2026 EPHEA AGM Agenda

Wednesday 25 November 2026

10:00am AWST, 12:00pm AEST, 1:00pm AEDT, 3:00pm NZDT.

1. AGM welcome

a. Acknowledgement of Country and Karakia
b. Register of attendees
c. Noting of apologies

2. 2025 EPHEA AGM minutes

a. Confirmation of meeting minutes
b. Business arising from meeting minutes

3. Reports from office bearers and state chapters

a. President and Vice-President's report
b. Treasurer's report
c. Secretary's report
d. Membership Officer's report
e. Mentoring report
f. Executive Lead (Conference) report
g. Executive Lead (Mentoring) report
h. Executive Lead (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) report
i. Executive Lead (Professional Development) report
j. Executive Lead (Recognition) report
k. Executive Lead (Chapters) report

4. Election of office bearers and ordinary members to EPHEA Executive Committee

a. Notice of EPHEA Executive Committee resignations

Role	Member	Institution
Executive Lead (Pacific)	Amanda Moors-Mailei	University of Technology Sydney
Tasmania Chapter Convenor	Amelia Dowe	University of Tasmania
Secretary	Amber Elliot	Monash University
Executive Lead (Mentoring)	Bronwyn Williams	Western Sydney University
Queensland Chapter Convenor	Rehana Lakhani	Griffith University
Ordinary Member	Sophie Partridge	Western Sydney University
Public Officer/New South Wales Chapter Convenor	Shannon Vincent	Australian Catholic University

b. Notice of EPHEA Executive Committee expressions of interest

Role	**Member**	**Institution**
President	Nicola Cull	Australian Catholic University
Co-Vice-President (Australia)	Sarah Ellis	University of Technology Sydney
Co-Vice-President (Aotearoa New Zealand)	Guillermo Merelo	University of Auckland
Secretary	Joshua Dale	University of the Sunshine Coast
Co-Treasurer	Renee de Simone	University of Queensland
Co-Treasurer	Xena Irvin	University of Queensland
Public Officer	Claire Camilla Byrne	University of Technology Sydney
Membership Officer	Ciaran Smyth	Western Sydney University
Executive Lead (Aotearoa New Zealand	Kaisa Wilson	University of Auckland
Executive Lead (Conference)	Caitlin Pyle	University of Wollongong
Executive Co-Lead (Mentoring)	Ciaran Smyth	Western Sydney University
Executive Co-Lead (Mentoring)	Annabelle Reiger	Monash University
Executive Lead (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)	Tania Shepherd	Tania Shepherd
Executive Co-Lead (Professional Development)	Jindri De Silva	Macquarie University
Executive Co-Lead (Professional Development)	Laurie Poretti	University of Canberra
Executive Lead (Recognition)	Caitlin Pyle	University of Wollongong
Executive Co-Lead (Chapters)	Nurul Huda Sanny Yap	Curtin University/Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success
Executive Co-Lead (Chapters)	Nathan Coffey	Deakin University
Communications Officer	Zain Warsi	University of Technology Sydney
Ordinary Member	Lucy Jellema	University of New South Wales
Ordinary Member	Kumudika de Silva	University of Technology Sydney

- No expressions of interest were received for the Executive Lead (Pacific) role.

c. Notice of EPHEA Chapter convenor expressions of interest

State/Region	Member	Institution
Aotearoa New Zealand	Kaisa Wilson	University of Auckland
Australian Capital Territory	Rizwan Khan	Australian National University
New South Wales	Claire Camilla Byrne	University of Technology Sydney
South Australia (Co-Lead)	Andrea Parks	University of Adelaide
South Australia (Co-Lead)	Stuart Dinmore	University of Adelaide
Tasmania	James Brann	University of Tasmania
Victoria	Nathan Coffey	Deakin University
Western Australia	Nurul Huda Sanny Yap	Curtin University/Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success

- No expressions of interest were received from the Northern Territory, Pacific, and Queensland Chapter Convenor roles.

5. AGM close

AGM 2026 | Chair's Report

Nicola Cull, President, EPHEA

2026 has been another year of significant change for student equity in higher education. As the *Universities Accord* reforms continue to be implemented, lasting progress in equity depends on addressing the institutional structures, policies and cultures that shape students' access, participation and success.

Equity practitioners bring the specialist knowledge, experience and leadership needed to advance this systemic change. Across strategy, policy, programs, practice and research, their expertise is essential to building a more equitable and inclusive tertiary education system. EPHEA's role in connecting and supporting practitioners, amplifying their expertise and bringing it into national policy discussions is central to this work.

