

NATIONAL  
FOUNDATION FOR  
AUSTRALIA-CHINA  
RELATIONS

澳中基金会



National Foundation for Australia-China Relations

Annual Update 2023-24

年度资讯 2023-24

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# Chair's Message

The National Foundation for Australia-China Relations (the Foundation) strengthens risk-informed engagement with China in the national interest and celebrates one of Australia's great success stories – our Chinese-Australian communities.

These objectives energise the Foundation's efforts across the country: the ambitious projects we support, the programs we deliver and the networks we expand across different fields of endeavour.

In this annual update, you will see how our work has evolved to meet the priorities of the Government and the aspirations of the Australian people, from helping business understand risks and opportunities and re-engage in the contemporary China operating environment, to preparing our economy for a net-zero future, to convening important discussions with China.

The Foundation made important strides this year in building the partnerships that are critical to our effectiveness. We grew our project portfolio to nearly 160, covering every state and territory. Dozens of organisations worked with us to visit China for the first time since the pandemic – creating connections that benefit our country. We took on new challenges, bringing the Wang Gungwu Lecture to Parliament House in Canberra and co-hosting the 7th Australia-China High Level Dialogue in Beijing. Prime Minister Albanese's visit to China and Premier Li Qiang's visit to Australia were significant steps forward in stabilising the relationship.

There is plenty more to do. Advancing our interests, and stabilising our relationship with China, requires ongoing work. The Foundation is setting about this task with new leadership and new ideas, welcoming Gary Cowan as the Foundation's new CEO and Alice Pung OAM to our Advisory Board. We farewelled Philip Chronican, Chair of National Australia Bank, from our Advisory Board and celebrated his tremendous contribution.

On behalf of the Foundation and all of our staff, I want to thank the many supporters of our mission and the partners who give it impact. We are showcasing our values, the qualities of our people, and the strengths of our economy, as we engage China together in the national interest.

Pru Bennett

Chairman

July 2024



# CEO's Message

I am delighted to take up the role of Chief Executive Officer of the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations at this pivotal time.

The Foundation is entering an important new phase as the Government continues to take patient, deliberate steps to stabilise Australia's relationship with China.

Advancing Australia's interests requires engagement. The Foundation is sharpening its focus on areas that will deliver tangible gains, from trade and investment to tackling climate change. We are helping our stakeholders understand the terrain, set the terms and engage with confidence.

Improving China capability is central to this effort. The more Australians know about China – its politics, its economy, and its ways of working – the better they can engage. In this Annual Update you will see us rolling out new capability initiatives with our partners, alongside existing flagship programs like our 'Engaging China' workshop, which we delivered for the fourth time in April.

In everything we do, the Foundation promotes our country's greatest export: Australian excellence. In my first few months as CEO, I have enjoyed talking to those people – in Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Sydney and Canberra – bringing their talents to our engagement with mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. I look forward to visiting other states and territories in the near future.

Of course, Australian excellence also abounds in our Chinese-Australian communities: one of our greatest success stories as a nation. The Foundation is shining a spotlight on the achievements of our communities, while empowering a new generation of leaders – for example, through the William Ah Ket Leadership Program with the Australian National University.

Another busy year beckons. The Foundation's next grants round is already on the horizon, with ambitious new projects to set in motion. We will co-host the 8th Australia-China High Level Dialogue in Adelaide – providing an opportunity for constructive discussion across issues that matter to us, including our political relationship, trade and investment, people-to-people links and regional and international security.

The Foundation has different tools to give effect to our agenda. None are more important than our stakeholders – our Advisory Board, our staff and our partners in every state and territory. I look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder with each of you to engage China in the national interest.

Gary Cowan

CEO

July 2024



# The Foundation Annual Update 2023-24

In 2023-24, the Foundation expanded its work with a range of stakeholders to support practical and resilient engagement with China in the national interest, while engaging with and supporting the contributions of our diverse Chinese communities to Australian society.

## Mission Statement

The Foundation's mission is to promote and coordinate enhanced cooperation between Australia and China, in support of Australia's national interests and the Australia-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

## What we do

The Foundation is a national platform that works across all levels of government, industry, communities, universities, think tanks, and cultural and sporting bodies. Our work is guided by expert advice from our [Advisory Board](#) members and Executive team, helping build connections and promoting cooperation in Australia's national interest.

## CEO Appointment

In March 2024, Mr Gary Cowan was [welcomed](#) by Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Trade and Tourism Minister Don Farrell as the Foundation's Chief Executive Officer. Mr Cowan is a senior career officer with the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (DFAT) and has served as Australia's Representative in Taipei with earlier in roles in Australia's diplomatic missions in Beijing, Shanghai, and Tokyo. He most recently served as the First Assistant Secretary of DFAT's North and South Asia Division.

Mr Peter Cai concluded his term as CEO in December 2023, and was [thanked](#) by the Foreign Minister and Trade and Tourism Minister for his contributions both as CEO and previously as an Advisory Board member.

## Advisory Board Update

On 18 May 2024, the Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Trade and Tourism Minister Don Farrell, [jointly announced](#) the appointment of Ms Alice Pung OAM as a new Advisory Board member.

Alice Pung OAM is a Melbourne-based writer and lawyer, and an Adjunct Professor at RMIT University's School of Media and Communication. She is the author of bestselling books that have been published internationally, and translated into Italian, German, Indonesian and Chinese. Her books are studied in schools and universities in Australia and abroad. In 2022, Alice was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to literature.

