Panel Session: The Economics of Inclusion

Too often inclusion is assumed to be a cost burden. But what is the cost of not being inclusive? With at least one in five people in Australia with a disability, and a growing ageing population, inclusion should be viewed as a business opportunity. Our speakers will dispel the myths about cost and show how inclusion improves the bottom line.

Ro Coroneos

Ro is responsible for the Community and Social Strategy at Barangaroo South for Lendlease, which is a 10 year, $6b urban regeneration project on the western foreshore of the Sydney CBD. She leads the delivery of 50 social programs, which includes the multi-award winning Barangaroo Skills Exchange, an onsite learning hub, in partnership with TAFE NSW, as well as the Barangaroo South Community Partnership - a cross-business collaboration with the major commercial tenants in the precinct, focusing on Indigenous engagement. Ro led the development of the Design for Dignity Guidelines, in close collaboration with the Australian Network on Disability and Westpac Group. In 2016, she was awarded the Lendlease Global Employee Excellence Award, for Diversity and Inclusion. Ro trained as a lawyer, land economist and corporate governance professional, and has over 25 years' public and private sector experience in the energy utilities and property sectors. Over the last few years her particular expertise has been in social sustainability. Ro is also director of the NSW TAFE Commission board.

Paul Nunnari

Paul has worked extensively across all levels of government on the development and implementation of their disability reform strategies. He is Manager of NSW Event Access and Inclusion at the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. Paul works directly with the event organiser and other government and non-government event planning agencies to coordinate strategies which are most conducive to increased participation. Some of these strategies include better transport and communication options, better disability awareness training for event staff and an increase in access considerations to events like accessible viewing areas, captioning and audio description. He has worked on several major events such as, Sydney NYE, Vivid Sydney, and the City to Surf. Paul is a former Paralympic athlete, NSW Don't Dis My Ability Ambassador and has served on several Boards within the disability sector. He is currently Chair of the City of Sydney Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel. Recently Paul provided input into the NSW Implementation Plan 2012-2014, the NSW Disability Inclusion Bill 2014 and the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan guidelines 2015.

Sally Coddington

Sally has a background in business and marketing, and through her consultancy, Curb Cut Effect advises businesses about commercial solutions to empower people with disability. She has held leadership positions in the not-for-profit sector, including the Hunter Business Chamber, Hunter Life Education, Becoming Healthy Australia, and is currently a member of the NSW Disability Council. She has lectured at the University of Newcastle Business School, and has worked in the finance sector in Australia and overseas.

The Hon Kelly Vincent MLC

Kelly will join the panel following her keynote presentation. She is the youngest woman ever elected to an Australian parliament, the first to be elected on a disability rights platform and she is Leader of Dignity for Disability in the South Australian Legislative Council. Kelly's previous life was in professional playwriting and performance and she's an active patron of the South Australian Arts community. Through her work as a parliamentarian, Kelly Vincent is contacted by people in crisis – often due in part to the disproportionate amount of time people with disabilities have to spend battling with bureaucracy simply to gain fair access to the world others take for granted. Kelly says her goal is to make herself redundant, and she says this goal will be realised when having a disability in Australia no longer constitutes a full-time job.