-founder of the African-Australian Legal Network, Peggy enjoys mentoring law students and young people investing in their local communities.



TAYLOR OBERMAN AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE MOVING IMAGE (ACMI)

Taylor is a senior business development, customer strategy and project management professional with a demonstrated history of managing of highly equitable global brands and utilising creative problem solving and subject matter expertise to deliver tangible commercial outcomes and drive executive engagement. Taylor is a strong leader, with a track record of developing self-sustaining teams through honesty, transparency and efficiency. Outside of work, Taylor enjoys theatre, visiting the latest restaurants in Melbourne or cooking at home with her family.



ARIANNA ODDO SAVE THE CHILDREN AUSTRALIA

Arianna is a Business Development Associate at the University of Melbourne and an Investment Associate at Genesis Pre-Seed Fund. Passionate about helping researchers turn their ideas into real-world applications for a more equal tomorrow, she supports startups and social enterprises. Arianna holds a PhD from the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, focusing on alternatives to animal testing. She is a former European Commission Trainee, has a BSc in Chemistry from the University of Milan and an MSc from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, supported by a German Exchange Academic Service scholarship. Fluent in Italian, German, and Spanish, Arianna loves languages and foreign cultures.



ASSEM ONGARBAYEVA MELBOURNE POLYTECHNIC (TAFE)

Assem is a professional in the energy sector, beginning her career at AGL in roles such as Physical Markets Trader & Pricing and Strategy Lead. At Amber Electric, she led a pivotal project with CSIRO, enhancing energy market price predictions. As Chief Strategy Officer & Chief of Staff at UPowr, she led strategic direction, fundraising, and product innovation, securing significant grants and partnerships. Currently, Assem is the Lead Retail Transformation at AGL, overseeing assurance, delivery, and strategic partnerships with Kaluza as part of a major digital transformation. She holds a BA in Actuarial Science from ANU and enjoys trail marathons & Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.



MIRIAM PAPE GEELONG ARTS CENTRE

Miriam is an ESG strategist and advisor with extensive experience in program development, management and reporting in Australia. Her work is dedicated to exploring how her clients can drive positive environmental and social impact, whilst tactically aligning with stakeholder expectations, international sustainability frameworks and relevant regulatory requirements. She recently led the development of an ESG strategy for Queensland-based aged and community-care service provider. Miriam holds a Masters of Sustainability (Monash University) and Bachelor of Arts, International Studies (RMIT University). She lives in regional Victoria and values her time volunteering with local community, running, surfing and hiking with her two dogs.



KATE PARGETER GATEWAY HEALTH

Kate Pargeter is the Director of Community Partnerships with NSW Aboriginal Affairs and former Managing Director of BP AIR Services. A seasoned business leader with expertise in strategic planning and innovation, Kate has driven significant business growth earning awards such as the 2023 Telstra Albury/Wodonga Outstanding Business in Trade & Construction. She has held senior roles in health, including as National Virtual Health Manager at Ramsay Connect, leading innovative platform rollouts. A CSU Innovation Hub graduate, Kate's entrepreneurial drive and work with esteemed coaches have shaped her as a visionary leader focused on fostering sustainable success.



MEGAN PAYBODY PUBLIC GALLERIES ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Megan is an Associate Director at EY and helps lead the firm's Sports Events and Venues Practice. Megan has managed to take her personal passion of sport and make it her work focus. Megan has worked across all levels of Government, numerous sporting organisations and event organisations across Australia and internationally. She has led major sporting government infrastructure funding submissions, led assessments of government funded sporting programs, assessed the economic and social value of sporting organisations and events and developed strategies and policies to grow participation in sport. In her spare time Megan enjoys swimming and cycling.



KAVITA PETERSON FOOTSCRAY COMMUNITY ARTS

Kavita is a NAATI-accredited multilingual translator and heritage professional of Fiji-Indian/white-Australian descent with a special passion for decolonial and queering approaches to museum interpretation and heritage. They hold a Master in Translation and Interpretation Studies from Monash University and a Dual Master in Museum and World Heritage Studies from Deakin University and Brandenburg Technical University. While managing freelance translation work and establishing a decolonial heritage consultancy, Kavita is participating in a pilot paid internship at the not-for-profit Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria. Outside of their professional work, they are passionate about language, photography, film, travel and animals.