The Chairman and Foundation Executive thank outgoing Advisory Board member Mr Philip Chronican, Chair of the National Australia Bank, for his contribution since 2020. Mr Chronican's term as an Advisory Board member concluded on 7 February 2024.

Three Advisory Board meetings were held in the 2023-24 financial year:

- 31 October 2023 in Sydney
- 26 February 2024 in Canberra
- 11 June 2024 in Brisbane

The Foundation's Advisory Board convened in Sydney and considered grant applications from the 2023-24 open, competitive grants round.

The Advisory Board convened in Canberra and were hosted for a discussion by DFAT Secretary and Ex-Officio member of the Advisory Board, Jan Adams AO. The meeting coincided with the 2024 Wang Gungwu lecture that was held at Parliament House. Advisory Board members celebrated the longstanding contributions of Chinese-Australians to our nation and engaged parliamentarians, industry representatives, Chinese-Australian community members and many other stakeholders.

The Advisory Board convened in Brisbane to discuss the Foundation's strategic mission. It received a verbal briefing from former Australian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, and now Deputy Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Graham Fletcher. They were also hosted at Government House by the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency the Hon Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, representatives from the Queensland Government, universities, industry and business bodies, cultural organisations, and Chinese-Australian communities.

# Foundation Highlights 2023-24

The Foundation's efforts throughout 2023-24 came against a backdrop of stabilising relations between Australia and China, informed by the Australian Government's patient, calibrated and deliberate approach. This included Prime Minister Albanese's 4-7 November 2023 visit to the People's Republic of China and Chinese Premier Li Qiang's 15-18 June 2024 visit to Australia.

In addition to the travel to China undertaken by Chairman Pru Bennett, featured elsewhere in this Annual Update, then CEO Peter Cai travelled to China in September 2023 to participate in the 7th Australia-China High Level Dialogue and in July 2023 to support the 10th Anniversary of the Australian Consulate-General in Chengdu.

Between former CEO Peter Cai and current CEO Gary Cowan, the Foundation conducted dedicated outreach and engagement with stakeholders in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory during 2023-24.

The Foundation was delighted to see many of its grant activities in 2023-24 contribute to the Australian Government's stabilisation agenda. A selection of these follows.

## SUPPORTING AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIES

### Dairy Australia

Celebrating 25 years, Dairy Australia's China Scholarship Program solidifies industry ties with China. It has brought some 360 Chinese dairy industry middle managers to Australia for immersive technical training, touring farms and factories, building relationships and understanding Australian dairy practices.

Highlighting industry engagement, Australia's Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Scott Dewar's attended an alumni dinner in Changsha, in the margins of the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the China Dairy Industry Association with representatives of Dairy Australia and Australian dairy farmers. A Chinese delegation's visit to regional Australia showcased the program's commitment to fostering long-term industry relationships.

By supporting an important industry where annual exports to China total more than \$1 billion, the program strengthens Australia's trading relationships with China. Events run throughout 2024 and 2025 in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Australia.



*CEO Gary Cowan with Dairy Australia China Scholarship Program delegate Ms Xiaoying Zhang from the China's International Centre of Technology Innovation for Dairy at the 25th Anniversary Celebration Dinner in Melbourne, Victoria, 27 June 2024.*

### Australian tourism exports



*ATEC's China Host workshop training program launch, Perth. Photo credit: ATEC.*

China's outbound tourism industry presents a significant opportunity for Australia's visitor economy. Australia is investing in its tourism industry by supporting programs that cater to the growing outbound Chinese tourism market and help Australian businesses capture a share of this market.

Funded by the Foundation, the Australian Tourism Export Council selected Perth as the launch pad for a two-year national program as run part of its [China Host](#) training initiative, which helps equip Australian tourism businesses with knowledge and confidence in hosting international visitors from China.

## Benefitting from China's digital economy

Asialink's China Digital Economy Academy concluded its fourth and final round in October 2023. This program helped Australian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) bolster their knowledge and capability to engage with China's booming e-commerce market. Over 300 organisations participated across the four rounds, gaining valuable insights into Chinese business culture, consumer behaviour, and digital marketing strategies. This initiative advanced Australia's national interest by empowering SMEs to tap into a vast market and foster stronger economic ties between Australia and China.



Asialink – The China Digital Economy Academy – online series Module 2.

## ANU Goeconomic working group

Hot off the back of Premier Li's visit to Australia, Dr Benjamin Herscovitch from Australian National University (ANU) Goeconomics Working Group took stock of bilateral ties following the first visit to Australia by a Chinese leader in more than seven years and shared key takeaways for Australian business at a CEO roundtable hosted on 27 June 2024 by the Australia China Business Council in Sydney.

The event was delivered as part of a broader series of boardroom presentations and briefings run by ANU Goeconomics Working Group over the first half of 2024 in NSW, Victoria and Western Australia. The project is supporting Australian industry, businesses and state and territory governments to navigate and plan for the complex terrain of economic, security, and technological dynamics shaping their engagement with China.

