



MOMENTUM

ORGANISING CONFERENCE '26

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Yugambah people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples attending this event.

Welcome to Momentum 2026

Momentum 2026 is the union movement's biggest gathering, bringing together hundreds of unionists from across Australia for two days of learning, strategy, solidarity and action. Held every three years, the Organising Conference is a unique opportunity for our movement to come together, share what works, learn from each other, and strengthen our collective power.

This year's theme reflects a critical challenge and opportunity for unions: how we build and sustain momentum. After years of campaigning, workers have won important new rights, delegates now have stronger protections, and loopholes that have long undermined workplace standards are being closed. The task now is to turn those gains into lasting workplace power by embedding new laws, growing union membership, developing leaders, and building stronger, more organised workplaces.

Momentum is for everyone involved in union growth and member power. Whether you work in organising, communications, campaigning, industrial, legal, policy, WHS, member services, administration, women's, First Nations or specialist roles; there is something here for you. Across two days of plenaries and workshops, we'll explore topics including organising strategy, campaign communications, AI and digital tools, gender equity, climate campaigning, First Nations justice, workplace health and safety, union growth and much more.

Featuring leading thinkers, campaigners and advocates alongside practical sessions led by unions, Momentum is more than a showcase of success stories. It is a movement-wide conversation about refining strategy, sharing lessons, strengthening relationships, avoiding pitfalls, and building the leadership and solidarity needed to keep winning. Together, we will celebrate who we are, learn from one another, and shape the future of a stronger, fairer and more powerful union movement.

Getting to and from the venue

Gold Coast Conference and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC)

2684 Gold Coast Hwy, Broadbeach

For further information, visit gccec.com.au

PLANE

Gold Coast Airport is located a 30-minute drive south of the GCCEC and offers domestic and international flights. Regular bus + tram and shuttle services to Broadbeach are available.

For more information, visit goldcoastairport.com.au.

Brisbane Airport is located a 60-minute drive north of the GCCEC and offers domestic and international flights. Regular train + tram and shuttle services to the Gold Coast are available.

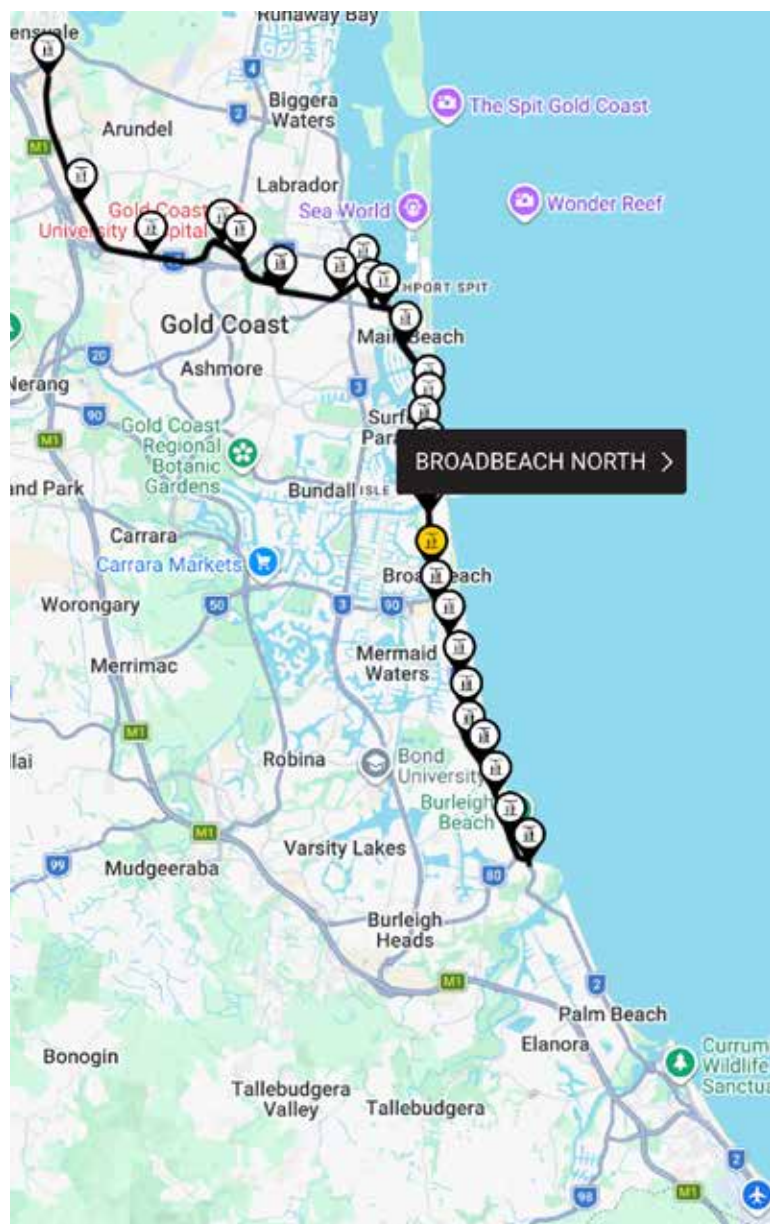
For further information, visit bne.com.au or airtrain.com.au.

TRAM

The G:link light rail system operates between Burleigh Heads and Helensvale.

The closest station to the ECCEC is **Broadbeach North**, located 150m from the entrance.

For further information, visit translink.com.au or ridetheg.com.au.



BUS

Buses frequently stop directly in front of the GCCEC.

Both northbound and southbound bus stops are located within 100m of the Centre's accessibility ramp.

For more information, visit translink.com.au.

TAXI (WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE)

Taxis that can carry one or two wheelchairs are available on the Gold Coast.

Taxis can pick up guests from the main entrance, which has a covered Porte Cochere and no guttering or steps.

The GCCEC reception desk can organise a taxi or a courtesy phone is available in the foyer.

CAR (PARKING)

The GCCEC car park entrance is at the northern end of the building.

Entry from the Gold Coast highway is via a set of traffic lights. Entry from TE Peters Drive is via the ramp onto the main driveway.

Overhead clearance is 2.1m.

There are 32 designated disability parking bays located close to the main elevators.

Parking is a daily flat rate of \$15. Payment can be made at pay stations before exiting or via ZipBy app (download before arriving).

There is clear access from the car parks to the double automatic doors and lifts, which are next to the parking payment machines.

Guests can also be dropped off at the main entrance via the driveway off TE Peters Drive, on the south side of the building.

For further information about accessibility at the ECCEC, scan the QR code or visit gccec.com.au/about-us/accessibility/accessibility-guide.



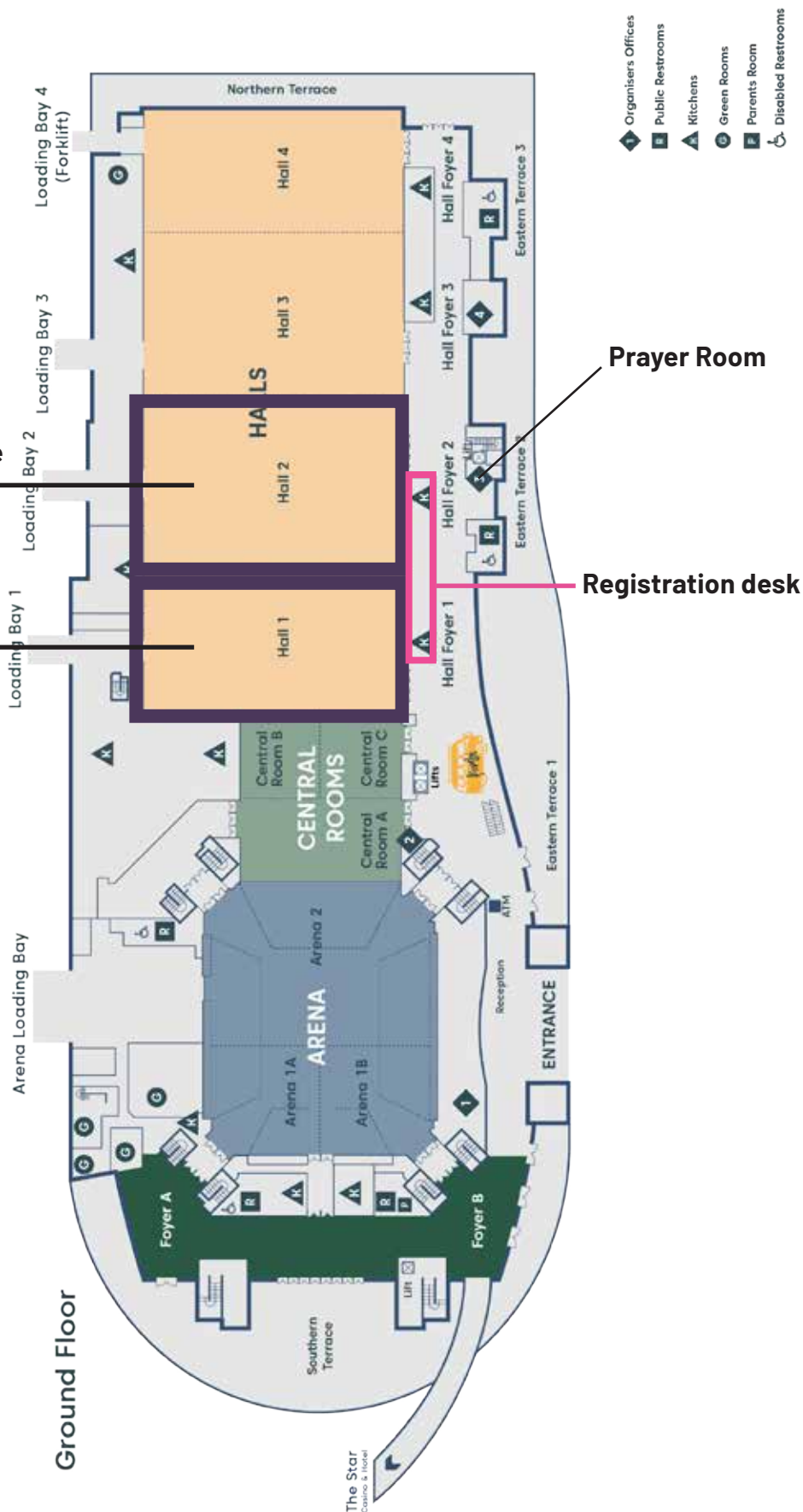
Venue map

gold | convention and
coast | exhibition centre

Ground Floor

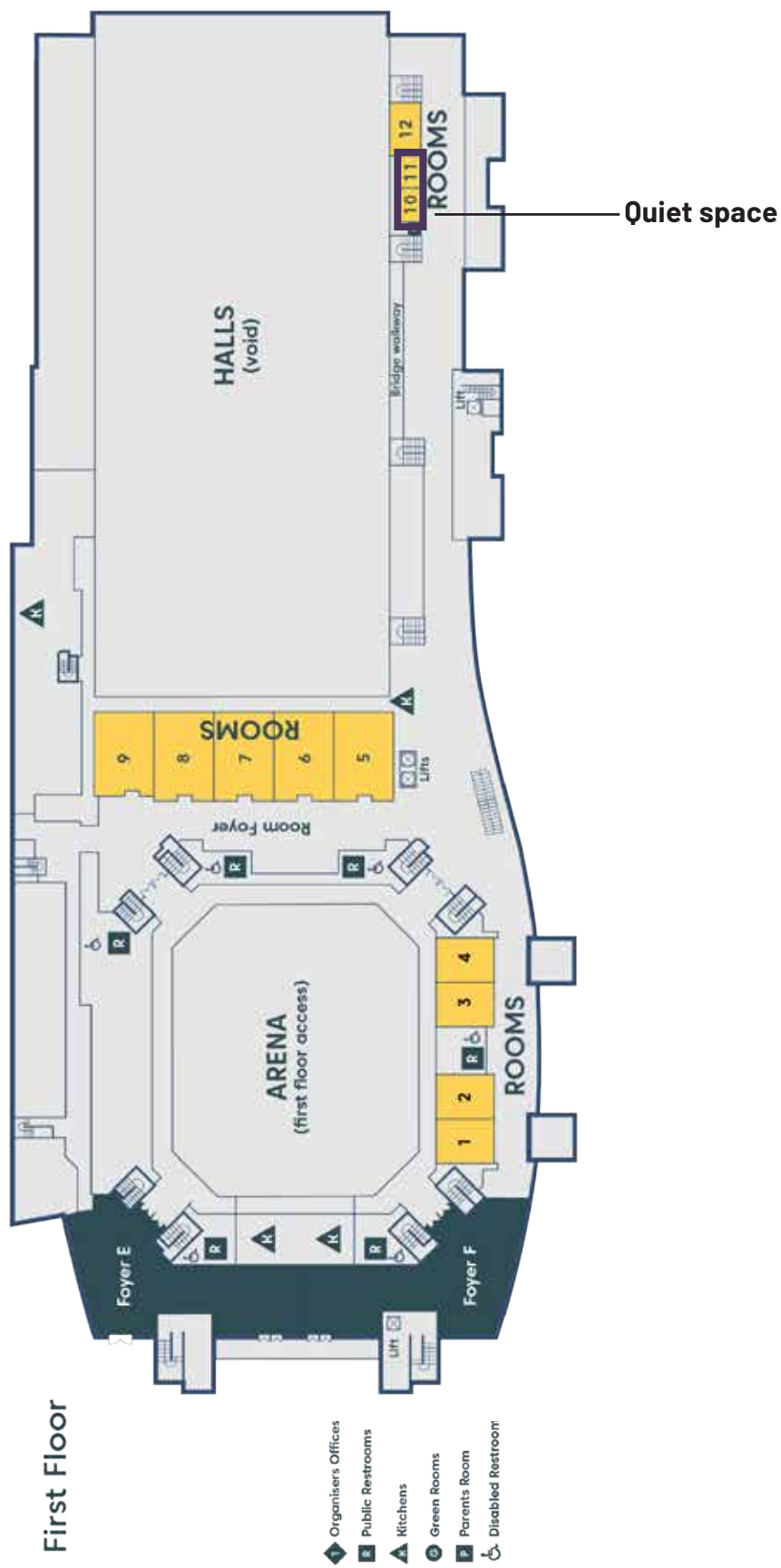
Exhibition
& Catering
space (Hall 1)

Plenary space
(Hall 2)





First Floor



Day 1

Tuesday 1 September

Registration

7:30am - 9:00am

7:30am - Registration open

8:00am - Coffee and Tea

Huddles

7:30am - 8:00am - Disability and Neurodiverse - Room 5

8:00am - 8:30am - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples - Room 6

Opening and Plenary One

Hall 2

9:00am - 10:30am

Welcome to Country and Conference Opening

Momentum 2026: United, Active, Growing

Secretary's Address

AEU VIC: 44% Net Growth in 12 Months

TWU: Growing Across the Industry

Morning Tea

10:40am - 11:00am

Workshops A

11:10am - 12:25pm

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------|--|
| 1.1 | Building a Digital Growth Machine
Room 7 | 1.6 | Young Workers are Having a Moment! How to Connect, Grow and Win with Young, Student, and Early-Career Workers
Room 8 |
| 1.2 | Motivating Membership: Why Workers Join – and Why They Don't
Room 1 | 1.7 | Borderless Solidarity – Organising Migrant Workers Together
Room 6 |
| 1.3 | Use It or Lose It: Education and Development of Delegates in Australian Unions
Room 4 | 1.8 | What is the Bigger Vision for Australian Workers – and How Do We Get There?
Room 3 |
| 1.4 | Growing the Union: The TWU's Aviation and Gig Work Campaigns
Hall 2 | 1.9 | Strange Bedfellows: How Unlikely Alliances are Driving Housing Wins
Room 5 |
| 1.5 | Who Cares Wins: Growing Power in Education and Care
Room 9 | 1.10 | Engaging and Organising Workers for a Better Retirement
Room 2 |

Lunch 12:35pm - 1:25pm

APHEDA Activist Meet-up: Hall 2

Plenary Two Hall 2 1:35pm - 2:35pm

Winning Under the New Laws

Workshops B 2:45pm - 4:00pm

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2.1 Empowering Delegates
Room 9 | 2.6 Sue the Bastards: Strategic Enforcement to Build Collective Power
Room 1 |
| 2.2 Using AI to Beat the Bosses
Room 5 | 2.7 Together for Treaty: A Role for Unions
Room 6 |
| 2.3 Same Job, Same Pay, Real Power: Organising Around Labour Hire Orders
Room 3 | 2.8 No Worker Left Behind - Strengthening Migrant Worker Centres Across the Pacific and Australia
Room 4 |
| 2.4 Winning in the Fair Work Commission and on The Ground: Building Power Through Multi-Employer Bargaining
Room 7 | 2.9 From Members to Movement: Building Campaigns that Win
Room 2 |
| 2.5 Too Much Work, Too Little Time? What the Law Says: Using WHS Laws to Manage Workload Risk
Room 8 | |

Photo and Solidarity Action 4:15pm - 5:10pm

4:15pm - 4:30pm - Conference Photo - Hall Foyer

Do you want to take group photos? This is the time to do it!