PHUONG PHAN ASYLUM SEEKERS RESOURCE CENTRE

Phuong is a frontline healthcare manager at Austin Health with extensive experience in operational and clinical leadership. She is passionate about leading teams to deliver exceptional quality care and is committed to advocating for equitable access to services. She has volunteered on several not-for-profit education boards in her local community. Phuong holds a Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours) from the University of Melbourne. She is a long distance runner who enjoys spending time with her family on outdoor adventures, such as skiing, camping and water activities.



JORDAN PHEASANT-KELLY CIRCUS NEXUS INC

Jordan is a public policy professional with extensive experience in the Victorian Government, with a career focused on evidence-based and human-centred social policy. Jordan has worked across a range of social policy portfolios, including mental health, family violence, multicultural policy, and youth justice. Jordan has nearly 15 years' experience volunteering for non-profit organisations, including both hands-on volunteering and a wide range of leadership positions. Jordan holds a Bachelor in Science (Software Systems) and a Diploma in Mathematics from Melbourne University, and is passionate about combining these technical skills with a strong values-based approach to achieve better social outcomes.



NATHANIEL PIZMONY LEARNING FOR LIFE AUTISM CENTRE

Nathaniel Pizmony is a legal professional with extensive experience in both the legal and not for-profit sectors. He holds a Juris Doctor from Monash University and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne. In his role as Corporate Counsel at Vocus Group, Nathaniel excels in advising the business on strategic projects and general commercial issues. He is dedicated to empowering others and leveraging relationships to drive meaningful outcomes. Nathaniel prides himself on his ability to listen carefully and understand client needs. Outside of professional commitments, Nathaniel values quality time with family and friends and contributing to his local community



ROSELINA PRESS THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS (ICAN AUSTRALIA)

Roselina Press is a communications and advocacy specialist with 10 years of experience across politics and the not-for-profit sector. She currently works as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Communications to Ellen Sandell, Leader of the Victorian Greens. She is also the Editor in Chief of Right Now, a volunteer-run Australian human rights media organisation. She has also worked at the Human Rights Law Centre and Oxfam Australia and held board positions at Right Now and Digital Rights Watch. She holds a Master of International Relations (First Class Hons) from the University of Melbourne.



ETHAN PROVERBS RAWCUS

Ethan is an HR professional with extensive experience in the not-for-profit sector, particularly in mental health at Mind Australia. He is passionate about fostering inclusive workplaces and advocating for LGBT+ rights. Ethan currently serves as a HR Consultant at the University of Melbourne, where he is also a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee. He holds a Bachelor of Business in Human Resources and International Business from the University of Tasmania. An avid hiker, Ethan recently walked over 1,500km on the Pacific Crest Trail in the United States.



CANDI RAEBURN OVARIAN CANCER AUSTRALIA

As Director of BioQusitive, Candice Raeburn leads a community laboratory dedicated to democratising biotechnology. Her diverse career encompasses roles in government, industry, academia, and the not-for-profit sectors, including significant contributions to Victoria's pandemic response and policy leadership at the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering. A global citizen, Candice has lived and worked in a number of countries around the world including Germany, Japan, Vanuatu, the UK and USA. She is an enthusiastic scientific communicator, with experience at New Scientist Magazine, Scienceworks and Science Gallery and has a deep passion for citizen science and interdisciplinary research.



LAURA RIORDAN SACRED HEART MISSION

Laura Riordan is an entrepreneurial leader with over 14 years of experience across diverse sectors and continents. Laura's career began in international development, working on impactful projects in Africa and India, including launching microfinance branches, developing mobile banking solutions and advancing women's rights initiatives. She transitioned to tech roles in startups, consultancy firms and big tech gaining expertise in automation, logistics, ERP transformations and supply chain. Currently serving as the Head of New Zealand at Amazon, Laura oversees the company's NZ operations. Laura is an aspiring Ironman triathlete, founder of a women's finance club and avid theatre-goer.