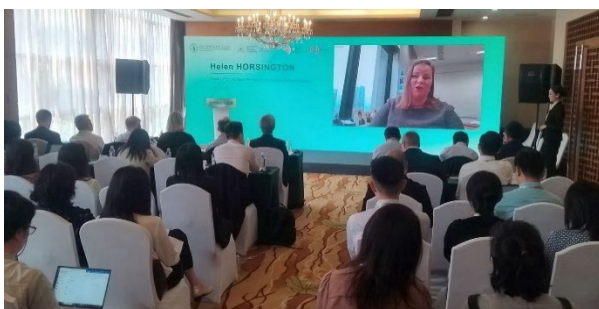
As the Australian Government continues to press for all remaining trade impediments affecting Australian exports to be removed, Dr Ben Herscovitch and research fellows, Professor Anthea Roberts and Dr Darren Lim have been running executive briefings for Western Australian fishing industry networks, including nearly 100 lobster industry representatives, to build China knowledge and manage geopolitical risk.



Dr Benjamin Herscovitch talked to leaders from Western Australia businesses, government and academic sectors.

## CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

### Australia-China Resources Decarbonisation



In May 2024, an Australian delegation led by Professor Frank Jotzo from the ANU convened an Australia-China Decarbonisation Roundtable in Beijing. This Foundation-supported event provided a valuable platform for Australian government officials and researchers to engage with key figures from China's Tsinghua University and discuss

Foundation Deputy CEO Helen Horsington delivering remarks at the Australia-China Decarbonisation Roundtable.

collaborative efforts to reduce emissions, including advancements in green steel manufacturing. Foundation Deputy CEO Helen Horsington delivered the opening remarks from Sydney.

ANU also held a decarbonisation forum in Perth in August 2023, bringing together high-level industry and political representatives.

## Local Government Shared Pathways to COP28 in Dubai

The Melbourne Centre for Cities Shared Pathways to COP28 program aimed to encourage practical cooperation between city/local government officials in Australia and China on climate change challenges through a series of masterclasses and workshops. Participants completed the second masterclass in Hong Kong in July 2023, where then Consul-General, Elizabeth Ward, spoke to the cohort about diplomacy in action.

A group of Australian and Chinese city officials selected from the program attended COP28 in Dubai in December 2023. Participants spoke at a panel event in the Australian marquee on climate initiatives and partnerships developed through the program, and future urban climate action. The session was opened by Kristin Tilley, Australia's Ambassador for Climate Change and the Deputy Head of Mission from the Chinese Embassy in United Arab Emirates.



Australian and Chinese city officials at COP28 in Dubai, UAE.

## Net zero and our sustainable economic partnership



Secretary Jan Adams AO PSM at the launch of the EABER report.

To strengthen Australia's economic partnership with China in a low-carbon future, the ANU's East Asian Bureau of Economic Research (EABER) held a Track 2 dialogue in Beijing in December 2023. Co-hosted by the China Centre for International Economic Exchanges, the dialogue brought together Australian researchers and industry representatives with their Chinese counterparts. Discussions focused on shared challenges and collaborative opportunities in a carbon-constrained world.

Following the successful dialogue, EABER published a report in May 2024 titled [\*A Sustainable Economic Partnership for Australia and China\*](#).

Launched by DFAT Secretary, Jan Adams AO PSM and overseen by ANU Professor Peter Drysdale and

Professor Shiro Armstrong, the report captured the key points and discussions from the event. The report's insights on transforming the Australia-China economic relationship in the face of climate change received coverage from the Australian Financial Review. EABER's report contributes to thinking on the transformation of our economic relationship with China as we act to address climate change and meet our net zero commitments.

## Climate Smart Agriculture

Australia and China are tackling food security and climate change through collaboration funded by the Foundation. The University of Technology Sydney's Institute for Sustainable Futures (UTS-ISF) developed the Phosphorus and Climate Smart Agriculture Network (PACSAN) to explore ways to achieve net-zero emissions and manage phosphorus resources through sustainable agriculture practices. By supporting this research, PACSAN helps ensure a secure and environmentally responsible food supply benefiting both countries.

PACSAN explores utilising excess phosphorus in China's agricultural soil as a greener alternative to



ISF Director Prof. Stuart White and ISF Assoc. Prof. Dana Cordell and PACSAN Project Director chair expert panels in Shanghai, China.



mined rock phosphate. It ultimately aims to assist both Australia and China reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The importance of institutional research collaboration supported by trilateral engagement between government, academia and industry on addressing climate change at the recently signed MoU between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of Australia on Climate Change Cooperation during Chinese Premier Li Qiang's visit to Australia in June 2024.

## ENGAGING CHINESE-AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITIES AND CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### The 2024 Wang Gungwu Lecture

On 26 February, the Foundation hosted the third Wang Gungwu Lecture in partnership with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). Each lecture features a prominent Chinese-Australian and celebrates their life, work and contributions to Australia.

Ms Ming Long AM, a respected business leader and former chair of Diversity Council Australia was 2024's keynote speaker.

*'We are at a time of great disruption, from climate change to AI. We cannot continue to operate the same way we have always done. We will need all the talent and diversity in our community to create the future we need, to create the future we want. We are stewards of our future and our legacy.'*

Ming's full speech is available in English and Mandarin on Foundation's [website](#).

The Lecture can be seen on [ABC iview](#) and [YouTube](#). Over 250 guests from across government, business and the community attended the lecture.



*Clockwise from top left: 2024 Wang Gungwu Lecture keynote speaker Ming Long AM. Ming Long AM and Professor Wang Gungwu, Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs the Hon Andrew Giles, Assistant Foreign Minister the Hon Tim Watts, DFAT Secretary, Jan Adams AO PSM, Shadow Foreign Minister Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham.*

## William Ah Ket Leadership Program

The ANU Centre for Asian-Australian Leadership delivered its inaugural [William Ah Ket Leadership Program](#) in August 2023. Named after the first Australian barrister of Chinese and Asian heritage, William Ah Ket, who fought discriminatory legislation and advocated rights for Chinese-Australians, this four-day program helps emerging Chinese-Australian leaders from diverse professional and personal backgrounds across the country to develop their skills, knowledge and expertise to become advocates for their communities, leaders in their field, and to advance Australia's engagement with China.



