

ASSOCIATIONS

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FINSIA's evolution to CISI

*David Cox, President,
Financial Services Institute of Australasia
discusses the strategic alliance*

- ◆ Community Broadcasting Association of Australia is Association of the Year™
- ◆ Australian Institute of Health and Safety wins Association Event of the Year™
- ◆ P&Cs Qld awarded Association External Campaign of the Year™
- ◆ Communication and Public Relations Australia awarded Association Turnaround of the Year™



An aerial photograph of Perth, Australia, during the golden hour of sunset. The city skyline is visible in the background with several prominent skyscrapers. In the foreground, a large, lush green park with many trees and a winding path is visible. A multi-lane highway runs through the middle ground. The text "YOUR DREAM BUSINESS EVENT DESTINATION" is overlaid in white, with "DREAM" being the largest word.

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Since 2004, Associations Forum has:
Presented 6,226 hours to 41,180 delegates,
hence 158,394 hours delivered.
Provided 1,178 associations training presentations

Fixing Board turmoil at RACP



The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) continues to be in the national headlines for the wrong reasons.

Historical tensions date back years. In 2019, the ACNC opened a compliance probe into RACP's governance. Central to the 2025 dispute is a boardroom struggle between the current President, Professor Jennifer Martin, and President-elect, Dr Sharmila Chandran.

We suggest the College re-does its governance structure with these back-to-basics solutions:

- 1 Reduce the Board size to six Directors who are physicians. Elect three Directors every odd year for a two-year term and elect three Directors every even year for a two-year term. Directors will easily get to know each other.
- 2 Have a term limit of two x two-year terms hence four years on the Board. This will allow continuity yet fresh ideas.
- 3 In this time of turmoil, forget Appointed Directors. Such external appointments only work in a harmonious and trusting culture.
- 4 Have the Board elect the President every year from among the six Directors for a one-year term, with a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms. Allow the Board to replace the President by a simple majority vote if absolutely necessary.
- 5 The President should chair every Board meeting when present. Don't have a separate President and Chair. Have only one person as first among equals.

- 6 Don't give the President a casting vote when motions are tied. Tied votes means a majority was not reached, and that happens.
- 7 Drop the idea of a Nominations Committee, especially with external appointees. Doctors are smart and can figure out for whom they wish to vote.
- 8 The CEO to draft a simple two-page Plan. Use a facilitator from Associations Forum to present the Plan to the Board for live refinement. Do annual Planning for a maximum of one day. Leave implementation to the CEO.
- 9 Have a culture of getting along. Don't take bullying claims to the Fair Work Commission. Don't call Special General Meetings to remove Directors. Don't involve ACNC or ASIC. Don't waste million(s). Let the six Directors work it out.
- 10 Rejoin Associations Forum. You have obviously missed our experience.

John Peacock AM

Chief Executive Officer, Associations Forum
jpeacock@nfp.net.au

Australian Dental Industry Association celebrates 100 years of achievement

In 2025, the Australian Dental Industry Association (ADIA) proudly marks 100 years of advancing

Australia's dental industry. Since 1925, ADIA has led the way in advocacy, standards development, and industry collaboration, helping shape a stronger and more innovative sector. Across the century, ADIA has played a key role in supporting local manufacturers, improving regulatory frameworks, and promoting better oral health outcomes for all Australians.

The centenary celebration honoured the association's achievements, long-standing members, and contributions to policy and professional growth, reinforcing ADIA's position as a vital voice for the dental industry. 

Australian Music Therapy Association marks 50 years of transformative care

This year, the Australian Music Therapy Association (AMTA) celebrates its 50th anniversary, commemorating five decades of

leadership in advancing music therapy as a recognised and evidence-based allied health profession. Since 1975, AMTA has played a vital role in building professional standards, driving education, and promoting the therapeutic value of music in supporting wellbeing across all stages of life.

The anniversary is being celebrated with a refreshed visual identity and a national call for stories that showcase the real-life impact of music therapy. This milestone highlights AMTA's ongoing commitment to connection, care, and professional excellence. 

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Is Your Board Ready for 2026?

As the year draws to a close, many associations are already looking ahead. Strategy offsites. Board refresh cycles. A new operating plan. But amid all the planning, it's worth asking: how well is your board actually set up to operate, not just at the strategic level, but in the day-to-day?

Because even high-functioning boards can struggle with inefficient processes. Disconnected prep, unclear follow-up, and the logistics of remote and hybrid participation all chip away at focus and momentum. These are not just tech problems. They are governance problems. And left unaddressed, they carry forward into the next year. They drain capacity, stretch staff, and limit the board's ability to lead.

So, what does better look like?

There's no one-size answer, but it usually starts with small operational shifts. Clearer pre-read workflows. Tighter meeting structures. Stronger accountability mechanisms. And in many cases, the right technology can support that shift, especially when chosen and implemented with the unique needs of the board in mind. If you're thinking about how to improve board efficiency in 2026, OnBoard's Board Efficiency Toolkit might be a helpful starting point.

It brings together practical resources to help associations:

- ✦ Rethink where board friction actually comes from
- ✦ Assess board management software options with the right lens
- ✦ Clarify what efficiency means in the context of good governance
- ✦ Identify small process changes that can drive outsized impact

These are not quick fixes. But they are the kinds of questions that can set boards up for a smoother, more focused year ahead.

Want to see what efficient governance could look like for your board?

Scan the QR code below, to download the **Board Efficiency Toolkit** 




OnBoard

WA Small Maltsters unite to launch Independent Malt Association

In 2025, Western Australia's small-scale malt producers took a major step forward with the launch of Independent Malt Association Western Australia.

Formed by four pioneering maltsters, the association represents a united voice for local, independent malt producers and aims to strengthen their role in the craft brewing supply chain. Built on shared values and challenges, the association seeks to promote the quality and traceability of WA-grown grains while advocating for greater support from brewers and government bodies. The initiative mirrors the independent beer movement and highlights the value of collaboration, storytelling, and regional pride in shaping Australia's malt landscape. 

IAP2 Australasia rebrands as Engagement Institute

IAP2 Australasia has officially rebranded as the Engagement Institute, marking a significant step in the evolution of engagement as a professional discipline in Australia and New Zealand. The new name reflects the organisation's long-standing role in building capability, setting standards, and advocating for the value of community and stakeholder engagement in better decision-making.

The change responds to member feedback and sector shifts, aligning more closely with the language and practice recognised across the region. While the name has changed, the organisation remains committed to delivering high-quality training and representing engagement professionals locally and globally. 