I have greatly valued the trust and encouragement of our members and Executive Committee throughout 2026. Thank you for the knowledge, generosity and care you bring to our EPHEA community, and for supporting one another through a year of change.

Our strategic direction

In 2026, EPHEA launched its Strategic Plan 2026-2028. Building on previous years' work, the plan recognises practitioners' specialist expertise, reflects our community's shared priorities and sets out four connected goals:

1. Goal 1: Build capacity and wellbeing of equity practitioners.
2. Goal 2: Champion systemic change and advocacy.
3. Goal 3: Strengthen collaboration and partnership.
4. Goal 4: Recognise and celebrate practitioner contributions.

Together, these goals guide our work towards equity for students and staff across Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific, respecting the distinct contexts, knowledges and priorities of our communities.

Goal 1: Building practitioner capacity and wellbeing

EPHEA supports practitioners to strengthen their expertise, learn from one another and build professional connections that support their wellbeing and sustain them in their work.

- **2026 EPHEA Conference:** Hosted by Western Sydney University, the 2026 EPHEA Conference, *Grounded in Place, Rising with Purpose: Equity in Action*, brings together more than 250 delegates to share research, practice and experiences. Ten grants were awarded to support equity practitioners to attend.

- **State Chapters:** EPHEA State Chapters bring equity practitioners together for professional learning and peer support. In 2026, EPHEA funded chapters to run in-person and online activities shaped by members' interests and needs, giving colleagues across institutions opportunities to share practice and build local connections.

- **EPHEA Mentoring Program:** The program continues to grow, with 32 mentees and 16 mentors taking part in 2026. It supports the professional development of equity

practitioners, creating opportunities for mentees to reflect on their practice, learn from experienced colleagues and develop as leaders.

- **EPHEA Professional Learning Program**: In 2026, EPHEA offered two professional learning sessions for members, with planning underway for more in 2027.

Goal 2: Championing systemic change and advocacy

In 2026, EPHEA brought equity practitioners' perspectives into national discussions on higher education reform.

- **National policy engagement** — Vice-President (Australia) Sarah Ellis and I represented EPHEA in five meetings with the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) and the Department of Education.
- **Policy submission** — EPHEA submitted a formal response to ATEC's discussion paper, *A More Joined-up Tertiary System*. Read EPHEA's submission.
- **Universities Accord webinar** — EPHEA partnered with the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion to deliver *Implementing the Universities Accord – Student equity in practice*.

Goal 3: Strengthening collaboration and partnerships

In 2026, EPHEA worked with partners across higher education to share expertise and advance shared equity priorities. We also developed ***EPHEA Partnership Guidelines*** to lay the groundwork for collaboration in 2027 and beyond, with a focus on clear expectations, mutual benefit and alignment with our values and strategic priorities.

- **World Access to Higher Education Network (WAHEN).** EPHEA partnered with WAHEN for this year's conference, connecting our community with international colleagues who share our commitment to equitable access and success in higher education.
- **Student Voice Australasia.** EPHEA worked with Student Voice Australasia to develop *Principles for Fair and Accountable Decision-Making: Student Attendance at Conferences*.
- **Partnership with the Student Success Conference.** EPHEA continued its partnership with the Student Success Conference (STARS) in 2026, delivering a session on systemic change that brought together more than 130 participants from the tertiary education community.
- **Refugee Education Australasia.** EPHEA supported webinars and a community of practice focused on supporting students from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
- **Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES).** EPHEA continued to develop its partnership with ACSES, including representation on its Advisory Board and

members' participation in its Equity Practitioner Grant Panel, 2026 Awards panel and External Periodic Review Panel.

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships.** EPHEA continued to strengthen its relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and organisations.

Goal 4: Recognising and celebrating practitioner contributions

Equity work is often relational, collaborative and undertaken over long periods of time. Its impact can be profound without always being highly visible. As a professional association, EPHEA has an important role in making that contribution visible and celebrating the people whose knowledge, persistence and leadership have helped move our sector forward.

- Congratulations to Professor Karen Seary and Jim Mickson, our 2026 Lifetime Membership Award recipients. This recognition honours their longstanding leadership in equity and their generous contributions to the sector and the EPHEA community.