4:40pm - 5:10pm - Solidarity Actions - Foyer Area: Rooms 3-10

Do you have a campaign you want to share? Email nlang@actu.org.au

Huddle

5:00pm - 5:30pm - LGBTQIA+ - Room 5

Dinner 6:30pm - 10:00pm

With special guests and entertainment.

Day 2

Wednesday 2 September

Registration

7:30am - 9:00am

7:30am - Registration open

8:00am - Coffee and Tea

Huddles

7:30am - 8:00am - People of Colour - Room 5

8:00am - 8:30am - Women - Room 6

Plenary Three

Hall 2

9:00am - 10:00am

Solidarity Under Pressure: Organising Against Division and Hate

Morning Tea

10:10am - 10:30am

Workshops C

10:40am - 11:55am

- | | | | |
|-----|--|------|---|
| 3.1 | Divided by Design: The Manosphere, the Far Right, and the Challenge to Solidarity | 3.7 | From Click to Collective Action: Organising Workers Online |
| | Room 7 | | Room 9 |
| 3.2 | Anti-Racism is Union Business | 3.8 | Doing our Research |
| | Hall 2 | | Room 4 |
| 3.3 | Countering Disinformation: Organising in an Age of Confusion | 3.9 | Member-Driven Wins |
| | Room 6 | | Room 8 |
| 3.4 | No AI Without Us: Putting Workers at the Centre of AI Adoption | 3.10 | 10 Steps Ahead: Campaign Communication that Cuts Through |
| | Room 1 | | Room 5 |
| 3.5 | Rising Heat, Rising Power: Organising for a Climate-Safe Workplace | | |
| | Room 3 | | |
| 3.6 | From Crisis to Power: Rebuilding our Health System | | |
| | Room 2 | | |

Lunch 12:05pm - 12:35pm

Workshops D 12:45pm - 2:00pm

- | | | | |
|-----|--|------|---|
| 4.1 | Neurodivergent and Disabled Workers Could Be the Power You're Missing | 4.7 | Power of Data: Golden Questions and Join Messages |
| | Room 9 | | Room 3 |
| 4.2 | Unions Engaging with AI | 4.8 | Rising Tides, Rising Solidarity – Union Responses to Climate Justice in the Asia-Pacific |
| | Room 7 | | Room 5 |
| 4.3 | What's Not to Like? Winning Back Time for Members | 4.9 | Voilà! Vertical Video! |
| | Room 1 | | Room 8 |
| 4.4 | Gender Equity: When Do We Want It? Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow | 4.10 | Less Noise, More Growth: 5 Tips for Campaigns That Build Membership |
| | Room 2 | | Hall 2 |
| 4.5 | Building Momentum: What Organising Works Makes Possible | | |
| | Room 4 | | |
| 4.6 | Blak-Led Organising: Kinship and NES Campaign | | |
| | Room 6 | | |

Afternoon Tea 2:10pm - 2:30pm

Plenary Four and Close Hall 2 2:40pm - 4:00pm

2:40pm - Festival of Dangerous Ideas

3:40pm - Conference closing remarks

Plenary 1

Momentum 2026: United, Active, Growing

Momentum 2026 opens with a powerful plenary on the opportunity before us: how a united, active movement can organise, bargain and win at scale.

Newly elected ACTU Secretary, Melissa Donnelly, will set out her vision for a stronger union movement, drawing on her deep experience as a union leader, campaigner and advocate for working people.

She will be joined by Erin Aulich, Secretary of the AEU Victoria, who will share lessons from the union's significant growth as Victorian teachers bargain, organise and take collective action.

Emily McMillan from the Transport Workers' Union will speak to the TWU's remarkable growth as members organise across sites and employers, aligning bargaining to win for all.

With a focus on demonstrated growth, together, these speakers will explore what it takes to build durable worker power: member-led campaigns, active workplace structures, coordinated bargaining and the confidence to act collectively.

This opening session will set the tone for Momentum 2026 - ambitious, practical and grounded in the organising work needed to grow our movement

Conference opening address

Michele O'Neil, ACTU President



Michele is the President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. She began her working life as a waitress, going on to work in the community sector with homeless young people and then in the clothing industry.

Before being elected as ACTU President in 2018, Michele represented workers in the textile, clothing and footwear industry as an organiser before becoming Branch and National Secretary of the Textile Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia. She represented her union nationally and internationally and led campaigns to win world-leading rights for workers throughout clothing supply chains. A model of

supply chain accountability for workers which increased pay and conditions for some of Australia's most exploited workers. Following the amalgamation of the TCFUA and the CFMEU, Michele was CFMEU Vice President.

Secretary's address

Melissa Donnelly, ACTU Secretary



Melissa Donnelly is the Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, departing the role of National Secretary of the Community and Public Sector Union.

A long-time union leader, lawyer and advocate for working people, Melissa led the CPSU through significant growth, with membership increasing by 23% during her seven years as National Secretary. She delivered major wins for public sector workers, including improved pay, stronger consultation rights, ground-breaking working-from-home rights and 18 weeks paid parental leave for both parents. Melissa brings deep experience in member-led campaigning, bargaining, industrial strategy and political advocacy.

At Momentum 2026, Melissa will open the conference by sharing her vision for a united, active and growing union movement – one that builds power with workers and wins real change across the country.

AEU Vic: 44% Net Growth in 12 Months

Erin Aulich, Branch Secretary



Erin Aulich is Branch Secretary of the Australian Education Union Victorian Branch, representing members across schools, early childhood, TAFE and adult provision. A long-standing education union leader, Erin has served as Branch Secretary since 2018, following earlier roles as Vice President Secondary and Deputy Vice President Secondary.

Her leadership is grounded in the power of workplace organising, collective action and member-led campaigning to improve public education and the working lives of educators. Under Erin's leadership, AEU Victoria has focused on building strength through active reps, organiser visits and union training – the combination its own data identifies as central to membership growth. At Momentum 2026, Erin will share lessons from AEU Victoria's growth as Victorian teachers bargain, organise and take action for better public education and stronger conditions.

Justin Mullaly, Branch President



Justin joined the union as a university student and quickly became active in the New Educators Network, and he still misses the buzz he got as a teacher when he'd look around the classroom and realise, "This is working!"

Justin was elected as President of AEU Victoria in 2024. He previously held the position of Deputy President from 2013-2024 and has served as Victorian Trades Hall President and on the AEU Federal Executive. Justin is passionate about campaigning for members, protecting public education, and ensuring teachers have the support and resources they need to make a difference every day.

Briley Stokes, Deputy President



Briley followed her mother's footsteps into primary teaching. Both her parents were strong union members, and when Briley started teaching in 2003, she joined the AEU straight away. After ten years of teaching, she was elected Deputy Vice President of Primary in 2013, and Vice President of Primary in 2016.

In 2024, Briley was elected Deputy President of AEU Victoria. Briley is passionate about helping members, providing resources and support, and ensuring schools and educators can thrive.

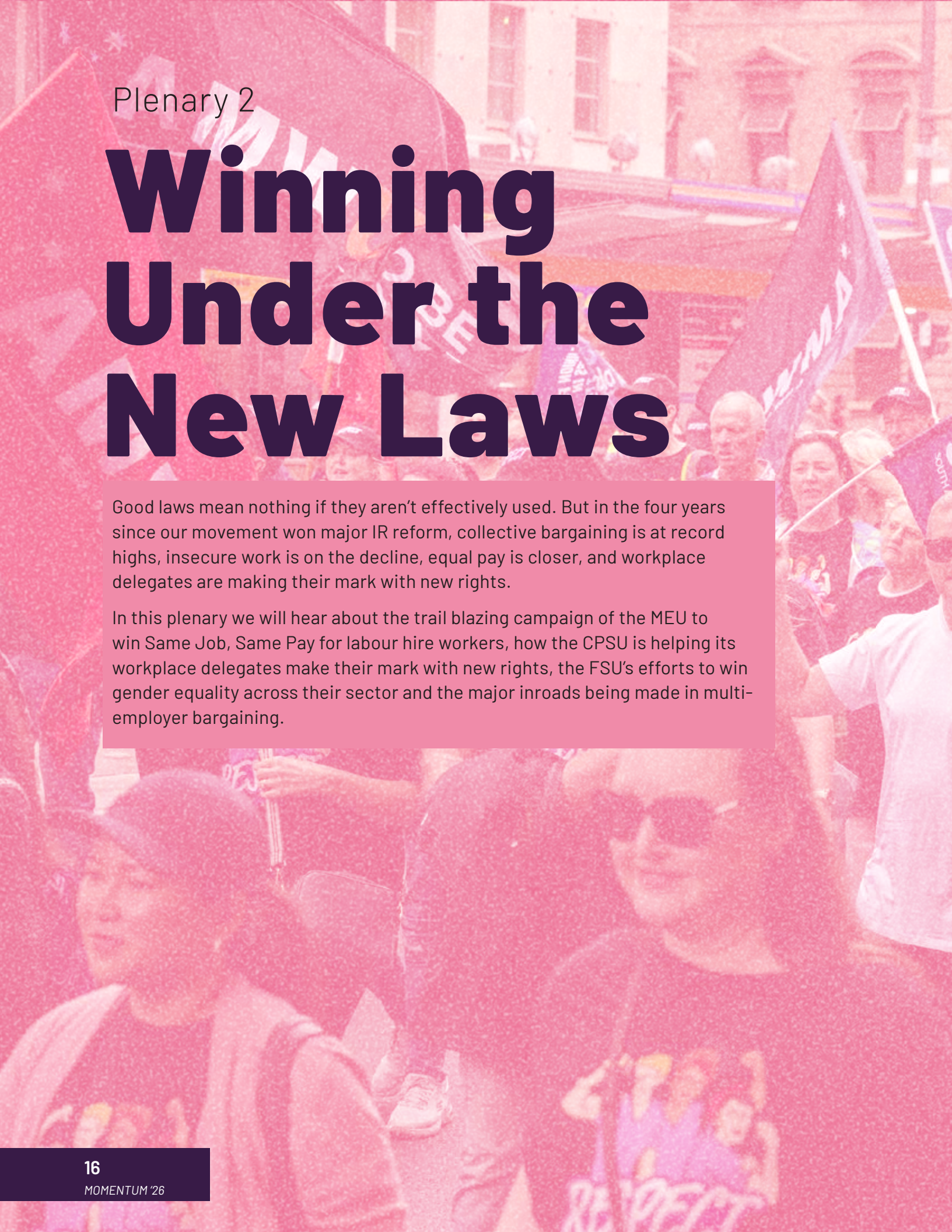
TWU: Growing Across the Industry

Emily McMillan, National Assistant Secretary



Emily McMillan is the National Assistant Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union and the first woman and First Nations woman to hold that position. A union official for more than 21 years, Emily has deep experience in supply chain organising, lifting standards across industries, and challenging fragmentation models that drive down wages, conditions and safety.

Before being elected National Assistant Secretary, she spent eight years leading the TWU's national campaigns, including mobilising workers to win industry reform, take mass protected industrial action for job security, hold Qantas to account over the illegal sacking of 1,700 workers, and rebuild aviation jobs after COVID-19. At Momentum 2026, Emily will share lessons from the TWU's growth strategy: workers organising together across sites and employers, aligning bargaining, and building the power needed to win for all.



Plenary 2

Winning Under the New Laws

Good laws mean nothing if they aren't effectively used. But in the four years since our movement won major IR reform, collective bargaining is at record highs, insecure work is on the decline, equal pay is closer, and workplace delegates are making their mark with new rights.

In this plenary we will hear about the trail blazing campaign of the MEU to win Same Job, Same Pay for labour hire workers, how the CPSU is helping its workplace delegates make their mark with new rights, the FSU's efforts to win gender equality across their sector and the major inroads being made in multi-employer bargaining.

Liam O'Brien, ACTU Assistant Secretary



Liam was re-elected as Assistant Secretary at the ACTU Congress in June 2024.

Before joining the ACTU, Liam was the Victorian Assistant Secretary and National Vice-President of the Australian Workers' Union. It was there where he fought for the rights of workers across the diverse range of industries that the AWU represents. As a national official he led the AWU's work in the aluminium, aviation, glass and construction sectors.

As ACTU Assistant Secretary, Liam is responsible for leading the movement's policy, industrial and campaigning efforts on work health and safety and workers' compensation matters.

Liam is also responsible for the skills and VET portfolio at the ACTU, and is the Deputy Chair of the Jobs and Skills Australia Ministerial Advisory Board. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics, with a major in Economics. He is the proud father of two kids and lives in Melbourne's west.

Mitch Hughes, Queensland District President of the Mining and Energy Union (MEU)



Mitch Hughes is the Queensland District President of the Mining and Energy Union, representing thousands of workers across Queensland's mining and energy industries.

Prior to being elected Queensland District President in 2023, Mitch served as Queensland District Senior Vice-President, having held elected leadership positions in the union since 2012.

Mitch has been a leading advocate for Same Job, Same Pay reforms, playing a key role in the Queensland District's decade-long campaign to close the labour hire loophole and secure equal pay for workers performing the same job. Under his leadership, the MEU has secured significant Same Job, Same Pay victories across Queensland's coal industry, including landmark rulings covering thousands of mineworkers employed through labour hire arrangements.

continued

Plenary 2 cont

Winning Under the New Laws

Ffion Evans, UWU, Deputy Director of Early Childhood Education and Care



Ffion Evans is the Deputy Director of Early Childhood Education and Care at United Workers Union. Over the last two years, membership in ECEC has grown by 4,000, using the new bargaining rights. Ffion has worked across major sector wide organising and bargaining campaigns, including Aged Care and across private and public sector unions internationally and in Australia.

Beth Vincent-Pietsch, CPSU-PSU, President



Beth Vincent-Pietsch is president of the CPSU/PSU group. Beth has served on the National executive of the CPSU for more than a decade and been with the CPSU for over 20 years. She leads the largest organising team in the CPSU/PSU and specialises in campaigning and engaging members on collective campaigns. Beth also established the CPSU Accessibility Network, bringing together members from across the union with disability to strategise future union direction, to lead campaigns for industrial wins, like paid disability leave, to share resources to engage the broader membership and to be a driving force for change in the APS and beyond.