SAVE THE DATE: 28 - 29 JULY 2026
ASSOCIATIONS FORUM NATIONAL CONFERENCE



ADVERTORIAL

Help your Attendees Capture Every Moment at Your Events

Smarter event notes with Cvent's AI capabilities

Are you listening, or are you scribbling? Note-taking at events has always forced members to make a difficult choice: absorb the content and risk forgetting details, or frantically jot notes and lose the presentation's flow. Fortunately, the era of analogue note-taking and distraction is finally over, thanks to Cvent.

Cvent, a global leader in event technology, is addressing this classic pain point with a major advancement in event note-taking, powered by CventIQ™. This embedded intelligence layer moves beyond generic AI to achieve real, tangible impact. And for your attendees, it all starts with the simple (yet tedious) practice of note-taking at events.

From Transcript to Insight: AI-Powered Session Summaries

The Session Snapshot feature, available in the Attendee Hub app, provides a real-time, accurate transcript of the speaker's words with virtually zero lag. Event attendees simply tap a button when they hear something valuable; the system automatically captures not just that moment, but a full minute of the speaker's words.

This raw transcript then undergoes an intelligent transformation. The app's built-in AI automatically generates concise summaries and descriptive labels for each captured segment. No more spending hours manually reviewing, categorising, or trying to decipher your own handwriting post-event. Members are free to focus entirely on the speaker and the experience, knowing a customised and searchable notes library is being curated in the background.

Data-Driven Content: Measuring True Audience Interest

While this feature greatly simplifies note-taking for attendees, it provides event organisers with something they've never had: real-time, objective data on audience engagement. Each tap creates a data point showing precisely when members engage most deeply with a presentation. This enables associations to plan their event programming with greater certainty. They can precisely see which segments generated the most interest, allowing them to identify effective content, compare engagement across sessions, and spot emerging topics before they become trends.

A Built-In Partner for Total Event Automation

Session Snapshots is just one example of CventIQ in action. This expansive intelligence layer acts as your built-in partner, automating time-consuming tasks across the entire event lifecycle. CventIQ saves your team hours by helping with everything from writing event content and creating social media posts to summarising event feedback and getting smart recommendations. To learn more about how CventIQ can automate your way to more impactful events, scan the QR code. 



Major association cyber scammed at conference time

A major Australian health sector association was plunged into crisis in 2024 when the final payment for its national conference was unknowingly paid to a fraudulent third-party. The association's CEO shares this story and its fraud warning.

The lead up to an association's National Conference can be hectic and as a CEO, your day can change with a phone call. The day before I was to fly interstate to our association's flagship conference, I received a call from my Finance Manager saying that our bank believes we were the victim of a cyber-breach and cyber-fraud. Given the venue had not received the final substantial payment of over AUD\$450,000 as per the contract, the Conference Centre were raising the potential of default and therefore not enabling access.

At this point, we were unsure if the breach was with us or the venue - and would the National Conference go ahead?

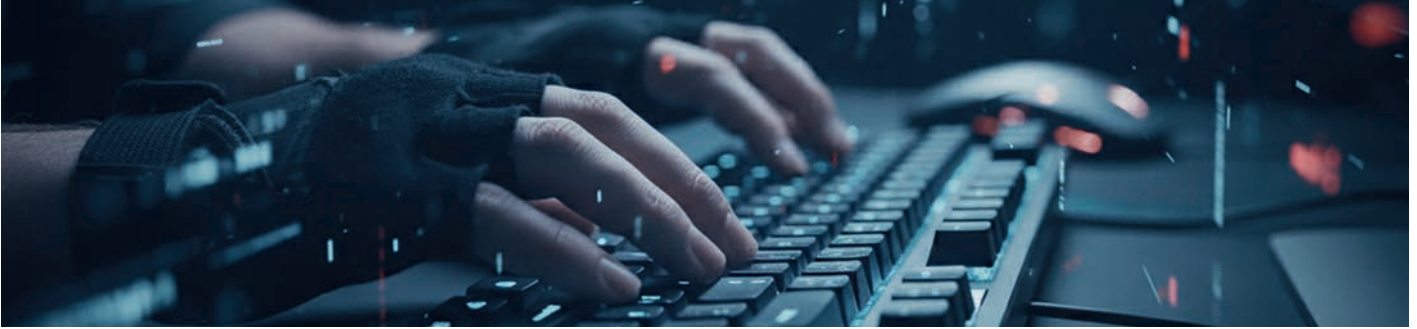
In the immediate phase, multiple matters arose:

- ◇ Is there integrity in our system and what was the quantum?
- ◇ Is there integrity in their system?
- ◇ Will the conference proceed and how can we ensure it does?
- ◇ Coordinating action to contain and resolve the threat
- ◇ Alerting the Chair of the Board to the issue

A crisis response approach was entered into with staff, our IT Manager and Managed Service Provider (the third-party company which remotely manages our IT infrastructure and end-user systems), the bank, the Australian Federal Police, our insurer, forensic cyber security experts and the Conference Centre.

It is after the event that one gets a sense of the true impact and the timeline of events that occur. Therefore, I have prepared a summary of actions and events – all of which occurred within the span of 7 days and resolution within 21 days:

- 1 The Threat Actor entered an Employee System through known email login credentials - exacerbated by the fact that the specific account did not have Multi-Factor Authentication enabled at that time. This entry may have been through a phishing link, an unsecured network, and/or account credentials being known to the Threat Actor.
- 2 The Threat Actor embedded inbox rules to intercept and alter the anticipated invoice to the Employee System from the Conference Centre for approval and payment in accordance with the contract.
- 3 Spoofing emails and change of the Conference Centre bank account were not picked up at the initial stage.
- 4 Payment was approved after a conversation between employee and CEO and forwarded to the Finance Team for payment.
- 5 Payment was made by the Finance Team after changing bank account details according to the fraudulent invoice without further verification.
- 6 The Finance Team and CEO received a call from our business banking provider stating that we may have been a victim of cyber-fraud.
- 7 The Finance Team contacted our cyber event insurer, and their Incident Response Team was alerted to undertake crisis management and Forensic Investigation.
- 8 Employees were notified by the Conference Centre that payment had not been received and were engaged with to ensure continuity of National Conference given that it was unknown at that stage if the issue was with us or Conference Centre.
- 9 The CEO provided immediate disclosure to the Chair of the Board with a scheduled Board meeting being in two days.
- 10 Initial efforts to ensure integrity in IT systems by the IT Manager commenced once the issue was identified and staff were notified. Remediation activities were instituted.
- 11 A police report was made.
- 12 Confirmation was received from the Conference Centre that a good faith approach was being taken to enable the National Conference to proceed.
- 13 The CEO advised lawyers of the issue.
- 14 The CEO met with the Conference Centre to agree to a joint approach and made the offer of a good-faith payment whilst the issue was being worked through. The offer was received and welcomed by the Conference Centre.
- 15 Meetings with the incident response team continued in conjunction with the IT Manager and Managed Service Provider.
- 16 Confidence in the integrity of systems was regained whilst the extent of the issue was being determined.
- 17 A change in the financial authorisation process was implemented to enable greater confidence.
- 18 The Managed Service Provider confirmed confidence in restoration of the system integrity.
- 19 Progress report prepared for Board meeting and Internal email to staff.
- 20 Update from Incident Response Team received.
- 21 The CEO met with the Conference Centre and given it was clearer that the issue was not with the Conference Centre, and made a further good-faith offer.
- 22 The CEO updated the Board and staff on a daily basis.
- 23 The CEO advised that all funds were recovered due to banking systems 11 days post-breach.
- 24 Draft report from Incident Response Team received 12 days post-breach.
- 25 Preliminary report received from Managed Service Provider on 13 days post-breach.
- 26 Recommendations received from Forensic Investigation 17 days post-breach and we needed to ensure that threshold of notifiable incident had been reached or not. This work was undertaken by Forensic Investigation and IT Manager.
- 27 Incident Response Team and Forensic Investigation confirmed 20 days post-breach that we did not meet criteria of eligible data breach and lawyers advised we could rely on this view.
- 28 The CEO advised the Board and staff of the outcome.
- 29 Further analysis commissioned with Managed Service Provider and separately an audit through an independent firm to ensure system and process integrity.
- 30 Further penetration test and system checks conducted 23 days post-breach.
- 31 Final report received from Incident Response Team and Forensic Investigation 23 days after notification.



It was an intense time. The National Conference was judged “best ever” by delegates, and attendees were unaware of the crisis. What became clear were failures at three levels:

- ◇ The phishing link that enabled the Threat Actor to lurk in the system and redirect the invoice email,
- ◇ The failure to verify why the bank details on the invoice were changed, and
- ◇ The system had a “security door” open through the absence of Multi-Factor Authentication being enabled for the original email recipient.

In conclusion, when informed that the money had been returned and there had been no apparent compromise of corporate or personal information, a sense of relief was gained. However, there were scars from this incident.

The learnings were clear:

- ◇ People are the front door and need to remain vigilant when providing continuous education or other member services.
- ◇ Financial systems and protocols need to be reviewed and followed, including more secure verifications.
- ◇ Review what data the association holds and implement role-based restrictions on access to systems.
- ◇ Have independent third parties review your systems in addition to undertaking penetration testing.

There are many resources available to help prevent such events and equally much guidance on what to do if and when fraud happens. Be prepared and have a crisis response plan ready – and be proactively vigilant. 

ADVERTORIAL

Jazz Up Your Business Events: Moreton Hire’s Stylish Stand Against Fast Furniture

Australia’s most trusted event and exhibition company, Moreton Hire, has just unveiled its latest addition to their premium furniture collection—the Jazz upholstered range.

This sleek new furniture family currently includes a chair and stool available in three complementary colours - Italian-designed and manufactured to the highest standards. With its refined aesthetic and exceptional build quality, Jazz is set to elevate business event styling across the country. But this launch isn’t just about style—it’s a statement. By ethical procurement, Moreton Hire continues to take a firm stance against fast furniture. In a market often flooded with disposable, low-quality furnishings, Moreton Hire is choosing durability, safety, and environmental responsibility. Their commitment ensures their furniture ranges they invest in is all *consciously sourced with reputable suppliers*, built to last, and aligned with *considered footprints*—a philosophy that prioritises long-term value over short-term convenience. Fast furniture, typically mass-produced for short-term use, contributes significantly to landfill waste and environmental degradation. Moreton Hire’s rejection of this trend is more than a business decision for the hire industry—it’s a pledge to reduce waste, support ethical manufacturing, and further promote a circular economy. By partnering with vetted suppliers who meet strict environmental and safety standards, they ensure that all furniture ranges not only look good but does good.

The Jazz collection is *in stock now* and *available in major cities on the East Coast*, making it easier than ever for event planners to access high-quality furniture without compromising on style. Whether it’s a corporate function, convention, exhibition, or major event, the Jazz chair and stool offer a versatile solution that blends elegance with conscious design.

Moreton Hire’s forward-thinking approach is reshaping the event hire landscape. By investing in furniture that is both beautiful and built to endure, they’re setting a new benchmark for responsible event styling. The Jazz range is more than a product—it’s a reflection of values that prioritise quality, sustainability, and trust.

For those seeking to make a timeless statement at their next event, the Jazz upholstered range is the perfect choice. Discover how Moreton Hire is redefining event furniture—one ethically crafted piece at a time. 



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ICC Sydney hosts Association Leaders Symposium

On 18 September 2025, Associations Forum proudly hosted another successful Association Leaders Symposium at the International Convention Centre Sydney. The gathering of 110 attendees included industry professionals and association leaders from around Australia.

Andrew McKellar, CEO of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Alex Robson, Deputy Chair of the Productivity Commission, shared insights on Australia's productivity and the role associations play in shaping national economic performance. Mary Kate Cunningham, Chief Public Policy and Governance Officer at American Society of Association Executives, joined live from Washington DC to discuss ASAE's public policy work, from tax reform to workforce development. Felix Pirie, CEO of Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia, offered a candid look at leadership transitions and board dynamics, while Simon Croft (Housing Industry Association) and Alex Ball (Diabetes Australia) explored high-impact advocacy in housing and health. Other speakers included Yasser El-Ansary, former CEO of FINSIA, who presented on global alignment through FINSIA's potential partnership with CISI, and Jamieson Louttit, Principal at JLA Insolvency & Advisory, who addressed insolvency risks for NFP directors. Josh Griggs, CEO of the Australian Computer Society, concluded the day

by highlighting AI's potential to drive innovation, productivity, and responsible leadership in associations. Delegates had the opportunity to expand their networks and build valuable connections with fellow association professionals and sponsors, each catering to specific industry needs. Associations Forum was proud to foster a collaborative environment where attendees could enhance their leadership skills and gain practical insights to improve the performance of their associations. 

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Governology holds Associations Conference London

Over 90 delegates attended the second Associations Conference London on 1 October 2025. Arranged by association governance consultancy, Governology, senior association leaders discussed structure, governance and major restructures. Throughout the conference, delegates heard inspiring discussions, insightful presentations, and enjoyed networking opportunities.

Speakers included Dr Colin Church, Chief Executive of the Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining; Jen Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive of the Chartered College of Teaching; and Louise Simpson, Executive Director of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, who took part in a panel on considerations by Royal Chartered bodies. Neeta Major, Group CFO at the British Medical Association, reflected on her time as Co-CEO of the BMA and the governance complexities of leading a major professional union.

