

THE VOICE

Monthly Newsletter for our Australian Alumni Community

ISSUE 35 | JANUARY 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members & Partners,

Happy New Year!

I hope you had the opportunity to spend some quality time with your loved ones during the holiday season. I am excited about 2024 and the opportunities ahead.

AAS kickstarted the year with our first networking event in partnership with SGX Group, Phillip Capital and Malaysian Association in Singapore (MASIS) on 25th January at SGX Auditorium. The event was graced by AAS Patron H.E. Allaster Cox, our partners, and members. In addition to the opportunity to connect and network with our members, we also heard from SGX Market Strategist Geoff Howie about 2024 market outlook and areas to keep a close watch on this year. We also heard from SGX Academy trainer Binni Ong about new investment products and strategies that we could adopt in 2024 and beyond.

On 30th January, I had the opportunity to attend the official launch of Fred Hollows Foundation in Singapore. The event was attended by Guest of Honour Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and was hosted by Fred Hollows Foundation patron H.E. Allaster Cox at his residence. I would like to extend my sincere well wishes to The Fred Hollows Foundation team.

Fred Hollows Foundation operates in more than 25 countries to make sure that everyone has access to high quality, affordable eye healthcare to end avoidable blindness. The foundation focuses on providing equipment, fund research and provide training to empower eye doctors, nurses, and health workers to create a sustainable system of care in the communities that need it most.

AAS will be planning our AGM in March. At the AGM, members will get updated from the management committee about Australian Alumni Singapore's general operations, finances, and highlights for the last 12 months. I would like to request you to attend the AGM and cast your votes to select your new committee members and vote for the proposed resolutions. We will be sharing further information regarding the AGM in the coming month.

If you are an Australian alumnus and want to contribute to this diverse and vibrant community as a Management Committee member, I would like to discuss this further with you. Please reach out to us at secretariat@aas.org.sg for more information

Yours Sincerely,



Rajaneesh R Kurup
#forwardtogether



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AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION

New Year Message from His Excellency Allaster Cox, Australian High Commissioner to Singapore



A happy new year to all AAS readers. I hope you celebrated the start of 2024 in good spirits and with good company. As we look forward to the New Year, I want to take a moment to look back on an eventful 2023 and reflect on some of the accomplishments we have progressed in Singapore.

My first nine months as High Commissioner to Singapore have been filled with engagements with government, businesses, and the diplomatic corps as well as forging connections through the arts, sciences and sport, to name a few.

2023 had been a transformative year in many respects:

- We celebrated an incredible milestone - the 20th Anniversary of the Singapore-Australia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA);
- We welcomed Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles at the 8th Singapore-Australia Annual Leaders Meeting and the 20th IISS Shangri-La Dialogue;
- We hosted nine First Nations businesses as part of Singapore Landing Pad immersion week; and
- We also commemorated the first anniversary of the Singapore-Australia Green Economy Agreement.



Similarly in this new year, we at the Australian High Commission Singapore will continue to reach out widely to better understand Singapore's plans for a sustainable shared future, and how we can design the next stage bilateral partnership to complement it.

We are currently working on our next iteration of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. When it was signed in 2015 it was the first of its kind for Singapore. The next iteration will chart the next 10 years from 2025-2035. The Singapore-Australia relationship will be enhanced by increased two-way trade and investment in renewable energy, digitisation, food supply, education and skills and health and ageing services amongst others.

Looking ahead a year, in 2025 we will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of our bilateral relationship with Singapore. We're already now planning how we will celebrate.

Once again, wishing you all a very happy and healthy year ahead and I look forward to continuing work (and play) with the alumni network in 2024.

Are you following us on social media?

Instagram: @australiainsg #GreatMatesAUSG

Twitter: @AusHCSG

LinkedIn: Australian High Commission Singapore

Facebook: @AustraliaInSingapore

MEET GEORGINA MCCANN

Acting Head of Post for Victoria to Southeast Asia

Victorian Government Trade and Investment Southeast Asia



Based in our Jakarta office, Georgina leads the VGTI Southeast Asia team to deliver trade, investment and international education outcomes in this important market.