Angela Budai, FSU, National Research and Policy Manager



Angela Budai is the National Research and Policy Manager at the Finance Sector Union. She has over 20 years' experience representing the interests of finance workers and has helped negotiate better pay and working conditions for thousands of finance workers across Australia. Angela began at the FSU as a regional organiser in NSW before becoming NSW Director of Campaigning. She is currently responsible for the development, coordination, and implementation of high-profile industry-wide policy initiatives. She is deeply passionate about women's rights and gender equity, with a keen focus on making workplaces more equitable through progressive policies.

Solidarity Under Pressure: Organising Against Division & Hate

Rising costs, misinformation, misogyny and political division are putting pressure on working people and testing our collective strength.

This plenary explores the forces pulling workers apart and the organising strategies that can bring us together. Drawing on insights into race, class, gender, disinformation and political change, speakers will examine how unions can rebuild trust, strengthen solidarity and create the shared story needed to win.



Giridharan Sivaraman, AHRC, Race Discrimination Commissioner



Giridharan (Giri) Sivaraman is Australia's Race Discrimination Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission, commenced in 2024, after a long legal career specialising in employment, industrial and anti discrimination law.

Born in India and raised partly overseas before migrating to Australia, he became a prominent workplace lawyer as Principal at Maurice Blackburn, where he led major race discrimination cases and advocacy for vulnerable and migrant workers, including through high profile wage theft compensation efforts.

Sivaraman has also held leadership roles in multicultural policy, including as Chair of Multicultural Australia and a member of the Queensland Multicultural Advisory Council, reflecting his broader commitment to racial equity and inclusion. Alongside this work, he has longstanding ties to the union movement: he has represented unions and workers for over two decades, provided advice connected to national industrial matters, and has consistently framed anti-racism as integral to workers' rights, regularly engaging with union organisations and advocating for stronger protections against discrimination in workplaces.

Van Badham, Journalist & Researcher



Van Badham is a writer, researcher and strategic communications consultant, currently completing her PhD in digital sociology at the University of Technology Sydney. She has been a featured columnist for The Guardian for more than a decade, writing about digital culture and society, and she hosts the award-winning news review podcast The Week on Wednesday.

Van's 2021 book QAnon And On: A Short and Shocking History of Internet Conspiracy Cults was both a bestseller and a finalist for a Walkley Award. Her writing on digital technology and politics has been featured in publications including The New York Times, The Age and broadcast media around the world.

Van's expertise in counter disinformation extends to active involvement in digital media literacy programs and public talks, workshops and panel appearances, working with organisations as diverse as the ACTU, community organisations, universities and industry conferences. She frequently collaborates with US-based disinformation expert Nina Jankowicz and is currently co-authoring a book on community counter disinformation strategies and information resilience with Indigenous activist and writer Thomas Mayo.

Dr Nathan Manning, Adelaide University, Senior Lecturer



Dr Nathan Manning is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Society and Culture within the College of Education, Behavioural and Social Sciences at Adelaide University. He is a sociologist whose research focuses on political sociology, citizenship, social change, and the role of emotions in political engagement and democratic participation.

Prior to joining the University of Adelaide in 2018, Dr Manning held academic positions at the University of York and the University of Bradford in the UK. His work has explored young people's political attitudes, political dissatisfaction, populism, and the emotional dimensions of citizenship. He is a founding Co-Editor of the international journal *Emotions and Society*. Dr Manning has made significant contributions to understanding how citizens engage with politics and social institutions in contemporary societies.

Kos Samaras, Director of Strategy and Analytics at RedBridge Group



Kos Samaras is a political strategist, pollster and public commentator who serves as Director of Strategy and Analytics at RedBridge Group, a research and advisory firm specialising in public opinion, social trends and behavioural insights.

Drawing on more than 25 years of experience in politics and campaigning, including 14 years helping lead Victorian Labor election campaigns, he has developed a reputation as one of Australia's leading analysts of voter behaviour, demographic change and community attitudes.

Widely sought for his expertise on social and political trends, Samaras combines polling, statistical analysis and field research to help organisations, governments and community groups better understand public sentiment and navigate complex policy and social issues. His work frequently focuses on economic inequality, social cohesion, the rise of populism, and the changing political outlook of younger and outer-suburban Australians.

Plenary 4

Festival of Dangerous Ideas

Many of the union movement's greatest wins started as ideas that sounded too bold, too risky, or outright impossible – until workers made them real.

In this plenary, union leaders take the stage to put forward a “dangerous idea” for our movement today: challenging orthodoxies about organising, growth, campaigning and power. Through a series of sharp provocations, we’ll interrogate what needs to change, what we might be getting wrong, and where we should be more ambitious. This is not about consensus – it’s about testing ideas, surfacing tensions, and pushing the boundaries of what unions are prepared to fight for next.

Provocateurs

1

Battling the Mining Tycoons (and Ourselves): the Bumpy Road to Reorganising the Pilbara

Grahame Kelly, General President, MEU and Shane Roulstone, National Organising Director, AWU

Hysterical headlines suggest that WA's precious Pilbara iron ore industry is on the brink of mass strikes and worker revolt. We wish. The reality is that after decades in the wilderness following the industry's devastating deunionisation in the 1990s, overall good progress has at times been hampered by mistakes in union judgment and tactics. MEU's Grahame Kelly and AWU's Shane Roulstone reflect on the bumpy journey of the Western Mine Workers Alliance, the things they got wrong and what they've learnt about taking on Australia's richest export industry.

Widely Felt, Deeply Felt, Winnable?

Emeline Gaske, National Secretary, ASU

Workers are hurting. The far right is gaining ground everywhere. Something has got to change. Unions must boldly tackle the issues and injustices that workers everywhere are feeling widely and deeply. But how do we do this, when the seismic changes we need to win feel so out of reach?

2

3

"It's not union business start paying the blokes on strike that's wot your for"

Steve Murphy, National Secretary, AMWU

How do unions build their licence to pursue the broader social and political issues that impact on our members, their families and their communities? In a time of anger-fuelled exchanges on social media and culture wars, do we retreat back and stick to industrial issues – or do speak out for a bold and enduring working-class agenda that extends well beyond the workplace?

You can probably guess what Steve thinks about this – but he has more to say about how important this is, as the far-right builds its influence, how we build the licence to speak out, and how we use it wisely.

An Unambiguous Truth – Teenagers Care about Super

Helen Cooney, National Assistant Secretary, SDA

The SDA has let young workers know that under 18-year-olds can only get super if they work more than 30 hours a week. Alongside the campaign for adults to be paid as adults, the SDA has exposed a system that tells some of the lowest-paid workers that their labour doesn't count the same. Super can help us build union membership when we organise around a simple truth: it should be paid on every dollar. Unions are driving fairness in superannuation policy, keeping funds on track with their members values, and chasing unpaid super for our members.

4

Who's Organising Your Members When You're Not?

Nicole Calnan, Federal Secretary, AEU

The rise of manosphere ideology is not a cultural problem at the margins of the union movement: it is a strategic threat at its centre. This is not an accident. The same forces that attempt to dismantle workers' rights have found in the manosphere a powerful recruitment tool: one that captures legitimate anger and redirects it at women, at migrants, at diversity; at anything except capital, and redirects it away from collective action: us.

The question is not whether this is happening in your membership. It is. Misogyny and radicalisation are not equality issues for unions to manage; they are strategic threats to solidarity that union leadership must confront.

5

6

Use it or lose it

Michael O'Connor, National Secretary, TFTU

Unions can use a range of enforcement approaches - including award prosecutions, enterprise agreement prosecutions and unpaid super matters - not just to recover money for workers, but to build organisation at the workplace.

The focus of this session is on using legal leverage strategically: identifying non-compliant employers, engaging affected workers, increasing union visibility, and converting enforcement matters into stronger workplace rights and union presence. It will also examine the possible use of settlement deeds to secure practical organising outcomes such as paid inductions, paid meetings, audits, payday super and other rights that help turn a prosecution into an ongoing foothold at the workplace.

Your Guide to the Spoons



Lecture or presentation styled session that is fairly one-way engagement. Generally participants are listening, with a chance to engage in optional questions time.



Mostly lecture style presentations with incidental discussions with other people on your table, for example.



Partly presentation based, likely to have some engagement, discussion and activities to work on with other participants.

About the Spoon Theory

Spoon Theory was first developed by Christine Miserandino as a way of tracking energy as she suffered from Lupus an autoimmune disease. It has been widely adopted by people with chronic pain and neurodivergence as a way of tracking the energy and effort it takes to undertake daily tasks or other activities. It works on the premise that each day you start with a certain number of spoons, and each activity you do in a day will reduce the spoons.

The spoon rating helps participants make informed choices about the sessions they attend and plan their energy across the conference. It also helps speakers think about how to make sessions manageable, predictable and flexible for people with disability, chronic illness, neurodivergence, mental health conditions, fatigue or other access needs.

Some of the elements we have considered in allocating spoons to each activity are:

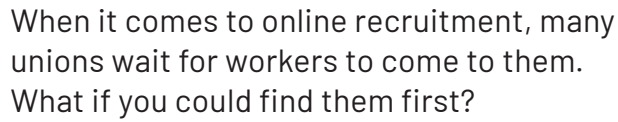
- Social engagement and interaction
- Denser information
- Difficult or traumatic materials
- Larger groups
- Environmental elements such as difficulty in navigating to a location, or distractions in the space and noise levels.

This is just to give you an idea; however, everyone is different and will have their own circumstances that impact how they are on the day; from chronic pain or anxiety and levels of masking it takes to be in a space. Additionally, some people will get more energy from more interactive sessions, whilst others will be depleted by the same session. We hope that this helps you manage your own needs in some way.

Workshop Session Outlines

Want to know the level of participation involved in each workshop session? Look for the spoons!

Building a Digital Growth Machine



You will also hear ASU National Office Campaigns and Member Engagement Lead speak to practical examples of how an automated member journey can maximise the impact of organising conversations.

Expect candid reflections on what's worked, what hasn't, and the practical lessons learned. Whether you're just starting out or ready to scale, you'll leave with a clear framework for building your own digital growth machine.

[illegible]

Speakers

Tim Petterson, UHUB, Strategist



Tim Petterson has spent the last 15 years driving digital innovation across the union and climate movements. He led Hospo Voice at the United Workers Union

— one of the movement's most ambitious digital-first experiments — which unionised 2,500 young hospitality workers and trained 400 activists, all recruited through digital channels. He now works at the ACTU's Union Innovation Hub, partnering with unions on digital growth projects.

Matt Coffey, AEU SA, Organiser



Matt Coffey has spent just over a decade organising workers in public schools, preschools and TAFEs as well as public hospitals

and warehousing. He now leads the AEU SA Branch's organising and growth strategy, including developing of digital organising systems that combine lead generation, automated member journeys, data, and traditional organising to recruit, retain and mobilise members.

Dexter Duckett, ASMOF NSW, Retention Lead



Formerly the NSWN-MA's Retention Administrator, Dexter Duckett is now leading ASMOF NSW's retention strategy out of the planning phase and into action. In the

wake of last year's historic doctors' strike in NSW and a surge that doubled membership, he is focused on consolidating that growth and turning it into long-term industrial strength. Dexter is also leading the Digital Enhancement Project, working with Chris Walton and Tim Petterson from the Union Innovation Hub.

Steph Cunio, ASMOF NSW, Organising, Strategy and Campaigns Manager



In her role, Steph provides both strategic and operational leadership to the Organising team. Steph is an experienced relational organiser

with a long history in leading education, union, community and climate organising teams. Steph previously led the Climate & Community Organising team at UWU, working alongside Tim Petterson, where she was a keen promoter of the union's digital transformation work. Steph is also a board member and previous board chair of The Sydney Alliance, and a previous board member of Climate Action Network. She is founder and co-chair of Jewish Women 4 Peace, a group of Australian women campaigning for a just peace for all who live in Israel/Palestine.

Motivating Membership: Why Workers Join – and Why They Don't



This session focuses on what drives workers to join their union, and how organisers and delegates can influence the join decision. It will share the latest insights on how workers are feeling about work, unions, and the value

of membership, and provide practical insights on what experienced union campaigners know has worked – and what has made potential members walk away.

Speakers

Jacqueline King, QCU, General Secretary



Jacqueline King is the General Secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions. Jacqueline has worked for three decades within the trade union

movement including with the ASU, AMWU, QCU and ACTU. Jacqueline was Assistant General Secretary of the QCU from 2020 and elected as the General Secretary in 2024. She is passionate about work health and safety and women's rights.

Deirdre Watson, ACTU, Senior Insights Researcher



Deirdre Watson is an insights researcher with over 20 years' experience, working in both quantitative and qualitative fields, and is a full member of The Research Society. A key focus of her work

is delivering insights to amplify the voice of members and improve the member experience. She is passionate about working with unions to help support strategic work, especially evidence-driven growth and retention activities.

Notes:



Use it or Lose it: Education and Development of Delegates in Australian Unions

Drawing on the latest national research into union delegate development, this session, led by Professor David Peetz, explores what actually builds effective, confident workplace delegates and what doesn't. Based on the landmark Use it or Lose it study, participants will unpack how delegates learn in practice, including the critical role of workplace follow-up, informal peer learning, and ongoing organiser support, rather than one-off training interventions.

The workshop will connect over two decades of research on delegate development to current union practice, highlighting the challenges unions face in building delegate capacity and the opportunities to strengthen leadership, engagement and workplace power through more intentional and effective education strategies.

Speakers

David Peetz, Professor of Employment Relations at Griffith University

Co-author of the Use it or Lose it report

Professor David Peetz is one of Australia's leading experts on labour policy and employment relations. A dedicated board member of The Union Education Foundation, A Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, he is the Laurie Carmichael Distinguished Research Fellow at the Carmichael Centre and Professor Emeritus at Griffith University, where he previously served in the Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing.



He has authored several influential books, including *Unions in a Contrary World*, *Brave New Workplace*, and *The Realities and Futures of Work*, as well as numerous articles and reports on work, gender, regulation, and industrial relations. Professor Peetz has provided expert advice to state and Commonwealth bodies, including the Fair Work Commission, led an independent review of Queensland's workers compensation system, and consulted for the International Labour Organisation across Asia and Europe. His research collaborations span institutions in Canada, Europe, the UK, the US and New Zealand.

1.4 Hall 2

Growing the Union: The TWU's Aviation and Gig Work Campaigns



This session will focus on the Transport Workers Union's groundbreaking industry-level campaigns to improve legal protections, safety, wages and working conditions for aviation and gig workers. Chelsea Barker will cover the TWU's Safe and Secure Skies campaign and the urgent case for reform in aviation. She will outline the union's claims on government, airlines, airports, and regulators, and highlight the critical role of members in driving the campaign, focusing on how delegates are leading from the front in engaging their co-workers, building collective power, and taking the case for change directly to Parliament.

Jack Boutros will discuss the union's more than decade-long campaign to organise and represent gig workers in the transport sector, including food delivery, parcel delivery and rideshare. He will explore the many facets of the campaign, including public pressure through the media, research and government inquiries to build the case for law reform; litigation in courts and tribunals seeking to establish employment rights for gig workers; and lobbying to counter the influence of gig companies and obtain the strongest possible protections through the "employee-like" reforms in the Closing Loopholes legislation.