Kathy Nguyen, Senior Lawyer at Governology, shared compelling case studies of governance breakdowns within associations. Additional speakers included Tanja Munro from the European Consortium for Political Research, Helena Coe of the Confederation of British Industry, and Martin McTague OBE, Chair of the Federation of Small Businesses, who highlighted the critical role associations play in national and international policy and advocacy. 



L-R: Dr Colin Church, Jen Baxter, Louise Simpson and John Peacock AM

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FINSIA to join global membership body CISI

The Financial Services Institute of Australasia (FINSIA) has entered a Strategic Alliance with the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment (CISI), resulting in all members transitioning to the chartered professional body in late November 2025. The decision reflects FINSIA's history and its strategic goal of providing greater value and global reach for members.

FINSIA's History

FINSIA's roots trace back to the banking and securities professions of Australia and New Zealand. The organisation was formally created in 2005 through the merger of the Australasian Institute of Banking & Finance (AIBF), founded in 1886, and the Securities Institute of Australia (SIA), founded in 1966.

Through this alliance, FINSIA reinforces its role as the professional membership body representing financial services practitioners across banking, institutional markets, funds management, financial advice, and securities in Australia and New Zealand. Over time, FINSIA has supported members through professional development, networking events, advocacy, and industry research.

A key change occurred in 2007 when, with 60% member support, FINSIA sold its education business to Kaplan Inc for AUD\$36 million. The Board decided to focus resources on membership services, accreditation, policy, and advocacy, prioritising serving members over maintaining an education business.

Why FINSIA Entered the Strategic Alliance with CISI

FINSIA President David Cox F FIN said: "Joining CISI allows members to stand alongside more than 54,000 financial services professionals worldwide, access internationally recognised credentials, world-class professional development, thought leadership, and unique networking opportunities."

The rationale behind the decision includes:

- ♦ **Global scale and recognition:** CISI, a UK-based body with a Royal Charter, has more than 54,000 members in over 100 countries.
- ♦ **Professional development and credentials:** CISI offers learning programs, CPD resources, e-learning, global content, and post-nominals.
- ♦ **Operational efficiency and member value:** FINSIA faces structural challenges operating as a membership body in a fragmented market.
- ♦ **Local relevance with global connection:** CISI will provide regional content and local support.

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- ◆ **Member feedback and strategic timing:** Years of consultation and surveys showed international accreditation and global networks rank high among member priorities.

What Members Can Expect

- ◆ Current members can join CISI at an equivalent membership level.
- ◆ Membership fees will generally be lower.
- ◆ Renewal is deferred until 1 December 2026.
- ◆ FINSIA post-nominals remain usable for two years; CISI post-nominals are immediately available.
- ◆ Members gain access to CISI's global network, CPD platform, thought leadership, and Chartership opportunities.
- ◆ Local representation will include a new Australia & New Zealand Advisory Council and domestic events.

Context and Implications

The move addresses challenges of scale and relevance and provides members with globally recognised credentials, professional development, and networking. The 2007 sale of FINSIA's education business signalled a refocus on membership services, and the CISI alliance represents the next phase of that evolution.

For members, the alliance opens international opportunities. In an era when financial services professionals operate across borders, globally recognised credentials are increasingly valuable. The change also raises questions about identity, continuity, and transition risk - how

FINSIA's local heritage will integrate with CISI's global brand, and how local networks and culture will be preserved. These have been addressed through careful planning, consultation, and mapping of the transition process.

David Cox said: "The sectors FINSIA serves are diverse and demand a broad proposition. The Strategic Alliance aligns both organisations' member base and global reach."

Conclusion

By entering the Strategic Alliance with CISI, FINSIA positions its members for a globally connected, professionally recognised, and cost-efficient future. Rooted in over a century of history, shaped by major decisions including the 2007 sale to Kaplan, FINSIA has concluded that the next chapter for its members lies in scale, relevance, and global credentials.

For members, the transition offers opportunity and change.

The global network, enhanced credentialing, and expanded professional development are clear advantages, while logistics such as membership migration, CPD obligations, and post-nominal usage will require attention.

The Strategic Alliance offers the promise of a stronger, more connected professional standing on the global stage. 

2025 Associations Forum Gala Dinner

SCAN TO WATCH



CEO John Peacock recaps a 'spectacular night'



Association Board Survey 2025 compares Australian and UK associations

Associations Forum and Governology analysed the results of the 2025 Association Board Survey, in which 344 organisations took part.

The Association Board Survey, conducted annually since 2008, examines a number of trends in association governance and Board composition. Long established in Australia, UK associations are now surveyed therefore the report provides the similarities and differences between associations in both countries. As leading providers of governance training and advice, Associations Forum and Governology have shared the following key findings from this year's survey:

- ◇ The average number of directors on a Board is 8.9 in Australia compared to 12.1 in the UK. There has been no change in the median number of directors from the 2024 survey with 9.5 in Australia and 11.9 in the UK.
- ◇ Gender balance is now close to equilibrium in Australia with "48% female Board members, compared to 38% in the UK. Associations in the UK are also changing as females represented only 17% in the 2024 survey.

- ◇ Survey participants reported a greater number of Presidents/Chairs of Board being appointed by their members compared to last year – increasing from 25% to 32% in Australia and from 30% to 42% in the UK.
- ◇ The percentage of organisations with an independent Chair increased from 6% to 9% in Australia, while remaining consistent in the UK at 12%.
- ◇ The average number of Board meetings held during the year increased marginally from 6.6 to 6.9 in Australia and reduced from 5.7 to 4.8 in the UK.

Association Board Survey is free for Associations Forum members or can be purchased for AUD \$200 (by NFP organisations only) by contacting the team at info@associations.net.au 

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Community Broadcasting Association of Australia is Association of the Year™ 2025

Associations Forum was pleased to announce the **Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA)** as recipient of the Association of the Year Award™ 2025 at the dedicated Association Awards™ dinner on 6 November 2025 at Novotel Melbourne Airport.

The Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) is the national peak body for over 300 community media organisations. Their members reach 5.2 million listeners weekly with diverse, local, and independent content. Their mission is to support and champion community broadcasters and in 2024/25, CBAA achieved impactful outcomes for members. They secured the sector's largest-ever funding increase, modernised governance, deepened engagement, and lifted visibility. They also helped stations gain economies of scale through innovative shared services, including DAB+ access, the Community Radio Plus app, and digital monitoring tools. These achievements are the culmination of a clear strategy, strong leadership, and member-centred culture.