Georgina has extensive experience as a Victorian Government executive, most recently heading up Community Sport and Recreation in the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, where she has delivered innovative and inclusive sports policy initiatives, industrial-scale grants programs and infrastructure projects across Victoria.

Prior to this, Georgina spent a number of years leading international education programs, strategy and policy, including driving delivery of the 2016 International Education Sector Strategy and overseeing a period of unprecedented growth in this priority export sector. Georgina has a longstanding connection to and passion for Southeast Asia, including experience working with the United Nations in the Lao PDR.

MEET HOLLY BUTLER

Deputy Commissioner for Victoria to Southeast Asia, and also AAS' Newest Advisor

Victorian Government Trade and Investment Southeast Asia



Holly Butler is the Deputy Commissioner for Victoria to Southeast Asia at the Victorian Government Trade and Investment (VGTI) Office in Singapore. Holly helps oversee the Victorian Government's four offices in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam to promote trade, investment, education and innovation initiatives in the region and to strengthen government ties between Southeast Asia and Victoria.

Holly has spent the last fifteen years working in both the private and public sectors in Europe and Asia, specialising in cross border investment and international business relations.

Holly has been based in Singapore since 2016 and, in her current role, focuses on attracting investment to Victoria by working with Southeast Asian growth-stage companies to facilitate their Australian market entry strategies, and assisting Victorian companies with their export and expansion projects into the region.

Prior to moving to Singapore, Holly lived in Paris for ten years and worked in the private sector advising international companies on their investment projects across Europe.

Holly is an Australia-French dual national. She grew up in Australia but has studied and lived in Belgium, Canada, France, the UK as well as her current home, Singapore. In her work, she endeavours to help people and companies connect the dots to make strategic and enriching decisions and relationships.



Australian Alumni Singapore
since 1955

The Mentorship Program aims to equip AAS members to meet the challenges in entering or already in workforce and to enhance the networking opportunities for participants.

The program will pair a mentor with a mentee. Each mentor and mentee will commit to participate in the program for at least 4 calendar months from September 2023 - February 2024. Each mentor and mentee should commit to meet at least 1 hour each month. The mode of meetings shall be as agreed between the mentors and mentees.

The mentorship programme will cover 3 areas:

Student Mentorship Programme
Professional-Entrepreneurship Mentorship Programme
Job Opportunities

MENTEE

For potential mentees, this is a opportunity for you to connect with a mentor who can offer you insight, advice and help you to navigate the next stage/s of your career.

REGISTER AS MENTEE



JOB OPPORTUNITY

Send us the job posts from your company or details and we will publish it in our newsletters and other channels and distribute to our reach out

JOB OPENING





JCU Conversations is the premier podcast series of James Cook University, Singapore —bringing to you discussions with successful leaders in the industry (across fields such as business, education, sustainability, and more) while offering a deeper understanding of their personal lives, careers, inspirations, and approaches to success. Join our rotating chair of distinguished hosts as we find out: What makes these bright minds tick?

Latest ▾



JCU Conversations 21: Andrew Rose

Discover our latest podcast episode, featuring a captivating conversation with Professor Andrew Rose, Dean of NUS Business School. Delve into valuable insights on academia and education as he shares his perspective in this engaging interview!

This episode's host: [Professor Abhishek Bhati](#), Campus Dean and Head of Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement at James Cook University, Singapore





James Cook University's Master of Psychological Science (Majoring in Business Psychology) equips learners to understand the human dimension of the challenges they will face as current or future leaders.

The programme core has a strong focus on application of psychological principles to solving problems and achieving desired outcomes across a variety of organisational and professional settings, while the business psychology major applies psychological theory and research practice to core business activities such as management, human capital, and marketing.

Graduates will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to perform effectively across a range of business functions, particularly as leaders and managers.

The Master of Psychological Science (majoring in Business Psychology) program at Singapore campus of James Cook University is accredited by ABP (Association of Business Psychology), UK. This accreditation affirms the university's commitment to delivering exceptional education and alignment with international standards and best practices in the field of Business Psychology.

To find out more of this program, click [here](#).

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Australian International School Pte Ltd | CPE Registration Number: 199204405H | Period of registration of PEI: 6 July 2023 to 5 July 2027



Celebrating the official launch of The Fred Hollows Foundation in Singapore



The Fred Hollows Foundation is one of the world's leading eye health organisations.