Supporting our association

Alongside this work, the team continued to manage the administration that supports EPHEA's operations and services to members. This included:

- Completing statutory reporting to the NSW Office of Fair Trading to meet incorporation requirements.
- Managing banking and PayPal processes to support payments and financial administration.
- Improving membership processes and communications to make joining, renewing and staying connected with EPHEA easier for members.

Looking ahead to 2027

In 2027, EPHEA will continue to draw on our members' breadth of expertise and leadership to strengthen our collective advocacy, build recognition of the equity profession and champion systemic change across higher education.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to the EPHEA Executive Committee for their commitment, collegial support and thoughtful contributions throughout 2026. As volunteers, they give generously of their time alongside their professional and personal commitments. Their work makes so much of EPHEA's contribution possible. A special thank you to our Chapter Convenors for bringing members together and supporting local connection and learning.

My warm thanks to Sarah Ellis and Guillermo Merelo for their support and close collaboration as Vice-Presidents.

As Amber Elliott concludes her time as Secretary, I am deeply grateful for her contribution over several years and the care and dedication she has brought to supporting EPHEA and its members.

Thank you also to Tania Shepherd and our Western Sydney University colleagues for the thoughtfulness and care they have brought to hosting this year's conference.

My sincere thanks to all colleagues listed below for their contributions throughout the year.

2026 EPHEA Executive Committee Members:

- **Sarah Ellis** | Vice-President (Australia) | University of Technology Sydney, NSW
- **Guillermo** Merelo | Vice-President (New Zealand) | Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland
- **Amber Elliott** | Secretary | Monash University, VIC
- **Xena Irwin** | Treasurer | University of Queensland, QLD
- **Renee de Simone** | Treasurer | University of Queensland, QLD
- **Shannon Vincent** | Public Officer | Australian Catholic University, NSW
- **Ciaran Smyth** | Membership Officer | Western Sydney University, NSW
- **Caitlin Pyle** | Executive Lead Conference and Executive Lead Recognition | University of Wollongong, NSW
- **Jindri De Silva | Executive Co-Lead** Professional Development | Macquarie University, NSW
- **Laurie Poretti | Executive Co-Lead** Professional Development | University of Canberra, ACT
- **Melissa Keenan** | Executive Co-Lead Mentoring | Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, VIC
- **Tania Shepherd** | Executive Lead Indigenous | Western Sydney University, NSW
- **Kaisa Wilson** | Executive Lead New Zealand | Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland
- **Nurul Huda Sanny Yap** | Executive Co-Lead Chapters | Curtin University, WA
- **Nathan Coffey** | Executive Co-Lead Chapters | Deakin University, VIC
- **Rizwan Khan** | Australian Capital Territory Chapter Convenor | Australian National University, ACT
- **Joshua Dale |** Queensland Chapter Convenor and Co-Secretary | University of the Sunshine Coast, QLD
- **Rehana Lakhani |** Queensland Chapter Convenor | Griffith University, QLD
- **Stuart Dinmore |** South Australia Chapter Co-Convenor | Adelaide University, SA
- **Andrea Parks |** South Australia Chapter Co-Convenor | Adelaide University, SA
- **James Brann |** Tasmania Chapter Convenor | University of Tasmania
- **Lisa Buchner |** Victoria Chapter Co-Convenor | Monash University
- **Nathan Coffey |** Victoria Chapter Co-Convenor | Deakin University
- **Nurul Huda Sanny Yap |** Western Australia Chapter Convenor | Curtin University

2026 Ordinary Executive Members:

Jason Chan | Macquarie University

Lucy Jellema | University of New South Wales

Katie Douglas | Swinburne University of Technology

Jaimey Facchin | University of Wollongong

Fiona Navin | Edith Cowan University

Lara Rafferty | Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

Cara Scobie | Monash University

Harry Twohig | University of New South Wales

Zain Warsi | EPHEA Communications Coordinator | University of Technology Sydney

Thank you to all our members for the expertise, care and commitment you bring to the EPHEA community.

Treasurers Report – EPHEA AGM 2026

Dear EPHEA Executive, Members and AGM attendees,

EPHEA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026
Renee de Simone and I (Xena Irvin) are pleased to present the following Treasurer's Report for period 3rd November 2025 – 6th November 2026.

EPHEA is in a strong financial position with income from new memberships and targeted spending on increasing opportunities for members to attend the 2026 EPHEA conference and engage through state chapters. A key area for review is the chapter funding process as each year this is delayed and therefore has minimal uptake due to planning constraints.