Associations Forum congratulates the other nominees:

- ★ Australian Catholic Primary Principals' Association
- ★ Australian College of Critical Care Nurses
- ★ Australian Council for Educational Leaders
- ★ Australian Institute of Conveyancers VIC Division
- ★ Australian Retail Credit Association
- ★ Australian Traditional Medicine Society
- ★ Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand
- ★ Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand
- ★ Grain Growers Limited
- ★ Independent Higher Education Australia
- ★ P&Cs Qld
- ★ Real Estate Institute of NSW
- ★ Swimming Pool and Spa Association of Australia
- ★ Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry



L-R: Paul Clements (Nexia Australia), Matt Field (Community Broadcasting Association of Australia) and Andrew Gosbell (Associations Forum)

ABOUT THE JUDGES

LINDA SMITH is a Chair, Board Member, and CEO with 20+ years' experience across government, not-for-profit, and start-ups. Expert in digital economy, mobile technologies, and governance, she has led major health and public sector organisations, driving transformation and innovation.

CHRIS CHAMPION is a Chartered Professional Engineer, has 30+ years' board experience in public works and engineering. Recognised among Engineers Australia's Top 100 Influential Engineers, he has led IPWEA globally and shaped governance and engineering standards worldwide.

ANNABEL NORRIS has 20+ years at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, leading business events with strategic growth and profitability. Known for negotiation, creativity, and mentoring, she has built lasting relationships across not-for-profit, association, and international events sectors.

WAYNE CASTLE is a CEO and strategist with 30+ years in corporate, association, and events leadership. He has driven organisational growth, member success, and industry development while mentoring future leaders across associations and corporate events communities.

IAN STUART is a business events consultant with 18+ years at Business Events Sydney. He has led major international conferences, developed ambassador and university programs, and enhanced Sydney's reputation as a world-class destination for association, corporate, and government events.

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Communication and Public Relations Australia awarded Association Turnaround of the Year™ 2025

Communication and Public Relations Australia awarded Association Turnaround of the Year™.

Formerly known as the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) until 2019, the association has since undergone a significant transformation. After a difficult decade, the organisation was grappling with governance instability, plummeting membership, and near insolvency. Its relevance in the sector had diminished, its public voice had faded, and internal structures were no longer fit for purpose.

The turnaround began with a change in Board leadership in 2019. Over the five years that followed, the organisation underwent a staged but substantial program of revitalisation, transformation and re-engagement. Every aspect of the association was examined and reshaped—its governance, mission, member offering, financial strategy, staffing, and public positioning. Today, rebranded as Communication and Public Relations Australia (CPRA), the organisation is once again growing, financially stable, and leading conversations in the profession.

The new Board leadership at the end of 2019 turned the challenge of COVID-19 into an opportunity. To retain members, the Chair initiated a series of free webinars and drove a program focused on member value until a CEO was appointed in 2021. Over a two-year period between 2021 and 2023, CPRA undertook a comprehensive consultation process to examine the relevance and reach of the organisation's identity and purpose. The outcome was a major strategic shift: a name change from the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) to Communication and Public Relations Australia (CPRA).

Membership grew from 1,920 in 2022 to 2,710 at the end of FY25—a 41% increase. This was driven by the introduction of corporate membership (enabled by the new constitution), allowing organisations to join and nominate staff.

Associations Forum congratulates the other nominees:

- ★ Australian Traditional Medicine Society
- ★ Civil Contractors Federation Victoria
- ★ Municipal Works Australia
- ★ Royal Australian Chemical Institute
- ★ RSL & Services Clubs Association



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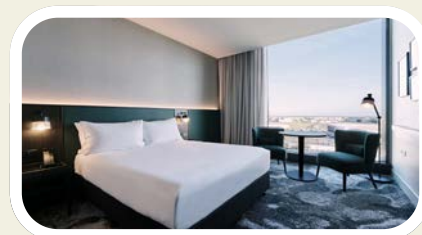
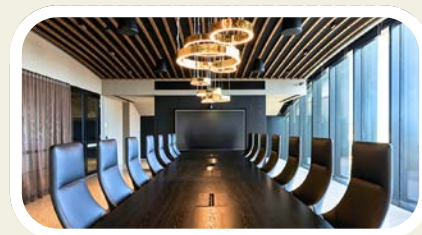
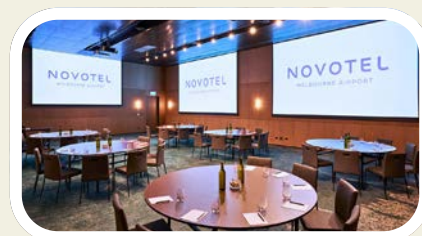


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Australian Institute of Health and Safety wins Association Event of the Year™ 2025

The Australian Institute of Health and Safety (AIHS) National Health and Safety Conference 2025 was a fully in-person, three-day professional event featuring a packed program of keynote sessions, workshops, an industry-first exhibition, offsite learning experiences, and structured networking. This flagship conference was anchored by the theme Driving Progress, bringing together safety professionals, regulators, academics, and business leaders from across Australia to explore innovations and challenges in workplace health and safety. With 700 registrations and 41 exhibitors, the 2025 conference secured the highest attendance for a national conference in the 76-year history of the Institute, exceeding attendance expectations by 27% and selling out both tickets and exhibition.

The conference aligned with the Australian Institute of Health and Safety's mission to advance the health and safety profession through education, collaboration, and advocacy. It responded to the growing need for cross-sector dialogue and capability-building in response to legislative changes, emerging risks (e.g. psychosocial hazards) and rapid shifts in organisational expectations. By delivering a program rich in technical learning, real-world application, and peer-exchange, the event provided a critical platform for safety professionals to connect, upskill, and influence progress.

The AIHS National Health and Safety Conference 2025 set a new benchmark for immersive, impactful events in the association sector. Through innovation, record attendance, high satisfaction, and industry-first activations, the conference not only met - but exceeded - its goals to educate, connect, and advance Australia's workplace health & safety community.

Associations Forum congratulates the other nominees:

- ★ Australian Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine Association
- ★ Australian Council for Educational Leaders
- ★ Australian Retail Credit Association
- ★ Association of School Business Administrators
- ★ Caravan Parks Association of Queensland
- ★ Family & Relationship Services Australia
- ★ Hire and Rental Industry Association
- ★ Landscaping Victoria
- ★ Master Builders Association of Victoria
- ★ Melons Australia
- ★ New Zealand Marketing Association
- ★ Optical Distributors & Manufacturers Association of Australia
- ★ Real Estate Institute of Australia
- ★ Real Estate Institute of NSW
- ★ Rehabilitation Medicine Society of Australia and New Zealand
- ★ Self Managed Super Fund Association
- ★ Self Storage Association of Australasia



Announcing the Association Event of the Year™ 2025



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P&Cs Qld awarded Association External Campaign of the Year™ 2025

The 2025 Association External Campaign of the Year™ Award was presented to the **P&Cs Qld's** for their 'Hands Up For Kids' campaign. P&Cs Qld's Advocacy campaign significantly advanced their mission to empower parents and ensure quality education for all Queensland state school students. Launched in early 2024, it directly addressed long-standing concerns over chronic public-school underfunding and the unsustainable burden on parents for essential resources, issues impacting student learning and wellbeing.