GEORGIA ROFFEY DOCKLANDS STUDIOS MELBOURNE PTY

Georgia is a Vice President at Macquarie Group's Green Investments team with experience working in Australia and London. She has over 6 years' experience in banking, finance and renewables with a focus on unlocking opportunities and investing capital to accelerate the transition to net zero. She holds a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Marine Biology and Zoology and a Master of Commerce. She has 12 years of experience as a volunteer life saver at Lorne Surf Life Saving Club. Georgia is a keen trail runner and enjoys travelling and exploring a new city by going for a run.



LUISA ROMEO CHAMBER MADE

Luisa is a marketing specialist in the fast moving consumer goods industry (FMCG), where she works to build brands and bring new products to life. Luisa is passionate about brand strategy and innovation, leveraging consumer insights and marketing strategies to create brands for generations to come. Luisa has worked across the homecare and frozen food categories and currently works at PZ Cussons, a global FMCG business. Luisa holds a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Management, majoring in Marketing, both from the University of Melbourne. In her spare time, Luisa is a debating adjudicator and community theatre actor and director.



MARTY SCHWARZ COMMUNITY SECURITY GROUP

I am a Strategy Consultant (Associate) at the Boston Consulting Group (BCG). I am very passionate about Responsible AI and giving back to the community. Prior to joining BCG, I studied a Bachelor of Science at the University of Melbourne, majoring in Data Science with a breadth track in Corporate Finance. I am also an active volunteer and Team Leader at Community Security Group (CSG). Outside of work and volunteering, I am an avid tennis player. I play competitively on a weekly basis and always enjoy a hit with friends. I also love hiking and running.



LAURA SHAKESPEARE PUBLIC GALLERIES ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Laura is a painter by numbers, specializing in data driven strategy with experience working as an analyst across a variety of industries in Australia, New Zealand and other markets. Laura's background in Linguistics and Political Science helps her interpret data in a more dialectical way. Laura is committed to helping organisations to interpret and unlock the value of their data to drive meaningful change. She loved visiting local markets and sewing clothes for friends.



ELLE SHEPHERD RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA VICTORIA

Elle Shepherd is an experienced communicator and program manager with a passion for strategic projects that deliver benefit to the community. She is currently a Program Manager at CSIRO leading new initiatives across the ESG, philanthropic and innovation portfolios. Prior to joining CSIRO, she held communications roles in the Australian Government and not-for-profit-sectors across a range of areas, including Indigenous reconciliation, the environment and international development. Elle recently completed her MBA at Monash University and holds undergraduate degrees in Communication and International Studies from the University of Technology Sydney.



EMILY SHUMBORSKI VICTORIAN PRIDE CENTRE

Emily Shumborski works in project delivery in the Project Management Office at State Library Victoria. Emily has led significant initiatives, including piloting Communication Access Accreditation to improve public library accessibility. Active in the not-for-profit sector, Emily serves as Treasurer for ALIA Victoria and volunteered as a foster carer for RSPCA Victoria and a cyclo-cross coach for Melburn Durt. Emily holds a Bachelor of Humanities and Music and a Masters in Global Media Communications. She is passionate about equity, and inclusion, and enjoys cycling, reading, being outdoors and spending time with family.



MOHIT SIDANA WODONGA TAFE

Dr. Mohit Sidana is a seasoned business strategist and investor with a strong focus on risk management, strategic planning and financial consulting. As a passionate educator, he brings valuable industry insights to his work. His unwavering commitment to community service and social justice is evident through his charitable work, significantly impacting many lives. He exemplifies cultural competency and inclusivity, passionately engaging in diverse community activities and initiatives.



STEPHEN SILVAPULLE FLINDERS QUARTET INC.

Stephen is an accomplished Special Counsel at Clayton Utz specialising in workplace relations, employment and safety. As a first-generation Australian, he brings a unique perspective and a strong commitment to understanding diverse cultural and community needs. Stephen is a trusted legal advisor to both public and private sector organisations and has a proven track record of assisting his clients to navigate complex legal issues without losing sight of who they are as an organisation. Outside the courtroom, Stephen is passionate about music and visual arts, enjoys video games, Dungeons & Dragons and the great outdoors.