While SEED funding was projected to be spent this year the conference planning team has done an amazing job of budgeting, so this was not required; kudos to Tania Shepherd and Jason Thomas for their expert management and planning.

2026 Budget (actuals for 1st Jan 2026 – 6th Nov 2026)

	2026 Proposal	Cumulative Totals 2026
INCOME		
Membership: 44 institutions expected	$19800	$17,031.02 *thank you Ciaran
Interest		$2,028.75
EXPENDITURE		
Communications Coordinator	$7500	$7896.00
Annual Subscriptions/Expenses	$4000	$3634.36
Conference Materials	$0	$589.95
Chapter Funding *Strategic objectives 1.5, 3.1, 3.2*	$8000	$1569.00
Early Career Mentoring Program *Strategic objective 1.5*	$1000	$0
Professional Development 10x $1000 grants to EPHEA Conference *Strategic objectives 1.2, 1.4, 2.2*	$10000^	$8077.16
Miscellaneous	$0	$10
BUDGET TOTALS		
	2026 Budget	**2026 Year to Date**
Overall income and expenditure for 2026.	Beginning: $67972.61 Income: $19800 Expenditure: $27,500	Beginning Position: $67,972.61 Income: $19,059.77 Expenditure: $21,776.47
	Deficit: -$7700 *SEED Funding*: $20,000	Deficit: -$2716.70 *SEED Funding*: $0 Position: $65,255.91

	Final Position: $40,272.61	

Statement of Financial Position

Account name	Balance 3/11/25 (AGM Report 2025)	Balance 6/11/2026
Mian Transaction Account	$3885.80	$6,825.54
Savings Account #5747	$1434.55	$434.55
Term Deposit #9963	$18895.48	$19,495.45
Term Deposit #2538	$24270.05	$25,216.59
Term Deposit #3580	$12364.89	$12,847.13
PayPal	$3469.16	$436.65
TOTAL BALANCE	**$64319.93**	**$65,255.91**

Thank you
2026 EPHEA Co-Treasurers
Renee de Simone and Xena Irvin

Transaction listing since last AGM [03/11/2025 – 06/11/2026]

Main NAB Transaction Account:

Date	Amount	Transaction Details	Balance
4-Nov-25	3400	PAYPAL20251104000003333265	4515.8
4-Nov-25	-360	INTERNET TRANSFER RUSH Sarah Ellis	1115.8
4-Nov-25	-1500	INTERNET TRANSFER QLD Chapter Fund	1475.8
4-Nov-25	-235	INTERNET BPAY DEFT INSURANCE 406371245900212	2975.8
4-Nov-25	-1675	INTERNET BPAY DEFT INSURANCE 406371245549761	3210.8
4-Nov-25	1000	ONLINE K2768172036 Linked Acc Trns EPINHEAAI	4885.8
10-Nov-25	-52.86	ONLINE M6568152908 FS100903 M6568152908	4399.64
10-Nov-25	-63.3	ONLINE C4422043208 SA1011899 C4422043208	4452.5
19-Nov-25	10309.14	UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLA	14708.78
26-Nov-25	-1696.81	ONLINE D6097686148 UTS301564 EPINHEAAI	13011.97
4-Dec-25	-1368.64	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA COMMS COORD	11643.33
12-Dec-25	-127	INTERNET TRANSFER Registry Payment	11516.33
13-Feb-26	0	PLEASE NOTE FROM TODAY YOUR DR INTEREST RATE IS 14.910%	11516.33
26-Feb-26	-631.68	INTERNET TRANSFER COMMS COORDI JAN	10884.65
10-Mar-26	-171	INTERNET TRANSFER NSW Fair Trade	10081.97
10-Mar-26	-631.68	INTERNET TRANSFER COMMS COORDI FEB	10252.97