Associations Forum congratulates the other nominees:

- ★ Association of Heads of Independent Girls Schools
- ★ Australian HR Institute
- ★ Australian Physiotherapy Association
- ★ Australian Psychological Society
- ★ Australian Restaurant & Cafe Association
- ★ Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand
- ★ Institute of Public Administration Australia NSW

ASSOCIATIONS HALL OF FAME™ 2025

*Individuals who have made a significant contribution
and long-standing commitment to an association or associations*

★ **EVA GOLD** has led the English Teachers Association for 23 years, providing strong advocacy for English teachers and the subject's integrity. She advanced pedagogy, curriculum, and professional learning, represented teachers nationally, and pioneered innovative conferences and publications that enhanced teaching standards.

★ **FAYE DOHERTY** has dedicated over 24 years to the association sector, including 18 years with Civil Contractors Federation Victoria. As Workforce Capability & Careers Lead, she has created vital career pathways, supported workforce development, and built enduring connections across education, training, and industry.

★ **JOHN PLUMRIDGE** has contributed over two decades of leadership to Civil Contractors Federation Victoria, serving as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. With 50 years in civil construction, he has guided the Federation through major change, championed workforce development, and upheld strong governance and industry standards.

★ **KEITH ROBERTS** has contributed extensively to the not-for-profit sector, supporting governance, strategic development, and operational excellence. He has provided guidance to Epilepsy NSW, Australian Rheumatology Association, and the Society of Australian Genealogists.

★ **LEWIS KAPLAN** has over 30 years' leadership and management experience in public and primary health including over 20 years in CEO roles in peak consumer and health organisations including Diabetes Australia, Australian Red Cross NSW, Alzheimer's Australia NSW and Huntington's NSW ACT.

★ **MAREE MCCASKILL** has led Timber NSW Ltd with a focus on industry advocacy, sustainability, and workforce development. Her leadership has strengthened the organisation's influence, supporting members, advancing policy, and promoting growth across the timber sector in New South Wales.

★ **MATTHEW FISHER**, CEO of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists since 2022, has strengthened professionalism and advocacy. His career includes leadership roles with ESSA, Doctor Portal Learning and the University of Adelaide's Stretton Institute, supporting anaesthetists across Australia today.

★ **RAY LEAK** a Life Member of Municipal Works Australia, has contributed over 35 years to municipal operations. Renowned for workforce innovation, leadership, and mentorship, he safeguarded jobs during council reforms and strengthened collaboration across councils, leaving an enduring legacy of service and community commitment.

★ **SARAH BACHMANN** has dedicated nearly four decades to the association sector, transforming National Precast, advancing workforce education through micro-credentials, influencing industry regulations, and mentoring leaders. Her visionary leadership strengthened associations, industry standards, and member outcomes nationally and internationally.



L-R: Matthew Fisher, Ray Leak, Keith Roberts, Faye Doherty, John Plumridge, Sarah Bachmann and CEO John Peacock AM

Simon Birmingham appointed as ABA CEO



The Australian Banking Association has appointed former Federal Finance Minister, **THE HON. SIMON BIRMINGHAM**, as its new Chief Executive Officer. Announced by ABA Chair Andrew Irvine, Birmingham replaces retiring CEO, The Hon. Anna Bligh AC.

With a distinguished career in politics and industry, Birmingham brings deep policy experience and leadership. He aims to strengthen trust in banking, support regulatory competitiveness, and drive innovation to benefit customers and the broader economy. 

Kristin Brookfield is CEO of SPASA



The Swimming Pool and Spa Association of Australia and New Zealand (SPASA) has appointed **KRISTIN BROOKFIELD** as its new CEO. With over 30 years' experience in building, government relations, and industry advocacy, Brookfield brings policy expertise

and leadership. Formerly with the Housing Industry Association, she is set to strengthen SPASA's voice in regulatory discussions. Brookfield praised outgoing CEO Lindsay McGrath's legacy and is eager to lead SPASA's next growth phase.

ARITA's new CEO is Jonathan Smithers



ARITA has appointed **JONATHAN SMITHERS** as its new Chief Executive Officer, following an extensive recruitment process. With a strong background in governance and advocacy, Smithers has held senior roles including CEO of the Law Council of Australia and President of the Law Society of England and Wales. Recently, he led Arthritis Australia. ARITA President Mike Hayes praised Smithers's leadership experience and alignment with ARITA's strategic direction and professional values. 

Will Evans appointed Cattle Australia CEO



Cattle Australia has announced **WILL EVANS** as its incoming CEO. Evans, former CEO of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association, worked alongside outgoing CEO Dr Chris Parker during a one-month transition. Evans brings experience in beef policy and advocacy and will lead key initiatives including a national levy review. CA Chair Garry Edwards welcomed Evans' appointment, citing his strategic leadership and passion for unifying and strengthening the voice of producers nationwide. 

AFGC promotes Colm Maguire to CEO



The Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) has officially appointed **COLM MAGUIRE** as its Chief Executive Officer. Maguire, who has served as interim CEO, earlier joined AFGC as COO and Company Secretary. With leadership experience in not-for-profit, health, and sport sectors, Maguire is praised for his collaborative approach and strategic vision. AFGC Former Chair Anthony Holme highlighted his commitment to innovation and stakeholder engagement as vital for the industry's future. 

Kate Lynch is new MDANZ CEO



KATE LYNCH has been appointed CEO of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (MDANZ). A health economist and experienced healthcare executive, Lynch brings extensive expertise in market access, patient advocacy, and strategic leadership.

Lynch's leadership background includes CEO roles at GBMA and Stillbirth Foundation Australia. She is committed to advancing healthcare outcomes through collaboration, innovation, and mentoring future medical leaders. 

Charlie Thomas to lead VFF



The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has appointed **CHARLIE THOMAS** as its new Chief Executive Officer. VFF President Brett Hosking highlighted Thomas's 15 years of experience advocating for farmers and rural Australians. Known for his strategic leadership and stakeholder engagement, Thomas steps in as the sector faces drought and a looming state election. He aims to strengthen the VFF's voice and deliver real value for Victorian farmers and regional communities. 