Former CEO Peter Cai (second on left) and Director of ANU Centre for Asian-Australian Leadership, Jieh-Yung Lo, with participants and speakers from the William Ah Ket Leadership Program.

## Stephen FitzGerald Scholars Program



Inaugural 2023 Stephen FitzGerald Scholars Program participants.  
Photo credit: ANU Australian Studies Institute.

Named after Dr Stephen FitzGerald AO, the first Australian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, this prestigious [program](#) run by ANU's Australian Studies Institute enriches Chinese international students' study experience in Australia and fosters lasting links and cooperation between Australia and China through the next generation of Chinese leaders.

The inaugural program included 30 Chinese international students from universities across Australia. Students were hosted at Question Time at Australian Parliament House by Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon Milton Dick MP. They also visited the High Court of Australia, the National Press Club, CSIRO, listened to dreamtime stories and learnt about First Nations culture at the National Arboretum. Students also met DFAT Secretary, Jan Adams AO PSM, at the gala dinner at the National Museum of Australia. The program was featured in [Australian Financial Review](#).

Building on this success, a second iteration of this program will be run in late 2024.

## BeachSmarts 2023 in South Australia

Tragically, a significant portion of Australia's coastal drowning deaths involve international visitors, with a high number coming from China. To address this and build connections between Chinese international students and the broader Australian community, the Foundation partnered with the [Royal Life Saving Society South Australia](#) in November 2023 to deliver the third instalment of the BeachSmarts program. The program educated 40 Chinese international students on water safety and CPR, equipped them with lifesaving skills and connected them to a unique part of Australian society. [Minister for Emergency Services for South Australia, Joe Szakacs, attended the training session](#), SA Member for Morphett, Stephen Patterson MP, and Hon Russell Wortley MLC joined the students at Glenelg Beach and spoke about the importance of beach safety. [SBS Chinese](#) also interviewed participating students.



Beach Smarts participants learned water safety skills at Glenelg Beach Photo credit: Royal Life Saving Society SA.

## Celestial Footy's Victorian launch



Chinese Australian player, Jin Long of the Western Bulldogs.

Celebrating the rich history of Chinese-Australians in Australian Rules Football, sports author Patrick Skene launched [Celestial Footy: The Story of Chinese Heritage Aussie Rules](#) in November 2023 in several locations across Victoria, the home of Australian rules football, and to Chinese-Australian families since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. The book chronicles the participation and passion of Chinese heritage migrants and their descendants in Australia's beloved national game.

## Celebrating lived experiences

In October 2023, the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) celebrated the vibrant tapestry of Chinese-Australian experiences with the [Unsung Stories](#) short film festival in Sydney. This Foundation-supported initiative provided a platform for Chinese-Australians from diverse backgrounds to share their personal narratives on the big screen. By giving a platform to these diverse voices, the *Unsung Stories* not only acknowledged the profound contributions Chinese-Australian communities have made to Australia's social fabric, but also ensured their preservation for future generations through AACTA's [online archive](#).



Attendees of the *Unsung Stories* Gala held at the Ritz Cinemas Randwick.

## National Symposium on the Future of Australia-China School Partnerships



CEO Gary Cowan addressed to audience at the IEAA Symposium.

Education and people-to-people links continue to be an important way for Australia and China to build shared understanding and partnerships.

The International Education Association Australia (IEAA) held its [National Symposium on the Future of Australia-China School Partnerships](#) in Melbourne in May 2024. The Symposium was a unique opportunity to discuss Australia-China school partnerships.

CEO Gary Cowan delivered remarks to a combined in-person and online audience of 200. The Foundation is pleased the Symposium showcased Australian excellence and strengthen people-to-people connections through school partnerships.

Recording of the Symposium and digital resources will be available on IEAA website.

## Embrace – supporting Chinese international students

Victoria University's [Embrace](#) program, launched in November 2023 with Foundation support, fosters a welcoming environment for Chinese international students and connects them to Australian life through a series of workshops and a mentoring program.

Over 100 participants, including Victoria University Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Adam Shoemaker and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Radoll, participated in the program's first workshop, 'Culture and Connection'. The workshop explored Australia's rich First Nations cultures and connect students with successful alumni and international student communities in Melbourne.



*Embrace participants experienced a First Nations smoking ceremony.*

Taking students beyond the confines of the classroom, *Embrace* broadens students' horizons and fosters a deeper appreciation for Australian culture. It creates a more positive and well-rounded students experience and solidifies Australia's reputation as a diverse and welcoming education destination. The program continues with workshops and a mentoring program in the second half of 2024.

## OTHER DIALOGUE AND PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE LINKS

### The 7th Australia-China High Level Dialogue

The Foundation co-hosted [the 7th Australia-China High Level Dialogue](#) with the Chinese People's Institute for Foreign Affairs in Beijing on 7 September 2023. This was the first time the Foundation co-hosted, and the first Dialogue held since 2020.