SELENA SMALL INFOXCHANGE AUSTRALIA

Selena is an experienced technical lead at Fresho, renowned for her expertise in product engineering, collaboration and leadership. With a background transitioning from hospitality management to coding, she is adaptable and determined. Selena is dedicated to driving change and fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Observership Program. As a state-champion kickboxer and accomplished public speaker, she brings a diverse perspectives to the board table. Selena's passion for continuous learning and mentorship enables her to make a meaningful impact in the tech community. Her commitment to advocacy and outcomes makes her a valuable asset to The Program.



KIM SMILEY NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN OF AUSTRALIA VICTORIA

Kim is a dedicated mother to three young children. She hold strong values in health, human connection and equality, which act as barometer for her personal and professional pursuits. She has worked across corporate, not-for-profit and for purpose organisations and currently leads Strategy and Development at the Resilience Project. She is actively committed to child rights and mental wellbeing, hoping to influence and shape a world where children have their core needs met, feel safe and are proactively supported to flourish. Skilled in strategic development and impactful partnerships, she also enjoys fitness, family time and nurturing meaningful relationships.



GEMMA SPENCER WESTERN VICTORIA PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK

Gemma is a values-driven professional with extensive experience in recruitment, project management and executive support in the healthcare industry. As the Executive Officer at South West Healthcare, Gemma is dedicated to ensuring the whole community has access to essential healthcare services close to home. Passionate about the non-for-profit sector, she actively supports and contributes to causes that best serve the community in South West Victoria. Originally from Yorkshire in the UK, Gemma holds a Bachelor with Honours in Music from the University of Nottingham, UK. She enjoys staying active, cooking, travelling and socialising.



ROBBIE STEPHEN PROUD 2 PLAY

Robbie is a health policy professional with experience across government. She has completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and a Master of Public Health from the University of Melbourne. Motivated by a passion for social justice and health equity, Robbie worked as a policy officer at the Department of Health and Aged Care and delivered a range of aged care sector reforms. Robbie was also Co-Chair of the LGBTIQA+ staff network. Robbie currently works as an Adviser to the Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care. Outside of work, Robbie coaches football, plays the classical guitar and enjoys cycling.



BIANCA STERN THE FUNDING NETWORK AUSTRALIA LTD (SYDNEY)

Bianca Stern is the general manager and a founding member of All Things Equal, a social enterprise providing award-wage employment for people with disability in hospitality settings. With extensive leadership experience in the social impact sector, Bianca focuses on disability, social enterprise, and philanthropy. She is a keen advocate for seeing young people in leadership positions and ensuring people with disability are meaningful contributors to society. Bianca holds a Bachelor (Honours) of Early Years and Primary Education and a Post Graduate degree of Social Impact. Bianca loves to eat Vegemite with her scrambled eggs and drinks a strong cappuccino.



DAVE STONE THE PERSONNEL GROUP LTD

Dave is Program Manager at TAFE Gippsland with a background in the construction industry. He empowers people to question the status quo and to create better outcomes through innovative thinking and streamlined processes. Supporting others and solving old problems in new ways are central to his approach. Before TAFE, he spent over a decade in the building industry as a carpenter. Since joining TAFE, he discovered a passion for processes and leadership. Having struggled with education early in life and later being diagnosed with ADHD, he now has a passion for personal development and lifelong learning.



KATHERINE SUNDERMANN MONTSALVAT

Katherine an architect and urban designer who is driven to create more equitable and resilient communities through thoughtful city planning and design. She has supported this aim through developing strategic masterplans for universities and urban neighbourhoods and delivering affordable housing projects, as well as leading advocacy efforts with local and state governments. Katherine has established and led not-for-profit organisations such as Urban Design Forum Australia and Middle Ground Housing. She enjoys time in nature, whether hiking, camping or participating in revegetation projects.