Peter Daly resigns as Master Plumbers CEO



After more than seven years at the helm, **PETER DALY** has resigned as CEO of Master Plumbers.

Daly's leadership saw the association navigate major challenges while achieving significant growth in member services, training programs, and advocacy.

Ashleigh Dalmau has been appointed as the new CEO and is committed to continuing the Association's advocacy for members and promoting the essential contribution of plumbing to Australia's future. 

Amanda Watson named Brewers Association CEO



The Brewers Association of Australia has appointed **AMANDA WATSON** as its new Chief Executive Officer. Former Chairman James Brindley welcomed Watson, citing her strong background in policy, advocacy, and stakeholder engagement. Watson succeeds John Preston, recognised for his impactful five-year tenure. Watson aims to advocate for fairer beer taxation, support industry innovation, and promote responsible consumption. Her leadership marks a new chapter for Australia's brewing sector. 

Greg Holland resigns as SCA CEO



GREG HOLLAND has stepped down as Chief Executive Officer of Spirits and Cocktails Australia (SCA) following an organisational restructure. The changes aim to create a more focused and agile peak body with a sharpened federal advocacy approach. SCA Chair Dan Hamilton thanked Holland for his leadership, during which the spirits industry grew significantly. Steven Fanner has been appointed as Holland's successor, bringing extensive experience in advocacy, communications, and industry representation. 

Holly Wake is EO for SACPPA



The South Australian Catholic Primary Principals Association (SACPPA) has appointed **HOLLY WAKE** as its new Executive Officer. With over 25 years of experience in business operations, project management, and stakeholder engagement, Wake brings strategic leadership to the role. She will support the SACPPA Executive, oversee key events, and liaise with Catholic Education South Australia. Her appointment strengthens the association's mission to support and advocate for Catholic primary school principals. 

Basketball WA CEO Nathan Cave retires



Basketball WA has announced that CEO **NATHAN CAVE** will step down for personal reasons. Cave has led significant growth, including modernising systems and delivering record-breaking events like the NBL1 Grand Final. To ensure continuity, Fabian Ross, former CEO of Hockey WA, was appointed Interim CEO and has now been confirmed as CEO, bringing strong leadership and industry knowledge to Basketball WA. 

MGA appoints Martin Stirling as CEO



MGA Independent Businesses Australia has appointed **MARTIN STIRLING** as its new CEO. Stirling, who has served as Director of Legal Services for the past 2.5 years, brings strong expertise in industrial relations and legal policy. Praised for his leadership and advocacy for independent retailers, he succeeds David Inall.

MGA President Grant Hinchcliffe said Stirling's deep understanding of the sector makes him the ideal choice to lead MGA's next chapter. 

Lisa Newland joins ACEL as CEO



The Australian Council for Educational Leaders announces the appointment of **LISA NEWLAND**, a highly respected educator with over 30 years of experience. Newland brings deep expertise in leadership development, strategic program design, and cultural transformation in schools. Her innovative work spans leadership training for teacher leaders to embed psychological safety and collective efficacy in school teams. Newland's appointment reflects ACEL's continued commitment to fostering impactful, future-focused educational leadership across Australia. 

Sudi Sekhar appointed as ACSEP CEO



Australasian College of Sport & Exercise Physicians is pleased to announce the appointment of **SUDI SEKHAR** as the new Chief Executive Officer of the College. Sekhar brings over 15 years of leadership experience in purpose-driven and member-based organisations.

He is widely respected for his commitment to cultivating a positive, outcome-oriented workplace culture. His appointment marks a significant step forward for the College as it continues to strengthen its impact and reach. 

Vale: Dr Nick Medland



Associations Forum extends its condolences on the passing of **DR NICK MEDLAND**, former President of ASHM Health (Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine). Dr Medland was a respected clinician, researcher, and advocate whose leadership and dedication advanced sexual health and HIV prevention across Australia and the region. His vision, compassion, and commitment to professional excellence have left a lasting legacy. 

Sydney's SMC offers special 2026 rates

The Sydney Masonic Centre (SMC) is a premier, purpose-built CBD venue featuring 13 fully accessible, multi-purpose spaces. Janine Kerner, Acting General Manager, is proud of SMC's strong reputation with associations.



"SMC is one of Sydney's best kept secrets. We combine flexible event spaces with advanced audio-visual technology, exceptional service, and award-winning catering to deliver excellence for our association clients," says Ms Kerner.

"We're pleased to offer SMC's Early Bird Special: Book Early & Save for 2026 events. Associations can plan ahead and enjoy a high-quality experience at a reduced rate. Our Conference Package is just \$87 per person for weekday events with a minimum of 50 guests - a great saving on the usual \$95 daily rate. This includes venue hire and catering in the heart of the CBD," she adds.

Associations hosting cocktail-style events can also enjoy up to 10% off selected packages. Enquire now to secure this limited-time offer.

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Wellington backs academics to lead global conference bids

Wellington, New Zealand's capital, offers support for Australian associations planning conferences with 400 or more delegates.

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Easy Access: Direct flights from Australian cities and a compact, walkable downtown.

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Wellington is home to New Zealand's Government, universities, and research institutions.

Sustainability Focus: known for environmental leadership and innovative thinking.

If your association is exploring international hosting options, Wellington offers a well-connected, rich environment with practical support to make your event a success.

To learn more about funding eligibility and how we can assist, visit business.wellingtonnz.com or contact the Business Events Wellington team.

Moreton Hire aligns with Milan-based manufacturer for Premium Lounge Zones

Moreton Hire, a leading supplier in the Australian events industry, has elevated



its event furniture offering by partnering with a renowned Milan-based manufacturer to deliver a premium range of upholstered lounge furniture for hire across Australia.

This strategic investment reflects Moreton Hire's commitment to enhancing comfort and style in the business events sector, catering to conferences, exhibitions, and corporate functions.

The new collection features sleek upholstered chairs, armchairs, stools, ottomans and modular seating in contemporary finishes, designed to create inviting lounge zones that encourage networking and relaxation. With a focus on quality craftsmanship and European design, the range blends aesthetic appeal and comfort.

Available nationally, the furniture is supported by Moreton Hire's full-service delivery and setup, ensuring seamless integration into any venue. This expansion reinforces Moreton Hire's position by offering clients access to globally inspired, quality, high-end furnishings tailored for professional gatherings. moreton.net.au/products/seating

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When you choose Lasercraft, you're choosing more than a product - you are supporting opportunity, inclusion, and Australian-made quality.

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Geelong is Victoria's newest event destination

Opening July 2026, Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre is set to transform events on Victoria's waterfront.