Notes:

Speakers

Anthony Forsyth ACTU, Senior Legal Officer



Anthony is a Senior Legal Officer at the ACTU; co-author of the 7th edition of Creighton & Stewart's Labour Law; and author of The Digital Picket Line: The Future of

Unions and Worker Representation.

Jack Boutros , TWU, Road Transport Campaign Coordinator



Jack Boutros is a Road Transport Campaign Coordinator at the Transport Workers' Union of Australia. Since joining the TWU in 2020, he

has contributed to the TWU Gig Economy campaign to organise and establish minimum standards and protections for food delivery riders and rideshare drivers. More recently, Jack has been involved coordinating the TWU's broader road transport campaigns focused on supply chain standards.

Chelsea Barker, TWU, National Aviation Campaigner



Chelsea Barker is a National Aviation Campaigner at the Transport Workers' Union National Office, where she is involved in leading national campaigns,

coordination, and member engagement across the aviation sector. Chelsea works closely with a network of organisers across major airports, supporting coordinated campaigns that build worker power and aim to set sector standards. A central focus of Chelsea's work is challenging the "race to the bottom" in ground handling, particularly through organising Swissport workers and exposing the company's low-cost model that threatens existing industry standards.

1.5 Room 9

Who Cares Wins: Growing Power in Education and Care



Education and care workers are showing that growth and industrial action go hand in hand. In sectors too often dismissed as “women’s work” or reduced to sentimental appeals about children and care, unions are building power, growing membership and turning that growth into collective action and real wins.

This session brings together campaigns from education, early childhood, nursing and aged care, to explore how unions in feminised sectors are organising around gender, value, workload and staffing, and what practical lessons these campaigns offer for building worker power across the movement.

Speakers

Katrina Bough, ANMF NSW, Branch Secretary

Katrina Bough is the Assistant General Secretary of the NSWNMA



and Branch Assistant Secretary of the ANMF NSW Branch. Katrina is a third-generation nurse, following in her mother and grandmother into the profession.

In 2012, Katrina developed a passion for emergency nursing on the NSW Central Coast, after a career change. She became an active union delegate at Wyong Hospital and was elected Branch President where she spearheaded a pivotal campaign to stop the hospital’s privatisation. After five years of full-time nursing in the ED, Katrina stepped away to become a clinical facilitator at the University of Newcastle. Katrina continued casual nursing until she commenced work as an Organiser at the NSWNMA in 2020. She strives to help nurses, midwives and care workers unlock their power and collective strength through union participation.

Chris Friend, HSU NSW, Division Secretary Aged Care & Disabilities



Chris Friend is a union leader with more than 18 years’ experience advocating for workers and campaigning to build union power.

As head of the Aged Care Division at the Health Services Union, Chris has played a leading role in major industry reforms, including the landmark Aged Care Work Value Case. With extensive experience in advocacy, enterprise bargaining, member engagement and organisational leadership, Chris brings practical insights into campaigning, negotiation and driving real workplace change.

1.6 Room 8

Young Workers are Having a Moment! How to Connect, Grow and Win with Young, Student, and Early-Career Workers



Strong data trends show young workers are more likely to consider joining unions now than recent years, but what are we doing to make sure this translates to a strong future movement?

Hear from unions prioritising young member issues, connecting with young workers before career entry, and winning

key campaigns for young members. This collaborative workshop will focus on why this is the moment is to grow youth membership, for a stronger union movement today and tomorrow.

Speakers

Angus McFarland, ASU NSW & ACT,
Secretary



Angus McFarland is Secretary of the Australian Services Union (NSW & ACT). Beginning as an organiser on the ASU's

Equal Pay campaign in 2010, he now leads the union's campaigning, organising and advocacy work, championing better pay, stronger workplace rights and a fairer future for working people.

Jordan Mumford, SDA SA/NT, Assistant
Secretary, Chair of ACTU Youth Committee



Jordan has been Assistant Secretary of the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association, South Australia since 2023.

Jordan joined the SDA when he got his first job at McDonald's when he was 14 years old and is passionate about improving workers' safety along with advancing the rights of young workers.

Jordan is the Chair of the ACTU Youth Committee and represents the ACTU Youth Committee on ACTU Executive.

Borderless Solidarity – Organising Migrant Workers Together



Australian and Pacific unions are working together to strengthen solidarity across borders and empower migrant workers at every stage of their journey.

This workshop highlights practical strategies for organising and supporting migrant workers from pre-departure engagement and union connections in Australia, to ongoing support and reintegration on return.

Featuring insights from Pacific trade union leaders and Australian union representatives, the session will showcase innovative approaches to organising PALM workers and strengthening migrant worker hubs.

Together, we'll explore how cross-border union partnerships are critical to preventing exploitation and ensuring migrant workers are informed, protected, and empowered.

Speakers

Clare Middlemas, APHEDA, Executive Officer



Clare is the new Executive Officer at Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA, the global justice organisation of the Australian trade union movement, commencing her role in March 2026. Prior to that, Clare was the International Manager at the ACTU, working on issues of workers' rights and human rights in Australia and around the world, including international labour standards, labour migration, trade, and business and human rights. Clare has over 15 years' experience in the trade union movement representing workers at the state, national and international levels.

Sania Tomi, Samoa Workers Congress, President



Seveaoga Saina Tomi Setu Fetalaiga is a dedicated wife, mother of four, trade union leader, and passionate advocate for workers' rights in Samoa. She is a founding member and currently serves as Executive Officer of Samoa First Union, the country's only private sector union.

She is also President of the Samoa Workers Congress, the national umbrella body representing trade unions, and serves as Vice Chair of the Pacific Islands Council of Trade Unions, advancing workers' rights and social justice across the Pacific region.

Committed to protecting and empowering workers, Seveaoga is the founder of the Samoa Migrant Workers Help Desk, which provides support, advocacy, and assistance to Samoan migrant workers and their families. A respected Samoan chief and proud Tamaitai Samoa, she traces her roots to the villages of Malie, Lepea, Sataua, Faga, and Foailuga in Savai'i, Samoa. She is deeply committed to social justice, workers' welfare, community development, and the empowerment of women, families, and workers throughout Samoa and wider Pacific.

Jotika Sharma, Fiji Trades Union Congress, Assistant Secretary



Jotika Sharma is the Head of Programmes and Administration at the Fiji Trades Union Congress in Fiji. She oversees the day-to-day management of the union confederation's office and leads the development of workers' education programmes for union members and workers more broadly.

At the international level, she is the elected Chair of the International Trade Union Confederation Global Women's Committee and Chair of the ITUC Asia-Pacific Women's Committee. She is also a Regional General Councillor and Executive Board member of both ITUC and ITUC Asia Pacific.

At the most recent FTUC Biennial Delegates Conference, Jotika led constitutional reforms to increase women's representation in leadership, in line with the ITUC 50:50 campaign. She was elected Assistant National Secretary, contributing to achieving gender parity within the FTUC National Executive.

In migration work, she leads the FTUC Migrant Resources Centre, supporting workers and their families with grievances related to the PALM scheme.

Carol Beaumont, ITUC

1.8 Room 3

Future jobs: What is the Bigger Vision for Australian Workers - and How Do We Get There?



We love a speech, or an inspiring post on social media, about a future where there's dignity for our members at work and beyond – no working poor, jobs where workers are genuinely respected and earn enough to live a decent life, communities where people have access to the services they need...

What we're not always so good at is stepping out the steps needed to build that future.

For AMWU, our Blueprint for Action is core to how we push back against the far-right agenda with our own narrative and bold campaigns for change.

In this workshop, we will talk through the Blueprint and lead a discussion where you can explore what the vision and pathways could be for your members. We will ask questions about what members really care about; what a decent society looks like; and what the building blocks to building that society could be.

Speakers

Steve Murphy, AMWU, National Secretary



Steve Murphy was appointed National Secretary of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in 2020, having previously held the position of NSW

State Secretary since 2017.

Steve has worked for the AMWU since being elected as a workplace delegate as a young tradesperson in the NSW Hunter Valley in 1998. Steve is passionate about working class politics, consensus on transitioning energy needs and a fair trading agenda for Australia.

Renee Portland, AMWU, Union official



Renee Portland is a Union Official with the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, with nearly a decade of experience organising and

representing workers across Western Australia's mining, construction, rail, and oil and gas industries.

A passionate advocate for apprentices and for increasing women's participation in traditionally male-dominated industries, Renee is committed to securing a future built on skilled, inclusive, and safe workplaces and to fighting for that future every day.



Strange Bedfellows: How Unlikely Alliances are Driving Housing Wins



Winning on housing means stepping beyond traditional workplace organising and building alliances in new places. From tenants' unions to cross-sector initiatives such as Housing Now!, unions are teaming up with different partners to

take on a system stacked against working people. This session explores how these partnerships are formed, where they succeed or falter, and how organisers can use them to build pressure, tell stronger stories and reach new audiences.

Notes:

Speakers

Lauren Hutchins, HSU, Assistant Secretary



Lauren Hutchins is Assistant Secretary at the Health Services Union NSW/ACT/QLD. She is a Vice President of the ACTU and Presi-

dent of Unions NSW.

She has worked in the union movement for over 25 years; with her first organising job as an Aged Care Project Officer with the Health and Research Employees Association. She has had the privilege of spending most of her working life organising women in feminised industries – from aged care to airlines – to kick ass.

Sharon Callaghan, ASU, Organiser and Former Tenant Advocate in the Illawarra



Following decades of community work, including in the areas of tenancy, youth work and juvenile justice, Sharon Callaghan worked as an

organiser with the ASU.

Recently she has documented the history of the Australian Social Workers Union that later became the Social and Community Services division of the ASU.

David Bliss, SDA, Newcastle and Northern Branch Secretary



David has dedicated more than 30 years to advancing the rights, wages, and job security of retail, fast food, pharmacy and warehouse workers.

Joining the SDA at

the age of 17 and becoming a workplace delegate at 22, he went on to serve as an Organiser, Industrial Officer, Senior Industrial Officer, Assistant Secretary, and now Branch Secretary.

Throughout his career, David has led significant industrial campaigns and industrial cases, including NSW and federal casual conversion cases on behalf of the SDA that helped secure pathways to permanent employment for long-term casual workers. He has been at the vanguard of the campaign to abolish adult age-based junior wages, challenging outdated wage structures and fighting to ensure adult workers receive the full rate of pay they have earned. He has played a key role in developing and implementing the SDA's industrial strategy during some of the most significant workplace rights campaigns of recent decades, including the successful fight against WorkChoices.

Beyond the workplace, he has spearheaded the Branch's A Fair Go Starts With a Home campaign, advocating for increased investment in and delivery of social and affordable housing across the Newcastle, Central Coast and Hunter regions of NSW, to help working families access secure and affordable housing.

Engaging and Organising Workers for a Better Retirement



Superannuation was won through union strategy, collective bargaining and sustained industrial pressure. As unions look to expand universal entitlements today, there are concrete lessons to draw from how super was secured and how it continues to be expanded.

This workshop examines the bargaining strategies that delivered superannuation, how unions are organising around super in the current industrial environment, and the organising opportunities ahead. It will focus on:

- using superannuation as a tool for worker education, digital engagement, recruitment and organising,
- how unions can communicate about super in ways that make it relevant and accessible to different segment of workers,
- current Enterprise Agreements that lift contribution rates and extend coverage,
- the bargaining tactics to secure higher contribution rates, payment on all hours worked, and the inclusion of excluded workers, and
- identifying and recovering stolen super including through payday super.

Speakers

Casey Thompson, ACTU,
Workers' Capital Manager

James Nero, Australian Super,
Partnership Manager NSW

Mark Jenkins, MEU,
Vice President, South Western District

Helen Cooney, SDA,
National Assistant Secretary

Monica Rawat, UWU,
Head of Brand, Marketing & Retention

2.1 Room 9

Empowering Delegates



This workshop is all about utilising new delegates' rights to empower delegates and hold strong against employers who breach the 2024-won delegates' rights in awards. How can organisers put power into action and build on skills that delegates learn in training?

Learn how the CPSU and TWU utilise delegate training to win for members, how HACSU delegates used their rights in state-wide bargaining and how Professionals Australia delegates at Airbus overcame threats and reprimands for using workplace facilities and time.

Notes:

Speakers

Professor David Peetz



Professor David Peetz is one of Australia's leading experts on labour policy and employment relations. A dedicated board member of The Union Education Foundation, A Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, he is the Laurie Carmichael Distinguished Research Fellow at the Carmichael Centre and Professor Emeritus at Griffith University, where he previously served in the Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing. He has authored several influential books, including

Unions in a Contrary World, *Brave New Workplace*, and *The Realities and Futures of Work*, as well as numerous articles and reports on work, gender, regulation, and industrial relations.

Professor Peetz has provided expert advice to state and Commonwealth bodies, including the Fair Work Commission, led an independent review of Queensland's workers compensation system, and consulted for the International Labour Organisation across Asia and Europe. His research collaborations span institutions in Canada, Europe, the UK, the US and New Zealand.

Sally Gunner,
CPSU, QLD Regional Secretary



Sally Gunner has been the CPSU Regional Secretary for 5 years; previously a Lead Organiser representing workers across the APS for over a decade of experience as a CPSU delegate. Sally brings a wealth of knowledge from being a delegate, representing members in high customer aggression environments and used WH&S to educate and protect workers from psychosocial hazards, while empowering delegates to use work time to engage members in consultation, Enterprise Agreement enforcement and bargaining. Sally is also an honorary QCU Vice-President representing the needs of public servants to state forums.

Des Marcenko, HACSU Tasmania,
Industrial Organiser

Des Marcenko is a State wide Public Sector Coordinator with HACSU, supporting members across Tasmania and leading major industrial campaigns for more than four years. Known for empowering public health workers and driving regular industrial action, Des has played a key role in high impact efforts such as the successful community campaign to save Hobart's Tolosa Street mental health facility.

Jon Farry,
PA, Lead Organiser

Jon Farry is Lead Organiser at Professionals Australia NSW, while supporting a small team of organisers also organising engineers including Airbus Australia Pacific Engineers. Jon developed delegates to bargain with Airbus for their first engineers EBA, and aided delegates in the health sector to get mandatory N95 fit testing made mandatory during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Daniel Hicks, HACSU Tasmania,
Industrial Organiser

Daniel Hicks is an Industrial Organiser with HACSU, supporting Public Sector members across Tasmania's North West and West. In his 2.5 years with the union, Daniel has become a steady advocate for disengaged and disenfranchised workers, helping them reconnect with their union, build confidence, and take meaningful action.

2.2 Room 5

Using AI to Beat the Bosses



This session is for unionists who are curious about, experimenting with, or sceptical about AI, or all three.

The promise of AI often gets framed in managerial language about productivity and efficiency but that's not how most unionists experience their work. For us, the problem is usually that there is too much to do and not enough time to do it all.

This session asks whether AI can help relieve some of that pressure without diminishing

the human judgment, care and relationships at the heart of building power. We'll explore practical uses for AI in our day-to-day work, including a demonstration of UnionChat (a Union Built AI tool) and how to build a simple Copilot agent.

The aim is not to sell AI, but to help unionists think critically and practically about how these tools can be shaped and used.