Former Trade Minister, the Hon Dr Craig Emerson, led the Australian delegation which included representatives from government, industry, academia, media and the arts. Reflecting bipartisan support for the Dialogue, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Julie Bishop, attended as a delegate and session lead. DFAT Secretary Jan Adams led a session and met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi with other delegates at the conclusion of discussions.

[The Dialogue](#) was another step towards stabilising the Australia-China relationship and has contributed to Australia's Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with China since it was first held in 2014. It provides an opportunity for constructive discussion across issues including trade and investment, people-to-people links and regional and international security. The 8th Australia-China High Level Dialogue will be held in Adelaide later this year.

In late September 2023, Foreign Minister Wong visited the Foundation's office in Sydney to thank staff for their work delivering the Dialogue.



*The 7th Australia-China High-Level Dialogue was held in Beijing.*



*Foreign Minister Penny Wong visited Foundation office in September 2023.*

## Young Matildas' Tour of Xiamen



*The Young Matildas in Xiamen.*

In November 2023 the Young Matildas U20 team toured Xiamen, building skills with their Chinese counterparts in preparation for the Women's World Cup in 2027 and as Australia prepares to host the 2032 Summer Olympic Games in Queensland. The trip included visits to a [local school](#), UNESCO World Heritage Site Gulangyu, and [two livestreamed friendly matches](#).

This promoted complementary Australia-China sports diplomacy, created leadership pathways, and helped increase the participation of women and girls in sport.

The Foundation also supported a friendly match between the Matildas and China's women team, the Steel Roses, on 3 June 2024 in Sydney. A sell-out 80,000 fans attended the match.

## Chairman's Visit to Haikou and Hong Kong

Foundation Chairman, Pru Bennett, visited Haikou in Hainan and Hong Kong in November 2023.

The visit showcased Australia's soft power and expanded relationships by engagement with in-market networks. The Chairman engaged across government, academia, industry and community to hear Chinese perspectives on Australia-China relations and potential areas for future engagement.

In Haikou, the Chairman represented the Foundation at the [first international training activity run in China](#) by Surf Life Saving NSW and QLD. In partnership with the Haikou Emergency Centre, Surf Life Saving NSW and QLD delivered [aquatic emergency training](#) to 40 first responders from across China. Additionally, they produced a bilingual aquatic rescue manual to support future training and development for Chinese emergency personnel.



*Surf Life Saving NSW & QLD delivered aquatic emergency training to frontline responders in November 2023 in Haikou, Hainan.*

## Ochre and Sky



*Ochre and Sky touring in China.*

Showcasing First Nations' culture and the concept of Country, the National Museum of Australia's *Ochre and Sky* exhibition embarked on a roadshow across China in 2023 and 2024, supported by the Foundation.

The immersive experience premiered in Tianjin in July 2023, with former Foundation CEO Peter Cai delivering opening remarks alongside artists Alison Page, Nik Lachajczak, and Zhou Xiaoping. The exhibition's journey continued to Beijing, Zhenjiang, and Shenzhen, fostering cultural exchange and captivating audiences.

Currently touring Anhui province until September, *Ochre and Sky* has one more Chinese city on its itinerary for later this year, extending its reach and propelling its message of cultural understanding and appreciation even further.

## The Australia China Youth Dialogue

The 13th Australia China Youth Dialogue (ACYD) was held in Chengdu from 17-20 November 2023. This was the first dialogue held in China since COVID-19, and an important opportunity for 30 emerging leaders, 15 from Australia and 15 from China, to create long-term, mutually beneficial relationships.

Under the theme 'Evolving Dynamics', delegates engaged in insightful discussions on critical topics like trade and investment, sustainable development, and healthcare cooperation. Their experience was further enriched by visits to local businesses and cultural sites in southwest China.

Australian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Scott Dewar, and then Consul-General in Chengdu, Adelle Neary, shared their valuable perspectives on the Australia-China relationship, emphasising the vital role these young leaders can play in shaping its future.

The Foundation is pleased to support ACYD and cultivate the next generation of informed and engaged professionals who will actively contribute to a constructive Australia-China relationship.



*The ACYD delegation in Chengdu.*

## Australian Newborn Hearing Screening Showcase Program



*The delegation was received by Australian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Scott Dewar, at his residence.*

The Foundation supported Macquarie University and the Australian Hearing Hub to deliver the [Australian Newborn Hearing Screening Showcase Program](#), to showcase how Australian expertise is helping to upskill Chinese audiologists and improve community health services in China.

In April 2024, a delegation of 14 Australian audiology experts and researchers travelled to Chengdu, Shanghai and Beijing to share knowledge and practices in newborn hearing screening and audiology through a series of workshops, roundtables and site visits.

## Fred Hollows Foundation in Inner Mongolia



*DFAT First Secretary in Beijing, Toby Sharpe, in Inner Mongolia. Photo credit: The Fred Hollows Foundation.*

Since 1998, the Fred Hollows Foundation has been working with local partners in China to reduce preventable blindness, making a real difference to the lives of many. In December 2023, the Fred Hollows Foundation launched a new eye health project in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia.

With the Foundation's support, the initiative is expected to benefit 160,000 people, provide 6,000 pairs of glasses, offer 600 cataract surgeries and treat 80,000 patients with other eye diseases.