The United Nations (UN) recognises eye diseases as a major health burden for countries around the world, with the greatest share of that burden falling on developing countries.

Partner with The Fred Hollows Foundation to alleviate this burden and create a more equitable world.

Visit our website at www.hollows.org if you are interested to find out more



Addressing Vision Loss in the Ageing Population: A Look at Vietnam



Vision loss is a global concern that has a profound impact on the lives of millions of older people. According to the World Health Organization, there are currently 2.2 billion people worldwide living with vision impairment, and a staggering 1.1 billion of those cases could have been avoided. Among these individuals, older people bear the brunt, with approximately 73% of avoidable vision loss cases occurring in this population group. This amounts to 800 million older people who are affected today. If urgent action is not taken, this number is projected to rise to 1.28 billion by 2050, primarily in low and middle-income countries.

Unfortunately, existing health and social disparities contribute to the disproportionate burden of vision loss faced by older people, especially among older women and disadvantaged groups. Older women, in particular, account for 56% of vision loss cases in the second half of life.

The Fred Hollows Foundation and the International Federation of Ageing have released a new report that emphasizes the need for collaboration between the vision and ageing sectors. The report, titled "Connecting Healthy Ageing and Vision," sheds light on the far-reaching impacts of vision loss on individuals and societies. It underscores the critical role vision plays in healthy ageing and calls for immediate action to prevent the increased risk of mortality, cognitive decline, falls, and depression associated with vision loss. It is crucial to recognize that while many eye conditions become more prevalent with age, blindness is not an inevitable part of ageing.

This new report is very timely now that the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) is unfolding so that vision is not forgotten in countries' efforts to improve the lives of older people, their families, and communities. It provides an overview of the eye health of older people and the actions needed to ensure that vision is protected and restored in older age. To turn this evidence into practice, The Fred Hollows Foundation is also implementing a series of innovative projects in five different countries, including two in Asia: Vietnam and China.



Vietnam is experiencing an accelerated ageing process compared to most other nations, with projections indicating that over 25% of the population will be aged 60 years or older by 2050. As such, it is crucial for Vietnam to take action to improve the eye health of its growing older population and reap the benefits of increased longevity.

In 2020, Vietnam faced a concerning situation with a cataract surgical rate of only 3,200, falling far below the recommended range of 4,000-5,000 cataract surgeries per one million population annually. The urgency to address this unmet need is further exacerbated by the growing ageing population.

Addressing Vision Loss in the Ageing Population: A Look at Vietnam



Older people's associations play an important role in community life in Vietnam. The Fred Hollows Foundation and its partners have launched a pilot project in Quang Nam province, located in central Vietnam. This initiative aims to incorporate eye care into the programs of inter-generational self-help clubs, which have a membership rate of 90% among individuals aged 60 years and older in the province. By raising awareness about eye care and improving access to eye care services, including screenings, examinations, provision of glasses, and subsidized treatment, the project aims to benefit the 5,220 club members and other older individuals in the community. By fostering partnerships and cooperation among relevant stakeholders, this project seeks to create a comprehensive approach to protect and restore vision in the ageing population.

Addressing vision loss among older populations requires collaborative efforts from the ageing and eye health sectors. The Fred Hollows Foundation, in partnership with its partners and various stakeholders, is taking the lead in implementing innovative pilot projects like the one in Vietnam. By integrating eye care into existing community structures and fostering collaboration, these initiatives enhance access to eye care services, improve treatment outcomes, and raise awareness about the importance of vision for healthy ageing. Through these collective efforts, we can meet the unmet needs of millions of older people with vision loss, empowering them to lead fulfilling and independent lives. It is imperative that we act now to eliminate avoidable blindness in later life and ensure that current and future generations of older people can fully embrace the benefits of increased longevity.