HIMA TK AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LAUREATE FOUNDATION

Hima is an accomplished leader in Product, Strategy & Data/AI, known for the ability to create impactful businesses and products (Hybrid, SaaS). She believes in utilising her technical and business skills for social good and has co-founded two social impact startups with a focus on STEM education. She has volunteered with numerous impactful organisations providing her skills for social change. Currently working as a Product Lead for Artificial Intelligence products at CultureAmp, where Hima leads the responsible usage of AI in creating customer facing products. Her curiosity, love for learning and creativity are the core values that guide her professional journey.



JUN WEI TONG TAFE GIPPSLAND

Jun Wei is a strategy professional with extensive education sector experience. He is passionate about working with organisations to help create a more equitable society through education. He currently leads strategy at OES, an education enabler that partners with universities to help non-traditional students access and successfully engage with higher education. Jun Wei was previously a management consultant across Nous Group and Kearney and an academic at Melbourne University. Jun Wei holds a BCom (1st class Honours) from Melbourne University and MPP (Distinction) from Cambridge University. He is an avid reader, baking enthusiast and indoor cycling convert.



LENNY TUISKU-IOSIF MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE

Lenny Tuisku-Iosif is an Associate Director at PwC Strategy& Australia, specialising in commercial due diligence and growth strategy. He has a passion for NFP engagement and served as Global Chief Operations Officer at 180 Degrees Consulting where he structured operations across 105 branches and led over 20 NFP consulting projects. Outside of work and volunteering, Lenny enjoys climbing and has climbed peaks across the Himalayas and the Andes, including a recent solo ascent of the highest peak in South America, Aconcagua.



AARON VAN REE YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH

Aaron is a strategy and commissioning manager for mental health programs in Melbourne's East. He has extensive experience in the mental health and social services sector, particularly supporting refugee and Aboriginal communities. Aaron has enjoyed many years of volunteer work, mostly in engaging disadvantaged youth. He holds a Bachelor of Social Work with First Class Honours from RMIT University. Aaron loves to spend time with his three children; travelling, cooking and playing sport.



CHARLOTTE VELDHOEN - VAN DER AVOORT BREAST CANCER NETWORK AUSTRALIA

Charlotte is a strategic advisor with international experience in health, social services and education. Charlotte's personal mission is to bravely challenge herself and others to help create a fairer more sustainable world in which people have access to good public services when and where they need them. Her current role is Director of Strategy and Planning at Western Health. Charlotte holds two Master degrees; Biomedical Sciences and Health Economics, Policy and Law. She enjoys spending time with her family who share her enthusiasm for sports, food, board games and the outdoors.



CASSIE WHELAN CEREBRAL PALSY SUPPORT NETWORK

Cassie Whelan is a strategic corporate communications and media executive with over 15 years of experience across the horticulture, agriculture, health and fitness, consumer tech and automotive sectors. She has dynamic expertise in marketing communications, corporate and brand reputation, as well as expertise in media, stakeholder engagement, digital and social and partnerships. Cassie leads teams in developing communication strategies in Australia and the Asia Pacific region. Currently, she heads the communications function at Apple and Pear Australia Limited (APAL), supporting Australia's apple and pear growers and oversees commercial communications for the global Pink Lady® network, a brand managed by APAL.



TESS WHELAN MELBOURNE & OLYMPIC PARKS TRUST

Tess Whelan is a project and program specialist looking to create long term sustainable change and work towards a more equitable world. Tess currently works at Our Watch leading workforce capacity building initiatives to prevent violence against women with disabilities. Prior to this, Tess led an internship program which saw more than 300 students with a disability placed in large Australian organisations during their university holidays. When Tess isn't working to create change, she is on the tennis court or cricket pitch training to make her next Australian squad in blind tennis and blind cricket.



DAISY YE REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA

Originally from Shanghai, Daisy moved to Australia seven years ago and her lived experience gives her perspectives on community needs and the migrant experience. She works as an Economic Development Project Officer for Warrnambool City Council, where she develops key skills in project management and community-focused initiatives. Her heart, however, lies in community engagement and she founded the Warrnambool Multicultural Association after seeing a gap in support for migrants and refugees, aiming to create a sense of belonging for newcomers. Outside of work and volunteering, she enjoys spending time with family and practicing belly dancing.