# Advisory Board Members

## Ms Pru Bennett (Chairman)



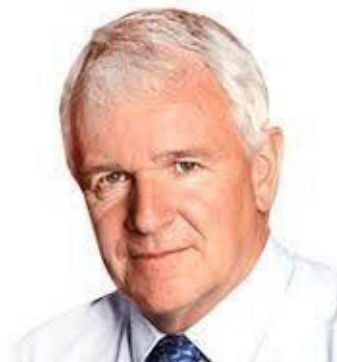
Ms Pru Bennett is a senior business leader with extensive experience working across greater China and Asia and has a deep understanding of China's economic relationships.

Having held roles engaging at senior levels in business and advising key economic and financial regulators in Hong Kong and Singapore, Ms Bennett has an insight into the challenges and opportunities of managing business, trade and investment between greater China and the region, and in corporate and board governance.

Until recently, she was a Managing Director and Head of Investment Stewardship for the Asia-Pacific region for BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, with over US\$9 trillion under management. She is now a Partner at the global strategic advisory firm, Brunswick Group.

She is a director of Global Compact Network Australia, a member of the Monetary Authority of Singapore's Corporate Governance Advisory Committee, the Financial Reporting Council, the Asian Corporate Governance Association, and Deakin University's Integrated Reporting Centre Advisory Board. She is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and has a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of New South Wales.

## Mr Rowan Callick OBE



Mr Callick is an Industry Fellow at Griffith University's Asia Institute, an Expert Associate at the National Security College, ANU, and vice chair of the Australia Taiwan Business Council. He was the Beijing-based China correspondent of The Australian for two terms, following 20 years with The Australian Financial Review including as China correspondent based in Hong Kong. Mr Callick has written three books on contemporary China, published in both English and Chinese.

## Ms Yin Cao



Ms Cao is the curator of Chinese art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. She is a board member of the newly established Museum of Chinese in Australia (MOCA) in Sydney. Ms Cao studied and worked as an art and museum management professional in China, the US, Japan and Singapore. She trained as an archaeologist at Harvard University and Peking University.

## Ms Wesa Chau



Ms Chau is CEO of Cultural Intelligence, a research, training and consulting firm helping organisations harness the power of cultural diversity. She has served on the Multicultural Business Ministerial Council and the Ministerial Council for Women's Equality and is an experienced director on boards. Ms Chau has received several awards for her contribution to the community, including the prestigious Victorian International Education Internationalisation Award in 2016 and was a 40 under 40 Most Influential Asian Australian in 2020.

## Dr Courtney Fung



Dr Fung is an Associate Professor in the Department of Security Studies & Criminology at Macquarie University. She is concurrently a Non-Resident Fellow at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, Harvard University and at the Lowy Institute. Dr Fung has previously held positions at the University of Hong Kong and with the Columbia-Harvard China in the World Programme.

## Mr Douglas Gautier AM



Mr Gautier is the CEO and Artistic Director of the Adelaide Festival Centre, where he has worked to position the Centre as a hub for Asian-Australian cultural engagement. He is Chair of the Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres and the Board of Global Cultural Districts Network and is a Deputy Chancellor of Flinders University. Mr Gautier was founding Vice-Chairman of the Asian Arts Festival Association and a board member of the Asian Cultural Council (Rockerfeller Foundation).



## Ms Marina Go AM



Ms Go is an experienced Director who serves as Chair of Adore Beauty. She is also a non-executive director of Energy Australia, Transurban and the Australian Institute of Company Directors and serves on the governing committee of the Australian Republic Movement. Ms Go is a former Chair of the Walkley Foundation, Ovarian Cancer Australia, Netball Australia and the West Tigers NRL club and has previously worked at Fairfax and Bauer Media.

## Professor Sharon Lewin AO



Professor Lewin is an infectious diseases physician and is the inaugural Director of the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity. Her research focuses on finding a cure for HIV. She is the President of the International AIDS Society. She also co-chairs the National COVID Health and Research Advisory Committee and has overseen important medical research collaboration with China.

## Duncan Lewis AO DSC CSC



Professor Lewis is a former Director General of Security, ASIO, Secretary of the Department of Defence and Australia's Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the EU and NATO. Mr Lewis is a retired Major General of the Australian Army. He served as the Australian National Security Adviser to two Prime Ministers. He was appointed as the Professor in the Practice of National Security at the ANU National Security College in June 2021.

## Dr Jade Little



Dr Little is the Chair of the Australia China Youth Dialogue, a track two dialogue for emerging leaders in the Australia-China relationship, and a past participant in the Australia-China High Level Dialogue. Dr Little is currently Chief Advisor to the Chief Operating Officer at Newmont Corporation. She previously worked for BHP, UBS and McKinsey & Company. She was The Australian Financial Review BOSS Young Executive of the Year in 2019.

## Mr Richard McGregor



Mr McGregor is a Senior Fellow for East Asia at the Lowy Institute. He is a former Beijing, Shanghai and Washington bureau chief for The Financial Times and was posted in Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong for Australian media outlets. He was also a visiting scholar at the Wilson Center and George Washington University in Washington DC from 2014-2016. Mr McGregor has authored a number of highly acclaimed books on China and East Asia, most notably *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*.

## Professor Rory Medcalf AM



Professor Rory Medcalf is Head of the National Security College at ANU. He has three decades of experience across diplomacy, intelligence analysis, think tanks, academia and journalism. In government, Professor Medcalf worked as a senior strategic analyst with the Office of National Assessments. He was also an Australian diplomat, with experience in India, Japan and Papua New Guinea, and he continues to lead informal strategic dialogues with a range of Indo-Pacific powers. Under his leadership, the National Security College has become a go-to institution for whole-of-nation capability development and policy contestability. In 2022 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for services to international relations and tertiary education.