For more information, you can access the "Connecting Healthy Ageing and Vision" report at <https://www.hollows.org/au/latest/healthy-ageing> or contact Priyanka Agarwal at The Fred Hollows Foundation at pagarwal@hollows.org

Author:

Dr. Vânia de la Fuente-Núñez, a medical doctor and anthropologist, currently works as the Healthy Ageing Senior Advisor at The Fred Hollows Foundation. Previously she worked for the World Health Organization (WHO) for close to a decade, leading WHO's capacity building efforts on healthy ageing, including the development of policies and programs for older people, and innovative learning programs across countries and regions. She also spearheaded WHO's Global Campaign to Combat Ageism, addressing negative attitudes and discrimination against individuals on the basis of their age. Previously, Vânia worked with NGOs and research institutes in high- and low- income countries, including Spain, Senegal, and The Gambia.

Visit our website at www.hollows.org if you are interested to find out more or contact our Regional Philanthropy Lead, Priyanka Agarwal at pagarwal@hollows.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBUARY BEACH CLEAN UP

by OCEAN PURPOSE PROJECT



For more information & to Register, please scan the Whatsapp QR Code and join AAS Sustainability Social Interest Group



AAS CYCLING INTEREST GROUP MONTHLY MEETUP

SATURDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2024 | 6.30AM SGT

For more information and to Register, please scan the Whatsapp QR Code and join the AAS Cycling Social Interest Group below.



[LINK](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, 14 March 2024



Organised by **RMIT Alumni Singapore (RMITAS)** and co-hosted by **Octave Institute**, **Forward 2024: Navigating Tomorrow's Landscape** is a thought-leadership event that discusses the rapidly evolving landscape of trends, industries, skills and jobs shaping the future.

To be held on 14 March 2024, this is an excellent opportunity for mid-senior level alumni members to come together and hear from industry experts offering valuable insights on transformative technologies, socio-economic shifts, and latest trends impacting businesses and societies today. From AI and automation revolutionising industries, to diversity and sustainability becoming a cornerstone of corporate strategy, **Forward 2024** highlights the pivotal role of forward-thinking and possibilities in thriving amidst change. **Forward 2024** also serves as a compass for understanding the evolving job market dynamics. Discussions will touch on the impact of technological advancements on employment landscapes, the emergence of new job roles and the evolution of businesses as we navigate the new world.

Exclusive for RMIT Alumni Members

Look forward to a fruitful evening of networking and learning opportunities among fellow RMIT alumni members comprising senior leaders, corporate professionals and industry practitioners. **Forward 2024** aims to inform and educate, and also to inspire actionable steps towards a future that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable.

Register now at <https://forward2024.eventbrite.sg/> to gain insights in navigating 2024! A wonderful evening awaits you.



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AAS 2024 New Year Gathering & Market Outlook



AAS had our first 2024 gathering and networking event on 25 January 2024 at SGX Centre, with Geoff Howie, SGX strategist and also alumnus of University of Queensland, giving us an overview of 2024 market outlook.

We are delighted to have our Patron, Australian High Commissioner H.E. Allaster Cox joining us for the evening together with more than 50 attendees from AAS and MASIS.

We hope our attendees enjoyed the evening as much as we do! For those who didn't manage to get a ticket, we hope to see you at our next event!



SOCIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Scan or click the link to join & connect with like minded AAS members



AAS-Tennis Group

WhatsApp group



[LINK](#)



AAS| Wine & Spirits Group

WhatsApp group



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AAS-Cycling Group

WhatsApp group



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AAS - Leverage SEO Group



[LINK](#)

If you would like to form and lead an interest group, please feel free to contact secretariat@aas.org.sg





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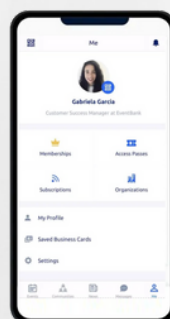
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Organisational Resilience in the New Normal

THE “NEW NORMAL”

As Governments, businesses and societies begin to adapt to the post-COVID 19 pandemic environment, organisations continue to evolve in a complex operating climate impacting daily operations, assurance to stakeholders and creating a sense of uncertainty. Left unchecked, these may materialise into potential undesirable consequences causing unnecessary disruption or leading to a crisis in their organisation.

Navigating through these complexities require trained and experienced professionals to ensure such threats do not become a reality and if they ever do, organisations must be ready to implement well tested contingency and response plans to recover from and resume critical operations.

It is a proven and well documented fact when organisations that are resilient and equipped to manage risks not only stand a higher chance of survival in their respective competitive fields but emerge stronger and ready to take on potential opportunities left behind by others who are not as well prepared.