VALERIAN ZAITSEV STAND UP

Valerian is a strong believer that education is the best policy lever we can pull to improve the lives of all Australians. He has spent the vast majority of his career teaching anatomy and physiology to students at the top universities in Australia. As an award-winning academic he has significantly contributed to the improvement of education programs. In a former life, Valerian was a judoka, having won multiple state, national and international medals. His favourite pursuit is philosophy, enjoying reading the great works of the Greek and Roman Empires as well as great Jewish thinkers like Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks.



NICK ZISSIS ROZANA AUSTRALIA

Nick is a Senior Manager in Auditing at PwC and has been a qualified Chartered Accountant since 2018. Nick specialises in financial services and works closely with Boards and Audit Committees to advise them on statutory audit / financial reporting matters. Nick previously worked in local government as a duty manager and the OH&S representative and was a recurring volunteer for the Good Friday Appeal. These experiences have allowed him to develop a breadth of experience, both professionally and personally that he looks forward to further expanding.

“In it’s first year of participating in the Observership Program, Wodonga TAFE was delighted to bring someone into the Boardroom who brought with them education sector skills coupled with a youthful and culturally diverse perspective. Their contribution throughout the year was warmly received and valued.”

Allison Jenvey OAM, Chair Wodonga TAFE and Chair Victorian TAFE Association

“Diversity is a key element for good governance, yet too often people with different education, skills, lived experience, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds don’t have the pathways to gain board experience. The Observership Program has an outstanding track record of sourcing and matching highly skilled, diverse, candidates to NFP and government boards. It’s a brilliant program, building the next generation of Directors!”

Morgana Ryan, Director, CARE Australia, former Chair Infoxchange

“The Australian Ballet has participated in the Observership Program for three years and has found the quality of the candidates presented to us for consideration to be outstanding. We have been fortunate to have two Observers to date and both bring a range of skills, experience and diversity to our Board. As a major performing arts company, this program has proven to be an excellent way for us to contribute to the development of talented future leaders and to increase the diversity of viewpoints available to us.”

Libby Christie AM, Former Executive Director, The Australian Ballet



“We received approval from the Victorian Government to appoint Anna Pitt, our 2019 Board Observer to the Victorian Opera Board. Anna stayed on our Marketing Committee in 2020 after her official Observership ended and

she has continued to attend Board meetings as an Observer since that time. Based on her skills and contribution, we decided earlier this year to propose her to the government as a full Board member. We are delighted that her appointment was approved and are excited to welcome her to the Board. We have been very happy with the quality of our Observers since joining the Program in 2017.”

Grant Powell, Board Director, Victorian Opera

“The support and professional development the Observers receive over the course of the Program is invaluable and cannot be accessed anywhere else. The selection process is very strategic: it ensures organisational fit. Our Observers have demonstrated real diligence and commitment to their role: they have brought valuable experience and expertise to the board table, including during the current Covid-19 crisis.”

Victoria Marles AM, Former Chair, Consumer Action Law Centre, Chair, Abbotsford Convent Foundation and Former CEO, Trust For Nature



Observer and Board Directors, Sacred Heart Mission

“I am really impressed with the philosophy of the Observership Program to encourage young professionals to get a deep understanding of governance

practices in the not for profit sector. This is an area of real need and one where they can make a great contribution. What surprised me in our first year of participation was the quality of the candidates offered to the MSO – highly motivated individuals, each with strong credentials and importantly, in our case, a passion for music! The Observers receive a comprehensive, structured training program facilitated by the AICD, so they come to the table well prepared to broaden their understanding with practical experience. I encourage all not for profits to seriously consider participating in the program.”