Speakers

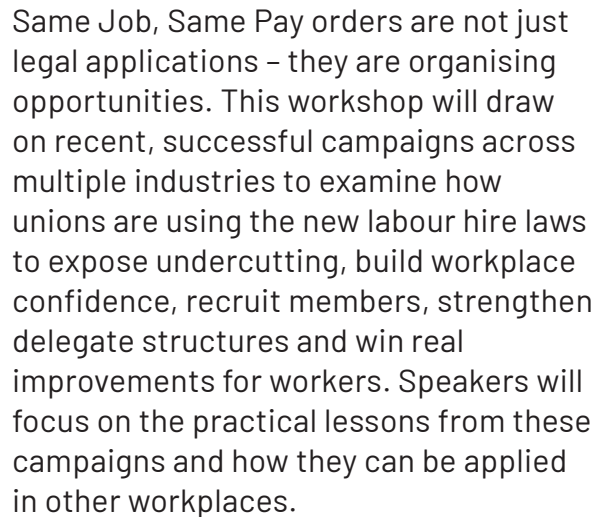
Yvette Nash, ACTU, Executive Officer



Yvette Nash is the Executive Officer at the ACTU, where she contributes to ACTU strategic initiatives that support unions to grow.

Recently, Yvette has been leading the ACTU's AI project, helping to explore how generative AI tools can be responsibly integrated into union operations. In particular she is leading the delivery of UnionChat, an AI application designed for use by Unions. Her work has focused on ensuring the project aligns with union values, privacy expectations, and practical needs across the movement.

Same Job, Same Pay, Real Power: Organising Around Labour Hire Orders



Speakers from the Mining and Energy Union, Rail, Tram and Bus Union and the Flight Attendants' Association of Australia will share the practical lessons from these campaigns and how they can be applied in other workplaces.

What would it take to turn a Same, Job Same Pay application in a target workplace into a campaign that builds power and delivers lasting change?

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Speakers

Jodie Cam, MEU, Organiser



Jodie Cam is an Organiser with the Mining and Energy Union, working across the Hunter Valley coal mines. With more than 30 years of experience

in the mining industry, Jodie brings extensive industry knowledge and a strong commitment to representing and supporting workers.

Before joining the MEU, Jodie was an active union member and held the positions of delegate, Vice President, and Secretary of her site lodge. Her experience on the job and within the union movement provides her with a practical understanding of workplace issues, health and safety, and the importance of collective action in achieving better outcomes for workers and their families.

Koady Williams, RTBU, National Director of Industrial Relations



Koady Williams is the National Director of Industrial Relations for the Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union. A union lawyer with extensive experience

in industrial relations, bargaining, dispute resolution and campaigning, Koady leads the RTBU's national industrial relations work and supports union officials and organisers to develop strategies that deliver practical outcomes for workers and strengthen union power on the ground. Prior to joining the RTBU, Koady worked with the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, supporting industrial and organising work across the private hospital and aged care sectors. He holds a Master of Business Administration.

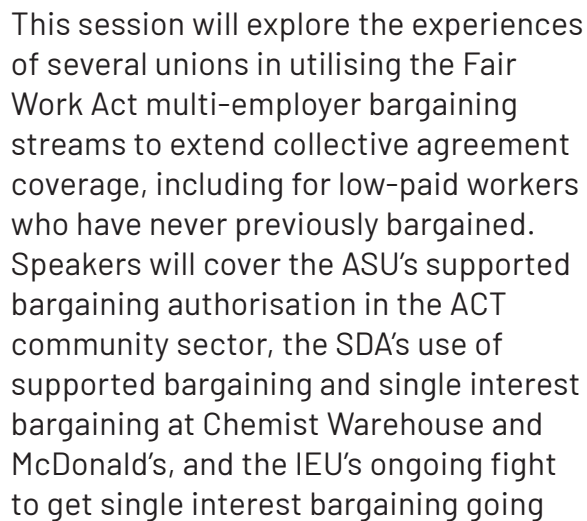
Steven Read, FAAA, Manager of Industrial Relations



Steven Reed is the Manager of Industrial Relations for the Flight Attendants' Association of Australia. A former FAAA

President and Assistant Secretary, Steven has represented aviation workers for more than three decades and has been involved in enterprise bargaining across the airline industry since the early 1990s. His experience spans Qantas, Virgin Australia, regional airlines and international carriers operating in Australia. Steven brings deep expertise in bargaining, industrial strategy and workplace representation, built on a career that began as cabin crew with Qantas and now includes leading the FAAA's industrial relations work.

Winning in the Fair Work Commission and on The Ground: Building Power Through Multi-Employer Bargaining



in Victorian Catholic schools. Lessons will be drawn from these unions in running FWC cases to gain access to multi-employer bargaining, concurrent with developing and maintaining the support of members for bargaining campaigns, to maximise the potential outcomes for workers through the new laws.

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Speakers

Ffion Evans, UWU, Deputy Director of Early Childhood Education and Care



Over the last 2 years membership in ECEC has grown by 4,000 using the new bargaining rights. Ffion has worked across major sector wide

organising and bargaining campaigns, including Aged Care and across private and public sector unions internationally and in Australia.

Stacey Sharkey, ASU NSW/ACT, Assistant Secretary



Stacey has worked in the union movement for the last decade as a campaigner, organiser, lead organiser and now Assistant Secretary of organising.

Her involvement with the ACT MEA spans back to 2020 through the negotiations of the agreement, the organising on the ground and now the Fair Work supported bargaining process.

Josh Peak, SDA SA/NT, Secretary



Josh represents workers across retail, fast food, warehousing and related industries. He has been closely involved in the SDA's organising

and bargaining work, including supported bargaining and single interest bargaining campaigns.

James Rankin, IEU VIC/TAS, Assistant Secretary



James has worked toward advancing the rights and entitlements of members in education settings for many years.



members to challenge psychosocial hazards, unreasonable expectations, escalate issues, and win safer work standards.

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Speakers

Jodie McFadden, QTU, WHS Organiser



QTU Organiser for the Gold Coast since 2015, Jodie cut her teeth as a school-based representative at Benowa SHS, where she led members in collective action

following an asbestos incident, organised rallies outside the Minister's office and campaigned for the implementation of the Gonski reforms to properly fund public education. In a full-circle moment, Jodie is once again on the frontline of WHS. Acting as the QTU WHS Officer, she has returned to rallying outside the Minister's office and unapologetically campaigning for safer schools.

Dash Taylor Johnson, SA Unions, Coordinator WHS Education & Capacity



Appointed in 2022, Dash Taylor Johnson is the SA Unions Coordinator WHS Education & Capacity. He is a registered teacher and AEU

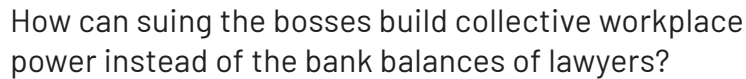
member of the SA Branch, since 1988. His organising path as a delegate, Branch Councillor, Executive member and Vice-President embraced improved industrial and WHS outcomes before continuing this work with the peak body. He has been at the forefront of psychosocial hazard management strategies, using WHS as an organising tool.

Beth Vincent-Pietsch, CPSU-PSU, President



Beth Vincent-Pietsch is president of the CPSU/PSU group. Beth has served on the National executive of the CPSU for more than a decade and been with the CPSU for over 20 years. She leads the largest organising team in the CPSU/PSU and specialises in campaigning and engaging members on collective campaigns. Beth also established the CPSU Accessibility Network, bringing together members from across the union with disability to strategise future union direction, to lead campaigns for industrial wins, like paid disability leave, to share resources to engage the broader membership and to be a driving force for change in the APS and beyond.

Sue the Bastards: Strategic Enforcement to Build Collective Power

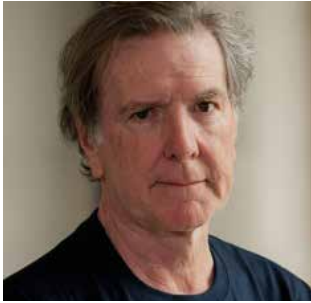


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Speakers

Michael O'Connor, Timber, Furnishing and Textiles Union, National Secretary



Michael O'Connor is the National Secretary of the TFTU – the Timber, Furnishing & Textiles Union which followed the successful demerger in 2025 of the Manufacturing

Division from the CFMEU.

He has been with the Union for over 40 years, commencing work as a union organiser in 1985.

He is a current member of the ACTU Executive and has a long history of presence on various industry boards and bodies covering superannuation and industry development, including FIRST Super, AIST, ACSI, Frontier Advisors and Super Benefits Administration.

Ben Moxham, ACTU, Legal and Policy Director



He has also been the ACTU's Deputy Chief of Staff and lead campaign organiser since 2014. He has also worked as a Senior Industrial Officer and International Officer for the British TUC, an

employment lawyer, and a researcher for an activist think tank in Thailand and Timor-Leste. He has degrees in law, politics, and international development.

Josh Peak, SDA SA/NT, Secretary



representing workers across retail, fast food, warehousing and related industries. He has been closely involved in the SDA's organising and bargaining work, including supported

bargaining and single interest bargaining campaigns.

Lorraine Biviano, TWU, National Legal Officer

Lorraine is the Director of Legal and Industrial Strategy at the Transport Workers' Union of Australia (TWU), where she leads the union's national legal and industrial agenda. In this role, she provides strategic guidance across bargaining, protected industrial action, tribunal proceedings and legislative reform, and contributes to the development of policy focused on workers' rights, safety and fairness in the transport sector.

Lorraine has held legal roles within the TWU since joining the organisation in 2014, contributing to major national campaigns and legal strategies over more than a decade. She has worked on cases including the Qantas v TWU federal court litigation relating to illegally outsources workers, applications for regulated labour hire arrangements orders and major transport cases including for contractual chain orders and minimum standards orders at the Fair Work Commission.

Together for Treaty: A Role for Unions



Together for Treaty builds understanding and collective support for Treaty, creating a space where unions can share their commitment to justice, truth-telling and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In these sessions, union speakers will highlight the role of the labour movement in standing in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

communities, creating space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members to led and emphasis how unions can use their organising power to amplify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, mobilise members, and advocate for systemic change.

Notes:

Speakers

Larissa Baldwin Roberts, CEO and Co-founder, Common Threads



Larissa Baldwin Roberts is a Widjabul Wia bal woman from the Bundjalung Nation and a nationally recognised Aboriginal campaigner,

organiser and movement leader, currently serving as CEO and Co-founder of Common Threads, a First Nations led organisation building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander power to drive systemic change on land rights, climate justice and self determination. She leads major national organising efforts including the Together for Treaty campaign, helping mobilise broad community and cross movement support for truth telling and Treaty processes, and bringing together hundreds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, allies and organisations to push for a coordinated national pathway to justice.

With a background spanning grassroots activism, climate justice campaigns and national advocacy, Baldwin Roberts has worked closely with unions and civil society partners to build solidarity, strengthen collective bargaining for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, and grow a powerful movement capable of influencing political and public agendas.

Geoff Keating , NTEU, Educator



Geoff is a proud Kunja man, educator, union activist and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative with the National Tertiary Education Union. Based at the

University of Southern Queensland, Geoff has a strong background in education, Indigenous student engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education. Through his work with the NTEU, he advocates for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, helping to strengthen First Nations representation, cultural safety and collective power across the tertiary education sector. As a member of the NTEU's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy structures, Geoff works alongside First Nations union members to advance self-determination, justice and equity, while building stronger connections between union organising and community leadership.

Wil Stracke, VTHC, Assistant Secretary



Wil Stracke is the Assistant Secretary of the Victorian Trades Hall Council, the peak body for the Victorian union movement. She's previously

worked as a solicitor, union organiser, lead organiser and campaign coordinator. She's also pulled beers, parked cars and acted/sung professionally. She's active on social media – check her out on TikTok and Instagram @wilstracke.

No Worker Left Behind – Strengthening Migrant Worker Centres Across the Pacific and Australia



Migrant Worker Centres play a critical frontline role in supporting and protecting migrant workers including seasonal workers under the PALM scheme particularly those who are vulnerable, isolated, or disengaged.

This workshop will bring together leaders from migrant worker centres across Australia and the Pacific, alongside an Australian union representative, to share insights,

challenges, and proven strategies in delivering support, outreach, and organising. The session will also explore why sustainable government funding is essential to ensure these services can continue to reach and empower migrant workers, prevent exploitation, and strengthen pathways to collective representation.

Speakers

Jonathan Cook, AWU, National Organiser

Jonathan Cook is a National Organiser for the Australian Workers' Union and has led national initiatives across multiple sectors including Agriculture, Civil Construction and Tourism. In Agriculture, the AWU has seen significant growth in membership of workers on the PALM Scheme and Jonathan leads the advocacy and Organising for these members – including the Super Power the Pacific campaign which seeks to improve superannuation outcomes for PALM workers and the AWU's push to improve the PALM Deed and Guidelines so that workers are not subject to exploitation on the Scheme.



Rosa Sottile, QCU, Project Director,
Queensland Migrant WorkWise



Rosa Sottile is the Project Director of Queensland Migrant WorkWise, a program delivered by the Queensland Council of Unions. QMWW is free and

confidential program that provides advice and support to migrant workers throughout Queensland. With experience in union organising, politics and campaigns, Rosa is passionate about justice, worker's rights and making Queensland a better place.

Isabel Salinas, Unions NSW, Director,



Refugee and Migrant Workers Centre Director

As Director, Isabel oversees the delivery of free legal advice and workplace rights education, while leading advocacy

for policy reforms that improve conditions for migrant workers across Australia.

With more than 15 years of experience in research, advocacy, and community engagement, Isabel has dedicated her career to advancing workplace justice and empowering migrant workers to understand and exercise their rights. For over eight years, she has led research on workplace issues affecting migrant workers through her work with Unions NSW and the Refugee and Migrant Workers Centre.

Jotika Sharma, Fiji Trades Union Congress,
Assistant Secretary



Jotika Sharma is the Head of Programmes and Administration at the Fiji Trades Union Congress in Fiji. She oversees the day-to-day management of the

union confederation's office and leads the development of workers' education programmes for union members and workers more broadly.

At the international level, she is the elected Chair of the International Trade Union Confederation Global Women's Committee and Chair of the ITUC Asia-Pacific Women's Committee. She is also a Regional General Councillor and Executive Board member of both ITUC and ITUC Asia Pacific.

At the most recent FTUC Biennial Delegates Conference, Jotika led constitutional reforms to increase women's representation in leadership, in line with the ITUC 50:50 campaign. She was elected Assistant National Secretary, contributing to achieving gender parity within the FTUC National Executive.

In migration work, she leads the FTUC Migrant Resources Centre, supporting workers and their families with grievances related to the PALM scheme.

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Speakers

Irene Moggan, TWU, Head of Member-Led, Growth & Development



Irene's current role is central in the TWU's transformation in becoming more member-led; where members lead in the organising, recruiting and

mobilising to scale. Her union history spans over 25 years in white collar and blue-collar unions. These include roles as an organiser, national educator and campaigner. She has led successful growth campaigns including inductions and recruitment blitzes resulting in mass membership growth. Irene coordinated national bargains in Linfox and StarTrack during the pandemic, taking members out on strike, delivering the highest industry rates and standards for transport workers.

Kate Tribble, HSU WA, Organiser



Kate Tribble has been a dedicated Union Organiser with the Health Services Union WA for over 12 years.

She has successfully worked on numerous workplace organising

drives, helping hundreds of members in public health secure better wages, safer working conditions, and robust collective bargaining agreements. Over the past six years, she has specialised in collaborating with members in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, forming a deep understanding of the delicate work these members perform and the deep structure concerns that they face in an area of increased need.

Angus Haye, ASMOF, Delegate



Angus Hayes is an anaesthesia registrar in his second year of specialist training with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists,

working across NSW Health hospitals in Sydney and regional NSW.

He serves as a councillor with the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation, where he has been an active delegate and advocate in the NSW public hospital doctors' campaign – organising colleagues around safe working hours, fair pay, and the retention of doctors in the public system. His experience spans metropolitan tertiary centres and regional centres, giving him a first-hand view of the workforce pressures facing public hospitals across the state. He is also a published researcher and soon-to-be father, and brings a frontline clinician's perspective to the industrial issues confronting salaried doctors nationally.