## Ms Alice Pung OAM



Alice Pung OAM is a Melbourne-based writer and lawyer, and an Adjunct Professor at RMIT University's School of Media and Communication. She is the author of bestselling books that have been published internationally, and translated into Italian, German, Indonesian and Chinese. Her books are studied in schools and universities in Australia and abroad. In 2022, Alice was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to literature.

## Professor Brian Schmidt AC



Professor Schmidt has been the Vice-Chancellor of the ANU since 2016. Winner of the 2011 Nobel Prize in Physics, Professor Schmidt was an astrophysicist at the ANU Mount Stromlo Observatory and Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics before becoming Vice-Chancellor. Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, The United States Academy of Science, and the Royal Society, he was made a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2013.

## Ms Jan Adams AO PSM (ex-officio)



Jan Adams AO PSM was appointed Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 1 July 2022. Prior to this, Ms Adams was Australia's Ambassador to Japan from November 2020 to June 2022 and before that Australia's Ambassador to China from 2016 to 2019.

From April 2013 to 2016, Ms Adams was Deputy Secretary with responsibility for trade and economic issues. In this role she oversaw Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement negotiations and the conclusion of free trade agreements with China, Korea and Japan. She previously led the department's Free Trade Agreement Division.

Ms Adams served as Ambassador for the Environment and Ambassador for Climate Change between 2005 and 2008 and as Minister Counsellor (Trade) in Washington from 2000 to 2004.

Ms Adams joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 1999 as Assistant Secretary, APEC Branch.

From 1993 to 1996, Ms Adams was an Adviser to the Minister for Trade and Minister for Industry, Science and Technology. She also previously worked in the OECD secretariat in Paris (Trade and Environment Directorates) and at the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

In 2016, Ms Adams was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for distinguished service to international relations through the advancement of Australia's diplomatic and free trade relationships, particularly with the United States of America, South Korea, Japan and China. In 2007, she was awarded the Public Service Medal (PSM) for outstanding public service in pursuing Australia's international objectives on trade and the environment.

Ms Adams holds Honours degrees in Economics and Law from Monash University and is a Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. She grew up in Wodonga, Victoria and is married with one adult son.

*The Foundation thanks the contributions of Mr Philip Chronican who departed the Advisory Board in 2023-24.*



**SENATOR THE HON PENNY WONG**  
LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**SENATOR THE HON DON FARRELL**  
MINISTER FOR TRADE AND TOURISM  
SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR AUSTRALIA-CHINA RELATIONS grants** **AND CEO APPOINTMENT**

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations grants round for 2023-24.

In total, 27 grants will be provided to support a range of activities designed to strengthen cooperation and enhance engagement between the people of Australia and China.

The grants will support Australian industry to re-engage with China in areas of economic importance for Australia, including agriculture and tourism. They will also support collaboration on climate change, energy and the environment in line with the statement on joint outcomes from the China-Australia annual leader's meeting.

The initiatives receiving grants are listed on the [Foundation's website](#) and include:

- Support to assist industry sectors build market connections, including for barley/grains, dairy, wool, wine and tourism.
- Research and innovation in decarbonisation, drought-resilience, sustainability, and climate change policy dialogue.
- Equipping the next generation of Chinese-Australian leaders with the skills and expertise to contribute to Australian public debate, including around engagement and collaboration with China.
- Programs to increase China literacy and the capability of scholars and young professionals to engage with China.

We welcome the appointment of Mr Gary Cowan as Chief Executive Officer of the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations.

Mr Cowan is a senior career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) He has served overseas as Australia's Representative in Taipei from 2018 to 2021, with previous postings to Beijing, Shanghai and Tokyo.

I thank former CEO Peter Cai for his contributions to the Foundation as CEO since 2021, and during its establishment phase as an advisory board member.

We are also pleased to announce the appointment of Ms Alice Pung OAM to the Advisory Board of the Foundation. Ms Pung is a Melbourne-based writer, editor and lawyer and an Adjunct Professor at RMIT University's School of Media and Communication.

The Advisory Board helps to guide the Foundation in its work to support governments, businesses, and communities build links and strengthen constructive engagement with China, consistent with our national interest.