Michael Ullmer AM, Former Chair, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO)

“The Program is a wonderful opportunity for personal development as participation exposes you to a diverse community of NFP leaders who are regularly making decisions that have a broader impact on society. The knowledge and skills that you pick up as an Observer can’t be taught in a classroom. By observing boards in action, you will learn how to be a better leader, a better listener and have a broader array of skills through which to apply when making decisions in any sector. The formal training program is comprehensive in nature and when applied alongside the practical observing of a board, is the perfect catalyst for a person to want to make a difference in whatever leadership role they are pursuing.”

Kate Stewart, Observer, joined FareShare following her Observership





LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY AS AN OBSERVER

Each organisation has been encouraged to review its directors' and offices' insurance, including potential coverage of you as an Observer.

The Program has sought legal advice on the potential liability associated with serving as an Observer and whether this role could be considered akin to the role of a shadow director under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) (the Act).

SHADOW DIRECTORS

In the ordinary course, a director is a person who has been formally appointed to act as a director of a company or a body. However, the definition of a director under the Act extends to a shadow director.

A person who is not validly appointed as a director will be a shadow director if they either act in the position of a director or if the directors are accustomed to act in accordance with that person's instructions or wishes. A person is not a shadow director merely because the directors act on advice given by the person in the proper performance of functions attaching to the person's professional capacity, or the person's business relationship with the directors or the company.

When determining whether a person is a shadow director, regard should be had to a variety of factors including whether:

- (a) there is a causal connection between the instruction or the wish of the person and the directors acting on it, though it is not sufficient if the act that was specified in the instruction is something the directors would do irrespective of the instruction;
- (b) there is "habitual compliance over a period of time"; and
- (c) the directors collectively are accustomed to act on the person's instructions or wishes.

ARE OBSERVERS SHADOW DIRECTORS?

In the course of their 12 month Observership, Observers are not appointed to act as directors of the companies or bodies that they are paired with.

Given that an Observer has no voting rights and only attends board or committee meetings to observe the workings of a board as a learning experience, it is unlikely that an Observer will be found to be acting as a director of the partnership, company or body.

Additionally, the word accustomed implies that there must be a pattern of conforming to the wishes of the person, rather than a single instance.

Given that the extent of the Observer's relationship with the board will be confined to a 12 month period, it would appear unlikely that the Observer would be able to exert a pattern of influence such that the directors who are formally appointed to the board would be in the habit of complying with the wishes of the Observer. Accordingly, we have received legal advice stating that in the absence of any additional facts, an Observer would not be considered to be a shadow director and thereby exposed to any liability that follows from being a director under the Act.

OUR GOVERNANCE

The Observership Program is a company limited by guarantee with an independent board and is registered with the Australian Charities and not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

BOARD DIRECTORS: Jonathan Gavshon (Founder and Chair), Alison Deans, Conor Foley (2017 Observer), Dennis Goldner AM, Ronny Andrade Parra and Joseph Skrzynski AO.

David Gonski AC, Peter Joseph AM and Jillian Segal AO are The Program Patrons.

The board of The Observership Program has an Observer each year.



David Gonski AC, Observership Program Patron

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PHOTOGRAPHERS: Photographers: Cendrine Beasley, Salona Chithiray, Giselle Haber, Andrew Hobbs, Nico Keenan

“As an Wailwan and Kamilaroi man concerned about the need for Indigenous representation in the board room of our organisations, the Observership Program gave me the foundational knowledge I need to be comfortable stepping up into these much needed roles. It's been as beneficial to me as it has been to our organisations. I implore our future leaders and community organisations to use this valuable program and secure the future of Indigenous organisations run by our communities, for our communities.”

Blayne Welsh, Observer, appointed to Ilbjerri Theatre Board following his Observership

“I want to express my gratitude for an outstanding Program. It has been truly life-changing... The ‘Finance for the NFP Director’ session was a masterclass in distilling complex financial concepts into accessible insights for new directors. As a Chartered Accountant, I was particularly impressed with the facilitator’s ability to articulate key financial ratios and trends in a way that resonated with those unfamiliar with financial statements. It was a standout example of the high-quality training provided by the AICD, which is such a valuable part of The Observership Program.”

James Moulton, Director, Corporate Value Advisory, PwC, appointed to Melbourne Chamber Orchestra following his 2024 Observership