Divided by Design: The Manosphere, the Far Right, and the Challenge to Solidarity



The popularity of the manosphere – a digital ecosystem connected by anti-feminist perspectives, communities and influencers – has gained recent popularity. The combination of far-right actors capitalising on economic and social insecurity and algorithmic social media platforms is creating a funnel to further far right ideologies. The manosphere is fuelling real and escalating consequences for workplaces and wider society.

This workshop poses the question: what must we as unions do to combat the manosphere and its divisive effects on our members?

Notes:

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Speakers

Emma Lowe, AEU, Deputy Federal Secretary



Emma is the Deputy Federal Secretary for the Australian Education Union. She previously worked as the Federal Women's Officer, as an

Organiser in the South Australian branch of the AEU, and as an educator with the ACTU.

Prior to becoming a full-time union official, Emma was an early childhood teacher in regional and metropolitan settings in South Australia.

Emma has been part of the leadership team of the SA Women's Electoral Lobby. She is currently the ACTU representative to the ITUC-AP Women's Committee.

Dr Nathan Manning, School of Society and Culture Adelaide University, Sociologist



Dr Nathan Manning is a sociologist in the School of Society and Culture at Adelaide University. Working within political sociology he focuses on

young citizens and the role of emotions in politics and citizenship. His current projects focus on young people's engagement with extremist content online and the different ways in which university education may undermine support for far-right politics. His work has been funded by the ONI, ESRC and the British Academy. He is founding Co-Editor of the journal *Emotions and Society*.

Dr Benjamin Adams, Adelaide University, Postdoctoral Research Fellow



Dr Ben Adams has experience spanning the academic social sciences, critical humanities and creative fields. His research interests include

the conceptual frameworks and practical implementation of preventing and countering violent extremism strategies for youth and, especially, young men, digital pathways to extremist content, along with broader but related issues regarding radicalisation, masculinities and ideology.

He has contributed to projects and publications focused on the sociology of schooling in a neoliberal context, gendered learner identities and subjectivities, educational inequalities, restorative practices, higher degree research cultures and decolonising educational supervision. He currently works as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Adelaide University.

3.2 Hall 2

Anti-Racism is Union Business



This anti-racism workshop, facilitated by Human Rights Commissioner Giri Sivaraman, centres the vital role unions play in advancing equity and justice in the workplace. It explores how and why anti-racism is union business, recognising that collective action has long been a powerful tool for challenging systemic discrimination and supporting workers who experience racism.

The session will highlight the work unions are already doing in the anti-racism space and build a shared understanding of the responsibility and opportunity unions have to lead change. A key focus will be campaigning for stronger employer accountability, including advocating for a clear duty of care to actively prevent and respond to racism in workplaces, ensuring all workers are safe, respected, and able to thrive.

Speakers

Giridharan Sivaraman, AHRC, Race Discrimination Commissioner



Giridharan (Giri) Sivaraman is Australia's Race Discrimination Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission, having commenced in the role in 2024 after a long legal career specialising in employment, industrial and anti discrimination law. Born in India and raised partly overseas before migrating to Australia, he became a prominent workplace lawyer as Principal at Maurice Blackburn, where he led major race discrimination cases and advocacy for vulnerable and migrant workers, including through high profile wage theft compensation efforts.

Sivaraman has also held leadership roles in multicultural policy, including as Chair of Multicultural Australia and a member of the Queensland Multicultural Advisory Council, reflecting his broader commitment to racial equity and inclusion. Alongside this work, he has longstanding ties to the trade union movement: he has represented unions and workers for over two decades, provided advice connected to national industrial matters, and has consistently framed anti racism as integral to workers' rights, regularly engaging with union organisations and advocating for stronger protections against discrimination in workplaces.

Katrina Bough, ANMF NSW, Branch Secretary



Katrina Bough is the Assistant General Secretary of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association and Branch Assistant Secretary of the ANMF NSW Branch.

Katrina is a third-generation nurse, following in her mother and grandmother into the profession. In 2012 Katrina developed a passion for emergency nursing on the NSW Central Coast, after a career change. She became an active union delegate at Wyong Hospital and was elected Branch President where she spearheaded a pivotal campaign to stop the hospital's privatisation.

After five years of full-time nursing in the emergency department, Katrina stepped away to become a clinical facilitator at the University of Newcastle. Katrina continued casual nursing until she commenced work as an Organiser at the NSWNMA in 2020. She strives to help nurses, midwives and care workers unlock their power and collective strength through union participation.

Jagath Bandara



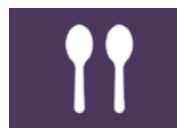
Jagath is a passionate social activist and trade unionist with over 25 years of experience in campaigning, organising, and

empowering workers across Australia, as well as the Asia Pacific region.

His work has focused on building union power, developing leaders, and advancing workplace safety, as well as championing youth and women's rights. Originally from Sri Lanka, Jagath is fluent in Sinhala and familiar with multiple South Asian languages.

Notes:

Countering Misinformation: Organising in an Age of Confusion



Disinformation is no longer confined to fringe conspiracy theories. It is increasingly used to divide communities, undermine trust in institutions, attack collective action and weaken democratic participation.

In this interactive session, journalist and researcher Van Badham explores how disinformation campaigns operate, why they are effective, and what organisers can do to build resilience in their workplaces, unions and communities. Drawing on years of research and frontline experience in media literacy and counter disinformation education, Van will provide practical tools

for identifying manipulation, responding effectively, and strengthening trust-based organising in an increasingly complex information environment.

Victorian Trades Hall Council will speak to their 2026 publication *Antidote: Trade Unionism as a Vaccine Against Far-Right Politics*. The report demonstrates how trade unionism functions as a vaccine against far-right politics, both at the level of the individual and across the entire social body.

ASU Together (QLD) share insights from their engagement with education on combatting the far right.

Notes:

Speakers

Van Badham, Journalist & Researcher



Van Badham is a writer, researcher and strategic communications consultant, currently completing her PhD in digital sociology at the

University of Technology Sydney. She has been a featured columnist for The Guardian for more than a decade, writing about digital culture and society, and she hosts the award-winning news review podcast The Week on Wednesday.

Van's 2021 book *QAnon And On: A Short and Shocking History of Internet Conspiracy Cults*, was both a bestseller and a finalist for a Walkley Award. Her writing on digital technology and politics has been featured in publications including The New York Times, The Age and broadcast media around the world.

Van's expertise in counter disinformation extends to active involvement in digital media literacy programs and public talks, workshops and panel appearances, working with organisations as diverse as the ACTU, community organisations, universities and industry conferences. She frequently collaborates with US-based disinformation expert Nina Jankowicz and is currently co-authoring a book on community counter disinformation strategies and information resilience with Indigenous activist and writer Thomas Mayo.

Will Wyatt, **Together QLD**, Organiser



Will Wyatt supports public sector workers across agencies including Queensland Police Service Queensland Fire Department, and Queensland

Corrective Services. He works closely with delegates to build workplace power, navigate complex industrial issues and strengthen collective organising in challenging environments. Will has a strong interest in countering misinformation and far-right narratives, drawing on frontline experience engaging with workers and communities as well as his own active presence online challenging disinformation and conspiracy-driven narratives.

Luke Hilakari, **VTHC Secretary**



Trades Hall is the peak body and the central organising force of the mighty Victorian trade union movement, representing 40 affiliate unions and

over 500,000 union members in Victoria.

Luke is the youngest Secretary of Trades Hall, elected in 2014. He worked for United Voice, organising cleaners, before becoming an Industrial Officer at Trades Hall. Under his Secretaryship, Trades Hall has expanded to campaign on a number of targeted issues by establishing a Young Workers Centre, Women and Equality Team, Migrant Workers Centre and OH&S Unit. Luke is passionate about wage justice, fixing dangerous workplaces, ending workplace discrimination and fighting for a progressive and socially just Victoria.

3.4 Room 1

No AI Without Us: Putting Workers at the Centre of AI Adoption



What is the difference between AI that undermines our working lives or improves it? The voice of workers. This workshop will hear from a wide range of unions campaigning to win the best rights for members in the roll-out of AI in workplaces across the country.

Speakers

Nicole McPherson, Finance Sector Union, National Assistant Secretary



Nicole McPherson is National Assistant Secretary of the Finance Sector Union of Australia and the President of the Victorian Trades Hall Council.

After starting her career as a lawyer, Nicole joined the Finance Sector Union and worked as an Industrial Advocate and National Industrial Officer. She was then elected as the Secretary of the Victoria and Tasmania branch of the Finance Sector Union before being elected as the National Assistant Secretary in 2023.

Nicole leads the Finance Sector Union's Organising, Campaigning and Industrial teams in fighting for progressive rights for all finance workers. She is passionate about business and human rights, the ethical use of artificial intelligence in the finance sector, and workplace health and safety. Nicole holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws with Honours, Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and Master of Laws.

Correna Haythorpe, Federal President, AEU



Correna Haythorpe is the Federal President of the Australian Education Union and a former public school teacher with more than 17 years' experience teaching in South Australia and overseas. A long-time union leader and advocate for public education, she has led major campaigns on school funding, TAFE, and teachers' working conditions, with a strong commitment to social justice and educational equity.

Damien Cahill, General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union, General Secretary



Damien Cahill is General Secretary of the National Tertiary Education Union. Before his election to a full-time trade union role in 2018, Damien was Associate Professor in Political

Economy at the University of Sydney. He is the author of numerous scholarly publications with a primary focus on the political economy of neoliberalism.

Sally Gunner, Community and Public Sector Union, Regional Secretary



Sally Gunner has been the CPSU Regional Secretary for six years and an Organiser and Lead Organiser since 2012, representing workers across

the APS in Queensland and working across national teams. Sally brings a wealth of knowledge from being a delegate since 2009, representing members in high customer aggression environments. She uses WH&S to educate and protect workers from psychosocial hazards while empowering delegates to use work time to engage members in consultation, Enterprise Agreement enforcement and bargaining. Sally is also an honorary QCU Vice-President representing the needs of public servants to state forums.

3.5 Room 3

Rising Heat, Rising Power: Organising for a Climate-Safe Workplace



Get to know different strategies to organise members on various climate risks at work.

Participants will understand the utility of different tools to hold employers accountable for making workplaces safe from current and emerging climate threats. As heatwaves intensify and disasters become more frequent, workers are increasingly on the front lines of climate change; often without the protections they deserve.

This workshop explores how unions can and are organising and fighting back to tackle the growing impacts of climate change at work, using work health and safety rights and collective organising to push back against employer inaction and exploitation.

Grounded in real examples from across industries, we'll explore how organising on the job can connect with bargaining and broader campaigning to win meaningful protections. We'll unpack how to push back on the idea that dealing with climate risk is an individual responsibility and instead build collective solutions that reflect the reality workers face.

The workshop will also discuss the dual role of WHS – as both a legal framework and a site of struggle – and the key role HSRs, delegates and members play in turning rights on paper into real enforcement at work. At its heart, this workshop is about power: the workers most exposed to unsafe conditions are often the least protected. Winning safer workplaces in a changing climate means organising not just for safety, but for fairness, equity and collective responsibility across our society.

Speakers

Catelyn Richards, ANMF, Federal Assistant Secretary



Catelyn Richards was appointed as ANMF Federal Assistant Secretary in 2026.

Catelyn is a Registered Nurse whose practice has centred on paediatrics, research and professional advocacy. Raised in rural Tasmania, she brings a strong commitment to equitable access to healthcare in regional and remote communities.

For more than 15 years, Catelyn has contributed to not-for-profit and non-government organisations in both representative and grassroots volunteer roles. Catelyn was a 2020 Union Summer intern at the ANMF Victorian Branch and later became an Organiser and Member Support Officer for the ANMF Tasmanian Branch. She later co-founded Climate Action Nurses, recognising that climate change is increasingly shaping patterns of illness, service demand and workforce pressure.

Steph Cunio, ASMOF NSW, Organising, Strategy and Campaigns Manager.



In her role, Steph provides both strategic and operational leadership to the Organising team. Steph is an experienced relational organiser with a long history in leading education, union, community and climate organising teams. Steph previously led the Climate & Community Organising team at UWU, working alongside Tim Petterson in the innovation part of the union, where she was a keen promoter of the union's digital transformation work. Steph is also a board member and previous board chair of The Sydney Alliance, and a previous board member of Climate Action Network. She is founder

and co-chair of Jewish Women 4 Peace, a group of Australian women campaigning for a just peace for all who live in Israel/Palestine.

Scott Cowen, ASU, Assistant National Secretary



Scott was previously the Branch Assistant Secretary of the ASU SA & NT Branch, and has extensive experience representing members in enterprise bargaining, workplace disputes, and at the Fair Work Commission. He serves as a Board Director for the industry superannuation fund Electric Super, the South Australian Community Services Portable Long Service Leave Scheme and the Future Skills Organisation. He is also a member of the Net Zero Economy Authority Stakeholder Panel.

Kelly Marks, CPSU/PSA NSW, Lead Organiser



Kelly is a proud product of public education, growing up in Albury, on the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people. She now lives on Bidjigal land with her family including two children who attend their local public schools.

Kelly is the TAFE Lead Organiser in the Federation's Post Schools Section. Prior to her election to this position in March this year, she was a Research/Industrial Officer at Federation for over five years. During this time she held the role of Climate Emergency Coordinator.

Before Kelly was elected as a Federation officer, she worked as a primary school languages teacher in inner city Sydney. She was a Federation Representative, Inner City Teachers Association Councillor and annual conference delegate and has worked as a policy and media advisor in the NSW parliament. Kelly has also held the role of Central Councillor and Delegate as a member of the Public Service Association of NSW.

From Crisis to Power: How Unions Can Rebuild our Health System



What will it take to rebuild a health system that works for workers and the community? This workshop explores how unions can build and use different forms of power to drive real change across complex health systems, from the workplace to government. Participants will unpack how industrial, political, organising and community power can be combined to create leverage over decision-makers

and shift outcomes beyond the immediate employer. Participants will leave with practical insights into how to build strong workplace organisation, mobilise members and allies, and run campaigns that win immediate improvements while building power for long-term system change.

Notes:

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Speakers

Alana Ginnivan, ANMF, Assistant to the Federal Secretary (Strategy & Campaigns)



Alana Ginnivan is an experienced nursing, industrial relations and policy professional currently serving as Assistant to the Federal Secretary (Strategy & Campaigns) at the Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation Federal Office.

Working across industrial, professional and strategic portfolios, she has supported members through complex workplace disputes and played a key role in parliamentary inquiries and major policy submissions.

A Registered Nurse with experience across emergency, trauma, burns and neonatal care, Alana views being part of the union as patient advocacy beyond the bedside, spanning from the person-centred to systemic change that strengthens working conditions, the professions and quality care.

Gus Hayes, ASMOF, Councillor



Angus Hayes is an anaesthesia registrar in his second year of specialist training with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, working across NSW Health hospitals in Sydney and regional NSW. He serves as a councillor with the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation, where he has been an active delegate and advocate in the NSW public hospital doctors' campaign - organising colleagues around safe working hours, fair pay, and the retention of doctors in the public system. His experience spans metropolitan tertiary centres and regional centres, giving him a first-

hand view of the workforce pressures facing public hospitals across the state. He is also a published researcher and soon-to-be father, and brings a frontline clinician's perspective to the industrial issues confronting salaried doctors nationally.