This next-generation venue brings together a 1,000-seat theatre, 3,700 sqm of flexible space, light-filled meeting rooms with sweeping bay views, and a 200-room Crowne Plaza Geelong - all seamlessly connected.

With advanced AV, premium food and beverage, and a vibrant public plaza, every element has been designed for seamless delivery. Framed by the coastal landscape, the interiors reflect their surrounds with natural light and a sense of openness, creating an inspiring backdrop for every event.

Getting there is simple. An hour from Melbourne, the venue is 20 minutes from Avalon Airport, one hour from Melbourne Airport, and accessible by road, rail or ferry.

Surrounded by world-class food, wine and coastal attractions, Nyaal Banyul offers a destination that combines industry-leading expertise with the energy of a dynamic regional city. Event bookings are now open. www.nyaalbanyul.com.au

Association Communications Summit at the Canberra Rex Hotel

Set in the heart of Braddon, Canberra's most vibrant neighbourhood, the Canberra Rex Hotel



is where sophistication meets connection. With over 900m² of versatile event spaces, we cater to everything from executive meetings to large-scale conferences and gala dinners, supported by professional audiovisual services and bespoke catering. In August, we were proud to host the Associations Forum Communications Summit, welcoming communication professionals from across Australia to collaborate, learn, and be inspired. Delegates enjoyed seamless events, elegant accommodation, and captivating moments at The Howling Moon rooftop bar.

Beyond conferencing, guests can retreat to our refined suites or unwind at our luxury cocktail lounge, Swan & King. With an indoor heated pool, gymnasium, and 24-hour reception, every stay is effortlessly elevated.

At the Canberra Rex Hotel, we don't just host events, we create experiences that bring people together. More than a hotel, the Canberra Rex Hotel is your elevated home away from home.

First Nations photographic exhibition now on permanent display at BCEC

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) has announced it will retain the compelling *All Shades* photographic exhibition by Kamilaroi documentary photographer and filmmaker Dean Saffron, to mark the Centre's 30-year anniversary.

The body of work represents an extraordinary collaboration between Dean Saffron and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland and the Torres Strait. Saffron travelled thousands of kilometres to capture these stories, recording oral histories and creating a visual archive that will be preserved for the future.

BCEC First Nations Advisor, Auntie Bridget Garay welcomed the announcement that the *All Shades* exhibition would be on permanent display and accessible to the venue's many visitors. "It is wonderful to have a true showcase of the diversity of our people and our communities. I love that Dean Saffron has empowered our people to choose how they wish to be photographed in their communities."

All Shades is free and accessible to all visitors to the Centre. BCEC.com.au/all-shades for more information.



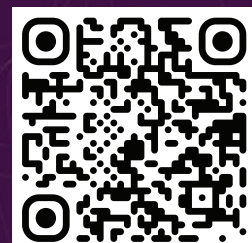
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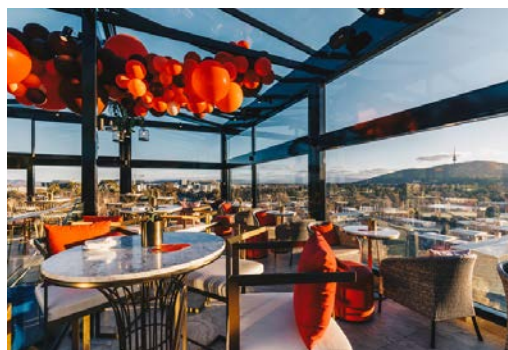
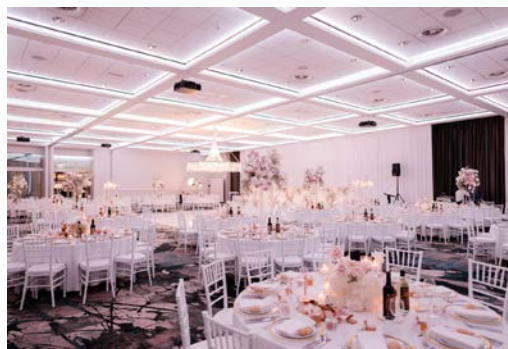
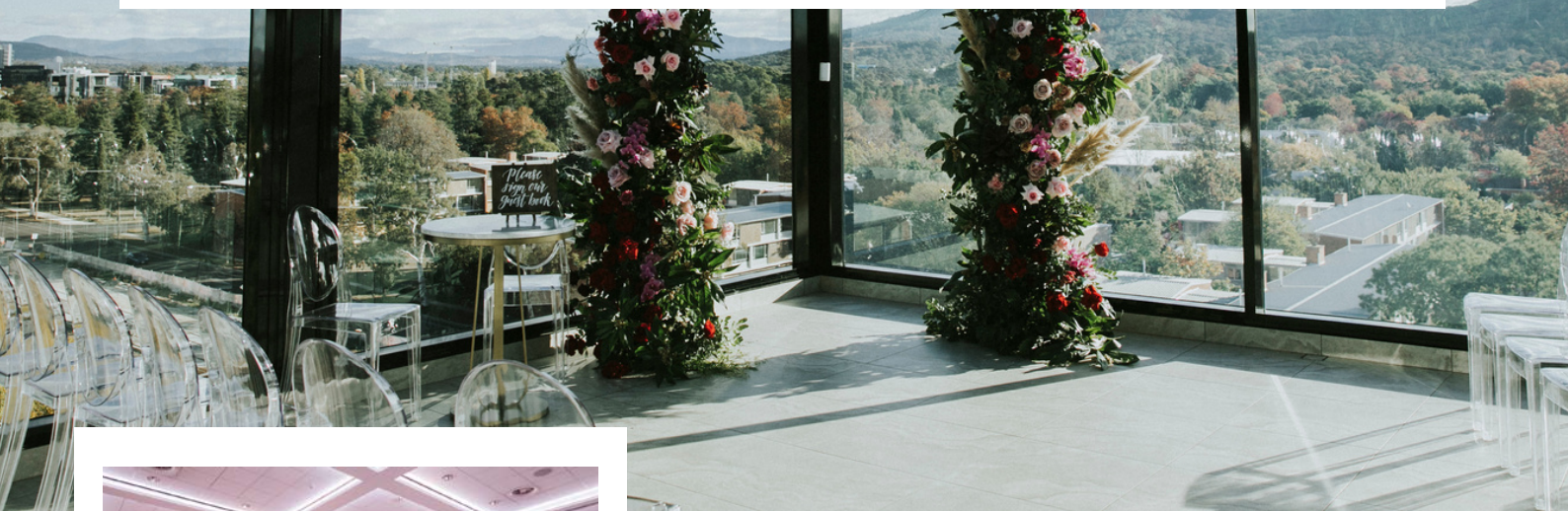
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