Post-pandemic, more businesses, governments and key stakeholders will be requiring a greater adoption of business continuity and crisis management plans and procedures. Is your organisation ready?

WHY CLIENTS CHOOSE US

Clients want to partner with us because:

- We simplify resilience and continuity
- We “hand hold” you to develop your resilience plans (some say we do everything for them) at your pace
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Established since 2013, our goal is to enable governments and businesses to achieve organisational resilience through customised solutions specific to our clients’ needs, goals and strategy

Our services can be broadly categorised (but not limited to) as follows:

- Business Continuity and Crisis Management:
- Resilience and readiness assessment
- Programme and policy development
- Business impact analysis and risk assessment
- Business continuity, emergency response and crisis management plan(s) development
- Training and awareness workshops
- Readiness tests and exercises
- Programme maintenance
- BCM and crisis management audits

Talk to us today at (65) 66796231 or email us

Enquiries@infinitycontinuity.com, or simply visit our website at at

<http://www.infinitycontinuity.com> to find out how we can partner with you!

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Global Talent or General Skilled Migration / Business Migration?

The Australian Government announced that the planning level for the 2023-24 permanent Migration Program will be set at 190,000 places, with 137,100 places for the *Skill* stream.

On 24 August 2023, the Department of Home Affairs published additional information on how the State and Territory allocations has been distributed. Below is the nomination allocation table, which can also be found on the [Home Affairs website](#).

2023-24 State and Territory nomination allocations			
State	Skilled (Subclass 190) visa	Nominated (Subclass 491) visa	Skilled Work Regional (Subclass 491) visa
ACT	600		600
NSW	2,650		1,500
NT	250		400
QLD	900		650
SA	1,100		1,200
TAS	600		600
VIC	2,700		600
WA	1,500		850
Total	10,300		6,400
			Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP)*
			0
			0
			0
			0
			0
			0
			0
			0

Subclass 189/190 visas – General Skilled Migration

The State and Territory allocation levels has been reduced back to pre-pandemic levels. Potential applicants can expect a reduction in the number of invitations issued by the state/territory governments, as well as longer waiting time and increased competition.

Subclass 188 visas – Business Migration

You will also note that there is no current allocation to any state or territory government for the business innovation and investor visa programme. The Department advised that this is because it has enough applications on-hand to meet the 2023–24 planning level for the BIIP.

Subclass 858 – Global Talent Visa

In contrast, Global Talent visa program has been allocated 5,000 places for 2023-24 program year. The GTI program offers direct permanent residency and does not depend on any points system, skilled occupation list, State or Territory nomination.

Although the threshold to be invited to apply for the GTI visa is much higher than that of the GSM program. It may be the only pathway for very senior technical leaders, executives or entrepreneurs in the target sectors who are over 45. With the global talent visa, although the age limit is 55, candidates who can provide strong evidence of actual or potential but realistic extraordinary contribution to Australia may still be granted a global talent visa even if they are over 55.

We have helped highly skilled migrants secure the Global Talent visa who thought they were only eligible for the business skilled migration or employer nominated / general skilled migration programmes.

Whether you are onshore or offshore, [get in contact with us](#) to find out if you're eligible for the Global Talent visa pathway and let us help you secure your future in Australia.

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\$108*	from \$3,800 to \$6,300*

* Invisalign Singapore is facilitating the outreach program for corporates. The dental treatments, Invisalign treatment consultation, offers and payments will be directly between the patient and the partner clinic for this program.
** Data on file at Align Technology, September 30, 2022

Don't wait any longer - **register now through the QR code on the poster** and take advantage of this amazing opportunity. Your family members can enjoy it too, so spread the word and let's achieve those dream smiles together!

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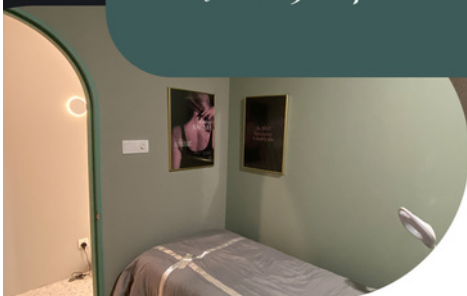
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