Stuart Hatter, HSU, Ambulance Division Secretary



Stuart Hatter is the Ambulance Division Secretary at the Health Services Union NSW, a role he has held since 2014. Stuart has worked in the union movement since 2001, including as national campaign lead for United Voice's Clean Start campaign, a patch organiser with the ASU NSW covering Sydney Water, and the ABC organiser with the CPSU. Across these roles, he has built extensive experience in organising, campaigning and building power across public and private sector workplaces.

3.7 Room 9

From Click to Collective **Action:** Organising Workers Online



In a hybrid, tech-driven world, how do we organise when workers aren't in the same room? Discover how digital tactics are driving union growth, building power, and moving workers to action - using a mix of new tools and proven organising methods.

You will hear from one union about the importance of touchpoint mapping and how we mix organising and digital interaction when setting up member journeys to engage leads, develop

delegates, onboard new members, and win back members.

Professionals Australia organising team Justine Keating and Stella Salvemini share practical lessons from organising technology workers at companies including DXC Technology, WiseTech Global and Atlassian, demonstrating how digital organising, worker-led campaigns, and strategic use of technology can build union power in a rapidly changing industry.

Speakers



Justine Keating,
Professionals Australia

Justine Keating has spent the past three years organising workers across Australia's technology sector. She has led campaigns to build union membership, develop workplace leaders, and support workers through major workplace change in some of the country's largest technology companies.



Divina Blanca-Jackson,
ASU, National Campaigns
and Member Engagement
Lead

Divina coordinates the day-to-day communications, campaigns and member engagement and retention work nationally, including the ASU's flagship Career Launchpad program.

She is an experienced senior campaigner and organiser having worked across various union and political campaigns for over a decade.



Stella Salvemini,
Professionals Australia

Stella Salvemini has played a key role in building worker power through enterprise bargaining, delegate development, industrial action, and member-led organising in complex and highly skilled workplaces.

3.8 Room 4

Doing our Research



Good research doesn't win campaigns on its own – but great campaigns know how to use it. Join Dr Ben Spies-Butcher for a practical discussion on how unions can use economic and social research to identify opportunities, strengthen campaign arguments and advance workers' interests. This session will provide an accessible introduction to understanding, interpreting and applying research in campaigning contexts.

Speakers

Ben Spies-Butcher, Centre for Future Work. Chief Executive Officer



Dr Ben Spies-Butcher is a political economist and policy analyst with two decades experience in university and non-government roles.

After completing his PhD in Economics at the University of Sydney, he was appointed to teach and research in Economy and Society at Macquarie University, before joining the Centre for Future Work in 2026. He has published two books and dozens of articles covering labour relations, macro economics, housing, care and climate policy and is an editor of the Economic and Labour Relations Review and Journal of Australian Political Economy.

Peter Stahel, Essential Media



Peter Stahel is an owner and the managing partner of the Essential group of research and strategic communications

firms. He has led public affairs, government relations and social research-informed strategy development across diverse sectors including health, education, social service, environment, legal, foreign aid and local government. Before joining Essential in 2015, Peter spent a decade as a political adviser and press secretary.

3.9 Room 8

Member Driven Wins



What does it take for union members to turn workplace action into wins that shape national laws and strengthen the union movement?

This workshop explores how member-led campaigns, grounded in lived experience and collective action, deliver national outcomes. including the achievement of paid family and domestic violence leave in the National Employment Standards and major federal wins.

Sam Parker, Organiser with ASU NSW/ACT, will share insights from the decade-long campaign led by workers in women's

services, highlighting how advocacy, organising, and community knowledge combined to achieve a significant national reform. The session will explore the role of unions in building understanding of the dynamics of family and domestic violence, and why workplace entitlements like paid FDV leave are critical to supporting workers experiencing violence. Participants will leave with practical insights into how campaigns can scale from a workplace to state and federal wins. Connect workplace rights with broader social justice outcomes, while building awareness, engagement, and collective power.

Speakers

Kate McKindley SDA Queensland Branch, Business Manager



Kate McKindley is the Business Manager of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association. She joined the SDA in 1997 when she started working in retail and later became an SDA delegate for her workplace. Kate has a Bachelor of Business and was a member and Chair of the Industrial Relations Education Committee 2021-2024. She is currently co-chair of the SDA National Women's Committee. Kate has held various roles in her 26yrs with the SDA including Recruiter, Union Organiser, Training Officer, and Organising Operations Officer.

Sam Parker, ASU NSW ACT, Organiser

Sam is an Organiser at ASU NSW ACT supporting members working in the community services sector. Sam had previously worked as a family and domestic violence worker for over 20 years, was a workplace delegate and Chair of ASU's NSW ACT Women's Services Sub-Division. Sam actively participated in the We Won't Wait campaign to secure ten days paid FDV leave in the NES.

Martin Byrne, AIMPE, Federal Secretary

Martin has driven major wins for members through his time on the Maritime Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority, on the ITF Fair Practices Committee and joint AIMPE AMOU Submission on the Independent Review of the Shipping Registration Act.

Martin began as a AIMPE branch industrial officer in 1984 and has been Federal Secretary for over a decade and still gets directly involved in delegate training, bargaining, disputes and organising members in person or via video with members on board at sea.

Daniel Hicks, HACSU

Daniel Hicks is an Industrial Organiser with HACSU, supporting Public Sector members across Tasmania's North West and West. In his 2.5 years with the union, Daniel has become a steady advocate for disengaged and disenfranchised workers, helping them reconnect with their union, build confidence, and take meaningful action. A lifelong local, he is driven by the growing regional gap he has witnessed and is known for quietly getting the job done while ensuring members take the credit.

Des Marcenko, HACSU

Des Marcenko is a state-wide Public Sector Coordinator with HACSU, supporting members across Tasmania and leading major industrial campaigns for more than four years.

Known for empowering Public Health workers and driving regular industrial action, Des has played a key role in high impact efforts such as the successful community campaign to save Hobart's Tolosa Street mental health facility.

10 Steps Ahead:



From campaign strategy to member engagement, this session explores how unions are getting ahead of the curve. Speakers from the TWU, AEU and HSU will share insights on how setting priorities, communicating effectively, staying

focused on being member-led and using a range of approaches – including peer-to-peer engagement – strengthens campaigns, deepens participation, builds lasting power and delivers results to drive change.

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Speakers

Emily Mead, TWU, Communications Lead



Emily Mead is the Coordinator of Media and Communications at the National Office of the TWU. Since 2020 she has worked to amplify the

stories of transport workers across digital and traditional media, contributing to high-profile public campaigns including Qantas' illegal outsourcing, establishing rights for workers in the gig economy, and the union's 2026 campaign to lift standards for all transport workers.

Angela Osborn, HSU SA/NT, Branch Assistant Secretary



Angela is the Assistant Secretary of the SA/NT branch of the HSU. She worked as a Radiation Therapist before

becoming a delegate, which eventually led her into organising. She supports the creation of the mothers', unpaid carers' and otherwise child minders' Award.

Pedro Matos, HSU SA/NT, Senior Organiser



Pedro is a Senior Organiser in the SA/NT branch of the HSU. He has a diverse background which includes physiotherapy, translation, and organising across NSW, VIC and SA. He's ESL and Peter Dutton signed his citizenship certificate (begrudgingly, he likes to imagine).

Cara Nightingale, AEU Vic, Vice President, Early Childhood



Cara spent most of her teaching career in Melbourne's southeast, working with vulnerable and newly arrived children and families. Raised in a strong union family, she joined the AEU as a student and became active in Sector, Branch and Executive Councils. After completing the Women in Leadership program, she was elected Deputy Vice President and later Vice President of Early Childhood. At the national level, she serves on the AEU Federal Early Childhood Committee. Activism, advocacy, and leadership play a strong part in Cara's vision for Early Childhood educators. She sees these elements as an essential part of the educator role, and believes more members need to recognise how they can exercise them broadly, as part of everyday practice.

4.1 Room 1

Neurodivergent & Disabled Workers Could be the Power You're Missing



Almost 25% of the Australian community has a disability – and disability is just one accident, serious illness or diagnosis away for all workers. People with disabilities face greater barriers to gaining and staying in work, so unions need to be equipped to support workers with disability and remove the physical and social barriers to being union.

This workshop will look at the work unions have been doing in this space and what we can learn from their approaches as well as discuss what is missing and how to bridge that gap through the recently launched ACTU Disability Inclusions project.

Speakers

Thirza White, CPSU TAS, Branch Secretary



Thirza has worked in the union movement for more than 25 years, organising and campaigning with workers from both the private and public sector in Western Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and in the UK.

Passionate about the public sector and building unions fit for the challenges facing us, Thirza currently leads the CPSU Tasmania branch as General Secretary and is also President of the CPSU SPSF and in that role sits on the ACTU Executive. She previously held roles across organising, campaigning, education and leadership in a range of unions including CPSU, UnionsWA, ACTU, TSSA and Unite.

Thirza is an alumnus of the Organising Works program and holds a bachelor's degree in politics and industrial relations from the University of Western Australia. She is passionate about improving understanding of neurodiversity and shifting public policy to include a disability lens, largely driven by her own lived experience of being a dyslexic thinker and ADHDer and raising three neurodivergent children.

Beth Vincent-Pietsch, CPSU, National President



Beth Vincent-Pietsch is president of the CPSU/PSU group. Beth has served on the National executive of the CPSU for more than a decade and been with the CPSU for over 20 years. She leads the largest organising team in the CPSU/PSU and specialises in campaigning and engaging members on collective campaigns. Beth also established the CPSU Accessibility Network, bringing together members from across the union with disability to strategise future union direction, to lead campaigns for industrial wins like paid

disability leave, to share resources to engage the broader membership and to be a driving force for change in the APS and beyond.

Carolyn Dunbar, VTHC, Lead Organiser Women's team



Caro Dunbar is the Women's Team Lead at Victorian Trades Hall Council. In this role she campaigns and organises with working women to advance their rights and safety at work, including a lead role in the campaign to end the misuse of NDAs for workplace sexual harassment in Victoria. She has previously worked as Regional Director Vic/Tas at the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance and as the Assistant Executive Director at SAG-AFTRA in Northern California.

John Skene, NSW Teachers Federation, Disability Officer



John Skene was elected as the NSW Teachers Federation Disability Officer in November 2024. He lives on Dharawal land and works on Gadigal land. As part of the Disability Officer role, he is responsible for supporting students, staff and schools in the disability space from Early Childhood to TAFE. He works closely with Organisers, Professional Support, Trade Union Training and other officers to support Federation members. With over fifteen years of experience as a teacher in special education, John has worked in schools for

specific purposes and support units. He is an Assistant Principal Special Education. He has held roles as Federation Representative and Workplace Committee at school level and elected as Branch Representative on Federation Executive 2023-2024.

4.2 Room 7

Unions Engaging with AI



AI is rapidly changing the world of work. With the stakes so high, how can unions shape its use for the benefit of workers. In this interactive session, the HSU will explore how union values have guided its adoption of AI to strengthen organising in remote locations. The session will also showcase the practical ways AI is being used across the union office to improve campaigning, communication, administration and day-to-day operations.

The AWU Vic will share what safe and effective AI use looks like in practice, covering the risks of unmanaged use, real

examples of AI streamlining union work while protecting privacy, the difference these tools can make for neurodivergent staff, and the five essentials of a workable union AI policy.

We will look at practical ways we can use AI to support our own work, maximising time spent on organising and member engagement. Participants will contribute use-cases for a live demonstration and will learn the basics of prompt writing. Come along to hear a practical worker-focused case study and workshop ideas for integrating AI into your own work.

Speakers

Billy Elrick, HSU SA/NT, Branch Secretary



Billy Elrick has served as Branch Secretary of the Health Services Union SA/NT since 2020. HSU SA/NT proudly represents Allied

Health Professionals, health professionals, and clinical and technical support staff across South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Before joining the HSU, Billy worked as a Disability Support Worker and completed a Bachelor of Arts. Under his leadership, HSU SA/NT has grown by more than 200 per cent and secured significant improvements in wages, conditions and workplace protections for its members.

Sasha Dougherty, AWU Vic, Communications Manager



Sasha Dougherty is the Media and Communications Manager for the Victorian Branch of the Australian Workers' Union, where she leads

internal and external communications, media relations, and project management.

With a background in broadcast media at Channel Seven and the ABC, she brings a practical, hands-on approach to storytelling, stakeholder engagement, and campaign delivery across both traditional and digital platforms. Away from her union work, Sasha is deeply involved in AFL as an assistant coach in the Calder Cannons' AFL talent pathway and a co-host on the podcast, Chicks Talking Footy on Joy FM.



What's not to like? Winning Back Time for Members

Improved well-being, productivity and improved retention – the benefits of moving to a four-day week and other ways to win back time for members are crystal clear. This workshop will cover the lessons learned in union efforts to win back more time for members.

Speakers

Cassie Farley, ASU VIC, Assistant Secretary

Ali Amin, SDA SA/NT

Ben Spies-Butcher, Centre for Future Work



Gender Equity: When Do We Want It? Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

Harnessing the momentum of recent union wins for gender equity, this workshop profiles and celebrates how unions are optimising and building upon cultural and legislative opportunities for change.

From reproductive leave to gender equity clauses, education opportunities, flexibility

and safety, what do we need to do to achieve equity for our industries and workplaces?

How can we keep our feet on the pedal towards a truly equitable future?

Notes:

Speakers

Angela Budai, FSU, National Research and Policy Manager



Angela Budai is the National Research and Policy Manager at the Finance Sector Union. She has over 20 years' experience representing the interests of finance

workers and has helped negotiate better pay and working conditions for thousands of finance workers across Australia. Angela began at the FSU as a regional organiser in NSW before becoming NSW Director of Campaigning. She is currently responsible for the development, coordination, and implementation of high-profile industry-wide policy initiatives. She is deeply passionate about women's rights and gender equity, with a keen focus on making workplaces more equitable through progressive policies.

Kate Obee, SA Unions, Coordinator, Gender Equality Program



Kate Obee is the Coordinator of the SA Unions Gender Equality Program, who are working to address the barriers faced by women in male dominated

industries through practical union resources and training. Kate has worked in the Union Movement for nine years across Industrial, Organising, Workers Compensation, and Gender Equality roles. She has a strong passion for feminism and justice and holds a bachelor's degree in psychology.

Karen Willis, Unions NSW, Gender Equity Manager



Karen Willis is the Gender Equity Officer at Unions NSW. She leads a team of expert trainers and researchers. Prior to her role at Unions NSW, Karen worked

for 40 years in NGO sexual, domestic, and family violence services.

In 2005, with Professor Moira Carmody from the University of Western Sydney, Karen engaged in a three-year Australian Research Council-funded project studying the prevention of sexual violence. In 2024, Karen engaged with Dr Chris Krogh of the University of Newcastle in the research project 'Moving from agreement to participation: investigating union-affiliated men's commitments to gender equality'.

Karen has been awarded a Churchill Fellowship, an Order of Australia Medal, and the Edna Ryan Grand Stirrers Award for her work to respond to and prevent gendered violence.

Lilly Hallett, VTHC, Women's Organiser



Lilly is a proud ASU member and women's organiser in the Trades Hall Women's Team. Lilly has worked at Trades Hall for more than three years including on the

successful campaign to end the misuse of non-disclosure agreements for workplace sexual harassment in Victoria.

This session frames Organising Works as a movement-building pathway rather than simply a program, and focuses on how momentum is created through people, leadership development, diversity of experience and collective capacity. Organising Works is how our movement grows and renews itself.

