



Daniel Gschwind – Chair, Trade and Investment Queensland

Daniel Gschwind was the CEO of Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) from 2001 to 2022, representing the industry in numerous committees and forums. In 2022 was appointed as Professor of Practice for the Griffith Institute for Tourism at Griffith University. He has been an Adjunct Professor at the University of Queensland since 2002. Daniel is also a Director of Tourism Whitsundays, a member of the board of Jobs Queensland and the Chair of the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

Daniel is the Honorary Consul for Switzerland in Queensland and the Dean of the Consular Corps.

Earlier in his career Daniel was involved in yacht charter operations in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean before relocating to Australia where he completed an Honours Degree in Economics at the University of Queensland. He worked as a Senior Economist for the Queensland Treasury for six years before taking on his tourism roles.



Ross Hanley - Manager, Industry Engagement, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training

Ross holds the position of Manager, Industry Engagement in the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training. Ross is extensively involved in the departmental engagement arrangements with industry to help employers, small business and other industry stakeholders provide information which can shape government decision making, including investment settings, program design and training product development.

A large portion of Ross's time in the State Government has been in the vocational education and training (VET) sector where he has been actively involved in creating links between industry, schools and the training sector to develop effective pathways for students into employment. Ross was also a St Joseph's Nudgee College Board member from 2015-2019 and represented Australia in Rugby Union from 1982-85.



Dr Natasha Montesalvo – Principal Consultant, EarthCheck

Natasha is a Principal Consultant – Destination, Strategy and Insight, at EarthCheck the leading scientific benchmarking, certification and advisory group for travel and tourism. Natasha joined EarthCheck having spent four years as the Policy and Research Manager at QTIC.

During her time at the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, Natasha partnered with Griffith's Institute for Tourism to co-author the climate adaptation and mitigation strategy for the Queensland tourism industry. A first of its kind document for Australia, leading climate adaptation and mitigation actions for the tourism industry. Since the development of this document, she was responsible for leading the steering committee directing the implementation of critical actions.

Natasha completed her PhD at Griffith University, Brisbane. Her thesis focused on the relational ties between destination management organisations and tourism and hospitality organisations and the impact they have on destination brand buy-in. She has operational experience in luxury hotel groups in Australia and the UK and has spent time working across Europe for a major UK tour operator.



Sam Palmer – General Manager, Visitor Economy and Client Programs, AUSTRADE

Samantha Palmer has been the General Manager of Austrade’s Visitor Economy and Client Programs Division since April 2021, leading the nation’s tourism policy and recovery programs as well as Export Market Development Grants. Sam is responsible for the development of the national long-term THRIVE 2030 strategy (The Re-Imagined Visitor Economy). THRIVE 2030 has a strong focus on expanding and enhancing Indigenous tourism. She is also Austrade’s Global

Diversity and Inclusion Champion.

Sam commenced her career in the visitor economy and brings 30-plus years of diverse experience with more than 20 in senior executive roles. She has led policy, programs and corporate transformations in the Queensland, WA and Commonwealth governments across fair trading and consumer protection, environmental protection and national parks, land transport and road safety, housing, disability, and Indigenous communities. She led the Commonwealth’s Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, run a tourism attraction, worked in the arts, university and community sectors, and lectured in public relations.

Sam was one of the 2013 Australian Financial Review/Westpac 100 Women of Influence, and the 2013 Australian Human Resource Institute Diversity Champion of the Year (HR). Samantha serves on the National and ACT IPAA Councils and is an IPAA Fellow.

Sam is a proud Queenslander born on the lands of the Gubbi Gubbi people.



Katherine Reid – CEO Bundaberg Tourism

Katherine is the CEO of Bundaberg Tourism and sits on the QTIC Board as a representative for the Queensland RTO Network. Katherine has a holistic understanding of regional tourism and business, having been heavily involved in the destination development of the Town of 1770 - Agnes Water as President of the LTO, and owner, operator of eco-tourism business, 1770 LARC tours for 17 years. Winning numerous regional and state awards for Cultural and Heritage Tourism, Eco-tourism, Visitor Attraction and the CQ and Southern Great Barrier Reef

Tourism Champion Award for outstanding contribution to the tourism industry.