# List of 2023-24 grant recipients

Grant Recipient	Project	Sector	Grant Amount (Ex-GST)	Location
Australian Tourism Export Council	Building China capability in Australia's tourism industry to host international visitors from China, supporting regional SMEs, First Nations businesses and wine exporter businesses.	Visitor economy	\$405,000	NSW
Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council	Supporting First Nations tourism operators across Australia to better understand Chinese traveller perceptions and demand for Australian First Nations Indigenous experiences, helping First Nations businesses develop China engagement strategies.	Visitor economy	\$180,000	WA
Dairy Australia	Showcasing Australian dairy industry excellence and strengthening professional and commercial links to support future engagement and exchange with China, marking the 25th anniversary of Dairy Australia's China Scholarship program.	Industry	\$430,000	VIC
Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre	Supporting Australian barley growers re-engage and reinvigorate relationships with China and showcase Australian grains innovation for sustainable barley trade.	Industry	\$350,000	WA
Australia Wool Innovation	Showcasing Australian wool industry innovation and excellence and building China engagement literacy among Australian wool growers for sustainable exports, marking over 50 years of Australian-China wool trade.	Industry	\$250,000	NSW
University of Southern Queensland	Connecting Chinese and Australian researchers, policy makers, community, and industry leaders to address the challenges of drought, climate change and climate-smart sustainable agriculture to support more prosperous regional communities.	Climate change	\$250,000	QLD
Charles Darwin University	Facilitating collaboration between Australia and China in tropical aquaculture and cropping systems for climate-smart sustainable agriculture production with traceable products.	Climate change	\$240,000	NT
University of Queensland	Showcasing Australian excellence in sustainable agriculture and enhancing collaboration between Australian and Chinese agricultural industry networks and researchers to explore pathways to achieve net-zero grain industries.	Climate change	\$120,000	QLD
UNSW	Showcasing Australian excellence in decarbonisation research and enhancing constructive collaboration across industry and academia in achieving Australia and China's national net-zero goals in the energy and resource sectors.	Climate change	\$125,000	NSW
University of South Australia	Supporting exchanges between Australia and China on global development of sustainable aviation fuel to prepare Australian farmers and industry networks for future opportunities in this sector.	Climate Change	\$230,000	SA
ANU: East Asia Bureau of Economic Research	Hosting an Australia-China dialogue in Canberra, focused on opportunities for bilateral collaboration on decarbonisation and the economic relationship to help achieve both nations' net zero plans.	Climate Change	\$235,000	ACT
The Marshall Centre	Tackling shared challenges in healthcare by strengthening gastric cancer research exchange and collaboration between Australian and Chinese researchers, industry and academia.	Health & ageing	\$104,000	WA

	Coincides with the 2024 Campylobacter, Helicobacter & Related Organisms (CHRO24) International Conference in Perth.			
University of Adelaide	Supporting research exchange between Australian and Chinese experts to develop a public warning tool for heatwaves. The innovative technology aims to help save lives of the elderly in both Australia and China, addressing the impact of climate change on people and communities.	Health & ageing	\$260,000	SA
Peter Doherty Institute	Strengthening Australia's infectious disease preparedness and response capability by supporting leading virologists in Australia and China to exchange expertise and identify areas for collaboration through a pandemic research alliance.	Health & ageing	\$200,000	VIC
Walter & Eliza Hall Institute	Showcasing Australian excellence in biomedical research through supporting Chinese university students to undertake the International Student Program in Research Experience internship and expanding collaborative networks in Hong Kong.	Health & ageing	\$200,000	VIC
Victoria University, Griffith University and others	Promoting Australian excellence in sport and exercise science in China and showcasing research and training opportunities in Australia. Strengthening people-to-people links through practical collaboration, reciprocal delegations and scholarships.	Education	\$300,000	VIC
ANU Centre of Asian-Australian Leadership	Delivery of two years of the William Ah Ket Leadership Program and alumni activities to equip emerging Chinese-Australian leaders with the skills and expertise to contribute to Australian public debate, including around Australian society and engagement/collaboration with China.	Community engagement	\$230,000	ACT
Royal Life Saving South Australia:	Nation-wide water safety training for international students and Chinese diaspora communities. Delivery of beach safety programs across Australia to improve water safety knowledge of Chinese-Australian communities and Chinese international students, enhancing Australia's reputation as a study destination and supporting communities.	Community engagement	\$200,000	SA
Australian Football League	Celebrating the history of Chinese-Australian participation in Australian Rules Football through a documentary of stories from the book, Celestial Footy, and educational resources for Australian schools.	Community engagement	\$200,000	VIC
Australia China Youth Association	Supporting Australia-China Youth Association chapters to connect emerging leaders from Australia and China through the Australia-China Emerging Leaders Summit, a business case competition and events that support cultural competence and foster mutual understanding.	Community engagement	\$150,000	ACT
Australian Dance Theatre	Showcasing the historical connections between early Chinese migrants to Australia and First Nations communities through the creative development and presentation of dance theatre work 'Two Blood'. Community engagement activities will follow the performance as it tours Australia in 2025 to highlight the contributions of Chinese-Australians to our national story.	Community engagement	\$120,000	SA
Australia-China Youth Dialogue	Support for the 14th and 15th Australia-China Youth Dialogues and alumni symposiums, developing and maintaining a network of young Australian and Chinese leaders to create long-term, mutually beneficial relationships.	Community engagement	\$140,000	WA
Asia Society	Readying Australian early-career professionals for informed engagement with China through delivery of foundational courses and a new alumni network. A separate workshop will bring together experts from academia, think-tanks, journalism and business to explore practical ways to deepen knowledge about China.	China literacy	\$209,000	VIC

Australian Centre on China in the World	China knowledge capability project for scholars. Establishing an Honours Advanced Preparation Program for Australian undergraduates to develop China capability and encourage further training in China studies. As well as hosting a visiting fellowship program for leading international China specialists to enhance Australia's sovereign China knowledge.	China literacy	\$204,000	ACT
Legend Media Group	Promote Australian entrepreneurialism, agricultural exports, and culinary excellence by supporting the premiere of 'M on the Bund' in Beijing and Shanghai. The documentary showcases the story of Australian restaurateur Michelle Garnaut and her Shanghai restaurants' influence on China.	Arts & culture	\$70,000	WA
Queensland University of Technology	Showcasing the knowledge and culture of Australia's First Nations peoples through an Australian Indigenous artists' residency program in Taiwan.	Arts & culture	\$70,000	QLD
Sydney Theatre Company	Supporting Sydney Theatre Company's first tour of China. The production will showcase Australian excellence in the creative sector and build people-to-people links through cultural exchange.	Arts & culture	\$300,000	NSW