Notes:

Speakers

Steph Cunio, ASMOF NSW, Organising, Strategy and Campaigns Manager



In her role, Steph provides both strategic and operational leadership to the Organising team. Steph is an experienced

relational organiser with a long history in leading education, union, community and climate organising teams. Steph previously led the Climate & Community Organising team at UWU, working alongside Tim Petterson in the innovation part of the union, where she was a keen promoter of the union's digital transformation work. Steph is also a board member and previous board chair of The Sydney Alliance, and a previous board member of Climate Action Network.

Rikki Hendon, UnionsWA, Secretary



Rikki took on her role at the end of 2024, following a 17-year career at the CPSU/CSA, which included six years as its Branch Secretary. Prior to

this, Rikki trained as a social worker.

Rikki's proudest achievements include winning reclassifications for feminised workforces, securing conversion to permanency entitlements and co-founding the Public Sector Alliance, which successfully campaigned for a return to genuine bargaining and real wage repair in the WA public sector.

Jagath Bandar, Activist and trade unionist



Jagath is a passionate social activist and trade unionist with over 25 years of experience in campaigning, organising, and empowering

workers across Australia as well as the Asia Pacific region. His work has focused on building union power, developing leaders, and advancing workplace safety, as well as championing youth and women's rights. Originally from Sri Lanka, Jagath is fluent in Sinhala and familiar with multiple South Asian languages.

Cody Jensen, RTBU WA, Industrial Organiser



Cody started as a track worker in the Western Australia, becoming a RTBU member, activist and delegate where Cody transformed membership density

and organised many collective fights.

In 2023, Cody successfully applied to the Organising Works program and started work as a trainee organiser with the CFMEU in Perth, WA. After several outstanding years building power and taking action with the CFMEU WA, Cody has returned to the RTBU and is now building power, resistance and nurturing agency in others.





Blak-Led Organising: Culture, Kinship and the NES

The session will highlight the ongoing work of unions to advocate for culturally appropriate leave provisions, including recognising kinship obligations and Sorry Business in the National Employment Standards. Through discussion and shared experiences, the workshop aims

to build understanding of how embedding kinship-informed approaches into the NES can support equity, dignity, and fair working conditions.

Notes:

Speakers

Jo Kerr, CPSU, ACTU ABTSIC Chair



Jo Kerr, is a proud Muruwari and Ngemba woman, and a prominent union leader, recognised for her strong advocacy on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and in particular public sector workers. A key focus of her work with the Community and Public Sector Union has been advancing the inclusion of cultural clauses in enterprise agreements, ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are better supported through provisions that recognise cultural obligations, promote cultural leave, and

embed respect for cultural practices within workplaces. Through her negotiation efforts, Jo has played an important role in strengthening equity, inclusion, and cultural safety in employment conditions, helping to set new standards for culturally responsive bargaining outcomes across the public sector.

Keith Wicks, NSWNMW, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Officer



A proud Walbunja and Yorta Yorta man, Keith has extensive experience in community engagement, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, and education pathways. He is passionate about strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation, fostering culturally safe workplaces, and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses, midwives and health workers to lead positive change across the health sector.

Wayne Kurnorth, UWU, ACTU ABTSIC Proxy Chair



Wayne Kurnorth, a Larakia man, is a committed union leader with the United Workers Union, known for his strong advocacy on behalf of Aboriginal workers in some of Australia's most remote communities. Drawing on deep cultural knowledge and lived experience, he has played a key role in organising and empowering remote Aboriginal workers, ensuring their voices are heard in national industrial conversations and that their work is recognised as essential.

Kurnorth has also been a leading figure in UWU's Culture Doesn't Clock Off campaign, which seeks to embed respect for cultural obligations – such as kinship responsibilities and participation in sorry business – in the National Employment Standards. His work highlights the importance of culturally safe workplaces and pushes for systemic change so that Aboriginal workers are not forced to choose between their employment and their cultural identity.

Frank Gafa, AEU, Organiser



Frank Gafa is a proud Wailwan and Wiradjuri man and a First Nations Organiser with the Australian Education Union Victoria, where he works to strengthen First Nations members' voices and advance culturally safe, equitable workplaces across the education sector. Based in Naarm (Melbourne), Frank has a background spanning higher education, union organising, Indigenous engagement and community campaigning.

Before joining the AEU, he worked in university and research sectors, including with the CSIRO on Indigenous STEM pathways and university partnerships, and as an organiser with the National Tertiary Education Union. Passionate about workers' rights, education, truth-telling and social justice, Frank has played a leading role in supporting First Nations members, advocating for cultural entitlements in workplaces, and building stronger pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in education and employment

Julie Perkins, ASU, Organiser



Julie Perkins is a proud Gumbaynggirr woman from the North Coast of New South Wales and a respected community, union and First Nations leader. Through her work with the Australian Services Union, Julie has been a strong advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, championing cultural leave provisions, kinship recognition and culturally safe workplaces.

She established and chairs the ASU First Nations Network and has played a leading role in campaigns advancing equality, social justice and workers' rights. Drawing on decades of experience in the community sector, family violence prevention, advocacy and leadership, Julie is committed to strengthening the voices of First Nations peoples and ensuring workers can maintain culture, community and connection while participating fully in working life.

Shannon Bourke, AEU, Educator & Organiser



Shannon Bourke is a proud Yanyuwa and Garawa woman, educator, union organiser and advocate for First Nations communities. As an early childhood organiser with the Australian Education Union Victoria, Shannon works alongside educators to improve workplace rights, strengthen the profession and support culturally safe learning environments. Her career spans early childhood teaching, Aboriginal education, community advocacy and union organising, including previous roles as a First Nations Organiser and Project Officer with

the AEU, where she helped build First Nations member engagement, facilitated forums and committees, and championed the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators.

Passionate about social justice, self-determination and culturally responsive education, Shannon is committed to ensuring First Nations perspectives are embedded in workplaces, education systems and union campaigns, while supporting stronger outcomes for workers, children and communities.

Greg Wellington, USU, Union activist

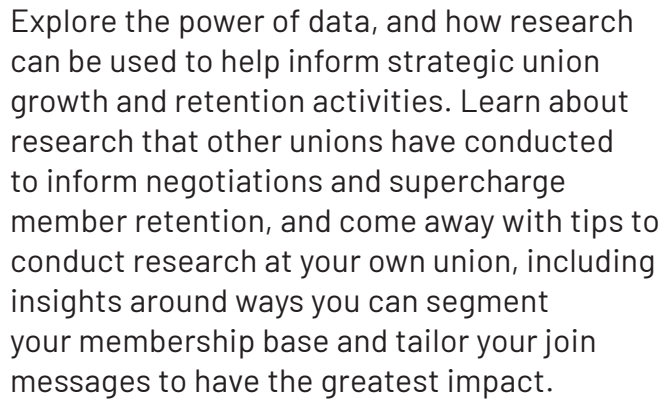


Greg Wellington is a proud Wanda Wandean/Yuin man, union activist and community leader who serves as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Officer with the United Services Union. Based on the NSW South Coast, Greg brings more than two decades of experience in local government and a long history of union involvement, having been a workplace delegate for much of his career. As one of the founding members of the USU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, he works closely with Indigenous

members across NSW to strengthen workplace rights, cultural safety and representation.

Through extensive engagement with regional communities, councils and union members, Greg advocates for culturally informed workplaces and supports the development of stronger pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers. He is also deeply involved in community life through sport, mentoring and volunteer leadership, reflecting his commitment to building stronger and more connected communities.

The Power of Data: Golden Questions and Join Messages



Notes:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Speakers

Brad Hayes, IEU, Federal Secretary



Brad was elected Federal Secretary of the Independent Education Union in 2023, having previously held a range of organising and leadership roles within the Queensland Branch and the federal office of the IEU.

With 30 years' experience in the union movement, Brad is a graduate of the Organising Works Program and began work representing IEU members in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, and Ipswich. He also worked for a decade as a regional and remote organiser in Far North Queensland.

He has a strong interest in emerging union organising strategies, member-led campaigns and new approaches to collective bargaining. Brad chairs the IEU's National Organising and Campaigning Committee and serves on several federal government education and ministerial steering committees, as well as industry skills advisory groups, the ACTU National Executive, and the AI Reference Group.

Ben Gallen, FSU, Campaign Manager



Ben Gallen is a Campaign Manager with the Finance Sector Union, where he leads campaigns across the insurance sector and major banks. He has worked in the union movement for more than 25 years across the public sector, aviation and, predominantly, the finance industry. During this time, he has held a range of roles including Organiser, Educator, Director of Organising and Campaign Manager.

With more than 15 years at the FSU, Ben has led successful campaigns on critical issues ranging from offshoring and technological change to enterprise bargaining and workplace rights. He is passionate about building worker power and using strategic research, organising and campaigning to secure better outcomes for finance workers. His work focuses on working with members in turning collective strength into real workplace change.

Deirdre Watson, ACTU, Senior Insights Researcher



Deirdre Watson has over 20 years' experience, working in both quantitative and qualitative fields, and is a full member of The Research Society. A key focus of her work is delivering insights to amplify the voice of members and improve the member experience. She is passionate about working with unions to help support strategic work, especially evidence-driven growth and retention activities.



Rising Tides, Rising Solidarity – Union Responses to Climate Justice in the Asia-Pacific

Climate change is already reshaping the lives of workers and communities across the Asia-Pacific particularly in the Pacific, where rising sea levels, extreme weather, and displacement are no longer future risks but lived realities. Under the Australian Government funded Partnership for Decent Work in the Indo-Pacific Program, climate justice is a key priority for union action.

This workshop brings together trade union voices from Asia, the Pacific, and Australia to examine the growing impacts

of climate change on workers, including forced relocation and threats to livelihoods. The session will highlight how unions are campaigning to safeguard workers' rights and communities, share emerging strategies, and build stronger regional solidarity to meet the climate challenge. It will also provide an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between Australian, Pacific, and Southeast Asian unions.

Speakers

Jotika Sharma, Fiji Trades Union Congress, Assistant Secretary



Jotika Sharma is the Head of Programmes and Administration at the Fiji Trades Union Congress in Fiji. She oversees the day-to-day management of the union confederation's office and leads the development of workers' education programmes for union members and workers more broadly.

At the international level, she is the elected Chair of the International Trade Union Confederation Global Women's Committee and Chair of the ITUC Asia-Pacific Women's Committee. She is also a Regional General Councillor and Executive Board member of both ITUC and ITUC Asia Pacific.

At the most recent FTUC Biennial Delegates Conference, Jotika led constitutional reforms to increase women's representation in leadership, in line with the ITUC 50:50 campaign. She was elected Assistant National Secretary, contributing to achieving gender parity within the FTUC National Executive.

In migration work, she leads the FTUC Migrant Resources Centre, supporting workers and their families with grievances related to the PALM scheme.

Maria Passi, TQU



Maria Passi hails from the Dauareb tribe of Mer (Murray) Islands and the Saisarem Tribe of Erub (Darnley) Island, East Torres Strait islands, Queensland, Australia.

Her father, the late Dave Passi, was a main plaintiff of the Mabo & Others High Court Land Rights case from 1982 -1992.

Her mother was a leading pioneer in the women's movement in the Torres Strait leading to the establishment of the Mura Kosker Sorority Pty Ltd. women's organisation in the Torres Straits.

Maria is currently a Cultural Practice Program Coordinator for the Torres & Cape Hospital and Health Service, in her role to develop, maintain and integrate cultural safety strategies into service delivery for the Torres Strait region.

Maria has been actively involved in the union movement for over 27 years. A delegate of the Queensland Public Services Union until now as a head delegate in the Together Queensland Branch of the ASU. She is a Branch Conference and Council Delegate for the Public Health Industry and National Conference delegate for ASU.

Elly Silaban, President, Confederation of Indonesia Prosperity Trade Union (KSBSI: Konfederasi Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia)

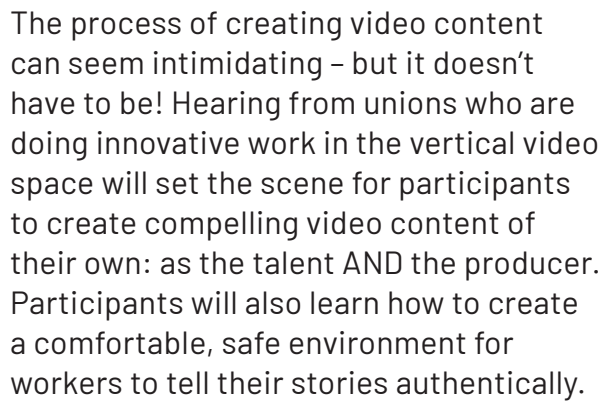


Elly is a union leader and workers' rights advocate from Indonesia, currently serving as President of All Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSBSI).

She is also active in advancing climate justice from a workers' perspective, advocating for a just transition that protects jobs, livelihoods, and labour rights as economies move toward sustainable and low-carbon development. She believes that climate policies must be developed through social dialogue and include concrete measures to support workers and communities affected by environmental and economic transformation.

Through her advocacy, Elly works to strengthen solidarity among workers and promote inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.

Voilà! Vertical Video!



This workshop will provide practical guidance for organisers who are keen to create impactful video content, with lots of opportunities to conceptualise, script and build your own campaign videos.

Nothing fancy; just the cameras we carry in our pockets! Beginners are very welcome; in fact, encouraged.

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Speakers

Wil Stracke, VTHC, Assistant Secretary



Wil Stracke is Assistant Secretary of the Victorian Trades Hall Council, the peak body for the Victorian union movement. She's previously

worked as a solicitor, union organiser, lead organiser and campaign coordinator. She's also pulled beers, parked cars and acted/sung professionally. She's active on social media – check her out on TikTok and Instagram @wilstracke.

Divina Blanca-Jackson, ASU, National

Campaigns and Member Engagement Lead



In her role, Divina coordinates the day-to-day communications, campaigns and

member engagement and retention work nationally, including the ASU's flagship Career Launchpad program. She is an experienced senior campaigner and organiser having worked across various union and political campaigns for over a decade.

Kleo Cruse, ACTU, Content Creator



Kleo Cruse is one of ACTU's Content Creators. She previously worked as the ACTU's media officer and digital

marketing officer. As part of her work, Kleo has captured many stories from the people of the union movement, across industries, and all around the country. She brings her formal training in journalism and creative writing, and is passionate about ensuring workers feel safe and comfortable when sharing their stories.

Less Noise, More Growth: 5 Tips for Campaigns That Build Membership



A punchy, practical workshop on what actually drives membership growth in campaigns, drawing on the ASU's Skilled, Respected, Equal campaign – which has delivered thousands of new members from disparate workplaces right across the country.

Learn the top tips and pitfalls of industry-wide and issues-based campaigning, and how to connect the big issues with membership growth. Sharp, practical, and ready to use; you'll walk away with new ideas to apply to your growth and campaign strategies.

Speakers



Gillian Strong, ASU,
National Campaign &
Growth Director

Gillian Strong is the National Campaign & Growth Director at the Australian Services Union,

where she leads national campaigns, political advocacy, communications, digital strategy, and member retention and growth. With more than a decade in the union movement, she is known for building bold, winning campaigns and driving innovative approaches to engaging workers at scale.



Stacey Sharkey,
ASU NSW/ACT,
Assistant Secretary

Stacey has worked in the union movement for the last decade as a campaigner,

organiser, lead organiser and now Assistant Secretary of organising. Her involvement with the ACT MEA spans back to 2020 through the negotiations of the agreement, the organising on the ground and now the Fair Work supported bargaining process.

Georgia Birch, ASU, Organiser



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