On behalf of the RTO Network, Katherine has been involved in the development of the Climate Change tourism adaptation and mitigation strategy and the Nature-based tourism strategy. An active member of the regional community in Bundaberg, Katherine is a part of the Reducing Urban Glow in Bundaberg project. This long-term project supports the broad effort to conserve the largest concentration of nesting marine turtles on the east coast of Australia using smart technology and open data. As well as an active lead on product and experience development initiatives across the destination, encompassing the Southern Great Barrier Reef, culinary tourism and Indigenous experiences.

Being recognised in the region as a collaborative leader, Katherine has forged strong partnerships across industries and has raised the reputation and awareness of the value of tourism and the contribution the industry brings to the regional economy.



Professor Lisa Ruhanen – Director of Education, University of Queensland

Dr Lisa Ruhanen is a Professor in Tourism with the UQ Business School, The University of Queensland. She has undertaken more than 30 academic and consultancy research projects in Australia and overseas in the areas of Indigenous tourism, sustainable tourism, and destination policy and planning. Lisa has more than 100 academic publications and in 2017 she and colleagues co-edited a book on Indigenous Tourism: Cases from Australia and New Zealand. She has worked for more than a decade with the United Nations World Tourism Organization as a consultant and member of their education advisory board.



Joe Sproats - Queensland Tourism Awards Judge, QTIC Tourism Indigenous Champions Network Member

Joe is currently a judge with the Queensland Tourism Awards and a member of the QTIC Tourism Indigenous Champions Network. With his wife Jennie, Joe previously operated Dreamtime Learning from the Noorla Resort in Ingham, training Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people in hospitality, tourism, business and mentoring. During their many years as tourism operators, they were awarded: Highly Commended Winner, Queensland Reconciliation Awards (Business) (2015), North Queensland Tourism Awards 'Hall of Fame Hosted and Operated Accommodation' (2009, 2001 & 1997), Australian Tourism Awards Standard Accommodation (2009,

2007), Gold Award in Heritage Conservation (2007). Nomination: Outstanding excellence in Heritage Conservation, National Trust Queensland (2007).

Joe has been working professionally with First Nations people for the last thirty years in community consulting and training and is himself a Ngarigo man and an Australian South Sea Islander descendant from Lifou Island. He is presently a contract psychologist with Ngarigo Nation Indigenous Corporation (NNIC) who works with remote communities providing community development projects and counselling clinics through Wakai Waian Healing, an Indigenous Psychology company based in Rockhampton. Joe is also the scribe with NNIC where he collects, stores and writes stories on Ngarigo people whose Country includes the Monaro Plains and Snowy Alps.



Associate Professor Michelle Whitford – Director, Curriculum Innovation at Griffith University

Associate Professor Michelle Whitford is Director, Curriculum Innovation at Griffith University. Michelle has worked in Indigenous tourism in a range of academic and professional roles since 1999. Her research and consultancy expertise in the field of Indigenous tourism and events includes policy, planning, sustainable development, management and evaluation. Michelle's expertise also includes leading and co-ordinating government and private projects with a focus on Indigenous tourism

supply and demand, capacity development, entrepreneurship, authenticity and commodification and management. Organisations Michelle has worked with include the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Studies, Indigenous Business Australia and the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism and Tourism and Events Queensland, the National Environmental Science Program and numerous Australian Federal State and Local Government agencies.

Michelle has undertaken work with QTIC on the development of the First Nations Tourism Plan (including engagement to write the Plan in 2019) and she continues her work as a member of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) First Nations Working Group Advisors Panel along with ongoing work on the establishment of the QLD First Nations Tourism Council. Michelle was on the 2021 Planning Committee of Destination IQ and was the proud 2021 recipient of the QTIC Destination IQ, Pip and Charles Woodward Award.