12-Mar-26	450	/ AUS CATHOLIC UNI Equity Practitio	10981.97
12-Mar-26	450	0355891 UWA Equity Practitio	10531.97
19-Mar-26	495	199519 GRIFFITH UNIVERS EPHEA	11476.97
23-Mar-26	450	404850 - Deakin Un Deakin Universit Equity Practitio	11926.97
24-Mar-26	-263.36	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA ZOOM 2026	11663.61
27-Mar-26	0	PLEASE NOTE FROM TODAY YOUR DR INTEREST RATE IS 15.160%	11663.61
1-Apr-26	450	11683164 CHARLES STURT UN Equity Practitio	12563.61
1-Apr-26	450	493128 CURTIN UNIVERSIT EQUITY PRACTITIO	12113.61
2-Apr-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA MARCH COMMS	12066.09
2-Apr-26	450	142949 CQU GENERAL FUND Equity Practitio	13013.61
17-Apr-26	450	Andrea E ParksParks - #0000204Andrea parks	12516.09
21-Apr-26	450	168655 USQ Finance Equity Practitio	12966.09
7-May-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER COMMS COORDI APR	12018.57
15-May-26	0	PLEASE NOTE FROM TODAY YOUR DR INTEREST RATE IS 15.410%	12018.57
22-Jun-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER COMMS COORDI MAY	11071.05
3-Jul-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER COMMS COORDI JUNE	10123.53
16-Jul-26	426	RTGS (WBC-003855) 1/MANUKAU INSTITUTE 3/NZ/AUCKLAND	10549.53
31-Jul-26	450	ONLINE Z9255186472 0000248 STUDY HUBS A	10999.53
7-Aug-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA JULY COMMS	10052.01
10-Aug-26	-682.77	INTERNET TRANSFER 22594	9369.24
11-Aug-26	450	2026/2001965356 Monash Universit Equity Practitio	9819.24
17-Aug-26	-1569	ONLINE V0074362112 Funds trns EPINHEAAI	8250.24
25-Aug-26	-1000	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA GRANTS	7250.24
27-Aug-26	-1000	ONLINE G9074677383 EPHEA Grant G9074677383	5250.24
27-Aug-26	-1000	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA GRANTS	6250.24
31-Aug-26	-1000	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA GRANTS	4250.24
4-Sep-26	-1000	ONLINE H6074106777 1INV-036131 EPINHEAAI	1250.24
4-Sep-26	-1000	INTERNET TRANSFER 3000181055	2250.24
4-Sep-26	-1000	INTERNET TRANSFER 3000181112	3250.24
14-Sep-26	-1000	INTERNET BPAY Qld Uni Of Technolog10344000448084	250.24
16-Sep-26	11654.68	PAYPAL 20260916020336539239	10818.4
16-Sep-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER EPHEA AUGUST COMMS	-836.28

16-Sep-26	-139	INTERNET TRANSFER PO box reimburseme	111.24
18-Sep-26	922.84	RTGS (CBA-004226) 1/ANNA-KAISA WILSON 3/NZ/AUCKLAND 1071	11741.24
6-Oct-26	-1000	INTERNET TRANSFER AR042434	10741.24
9-Oct-26	-947.52	INTERNET TRANSFER COMMS COORDI SEP	9203.77
9-Oct-26	-589.95	INTERNET TRANSFER VP-Q6D5GKZ4 Banner	10151.29
9-Oct-26	0	PLEASE NOTE FROM TODAY YOUR DR INTEREST RATE IS 15.660%	10741.24
29-Oct-26	-240	INTERNET BPAY DEFT INSURANCE 406371251083325	6868.77
29-Oct-26	-2095	INTERNET BPAY DEFT INSURANCE 406371251275293	7108.77
3-Nov-26	-43.23	INTERNET TRANSFER Wix monthly Oct	6825.54

Savings NAB Transaction Account: 5747

Date	Amount	Transaction Details	Balance
4-Nov-25	-1000	ONLINE K2768172036 Linked Acc Trns EPINHEAAI	434.55

PayPal Account

Date	Transaction Details	Gross Amount	PayPal Fees	Net Amount
04-Nov-25	Transfer to NAB	-3400	-10	-3410
04-Dec-25	Membership	450	-17.85	432.15
03-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
03-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
03-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
03-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
04-Mar-26	Membership	450	-17.85	432.15
04-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
04-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
04-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
04-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
06-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
06-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
08-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
09-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
10-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
11-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
13-Mar-26	Membership	75	-2.48	72.52
13-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
17-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
20-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
25-Mar-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
26-Mar-26	Membership	450	-17.85	432.15
02-Apr-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
12-Apr-26	Misc	-108.43	0	-108.43

12-Apr-26	Misc	54.49	0	54.49
12-Apr-26	Misc	-46.5	0	-46.5
14-Apr-26	Membership	100	-3.2	96.8
14-Apr-26	Misc	100.44	-3.21	97.23
22-Jun-26	Misc	3.21	0	3.21
22-Jun-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
26-Jun-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
30-Jun-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
13-Jul-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65
15-Aug-26	Membership	100	-3.2	96.8
16-Sep-26	Transfer to NAB	-11654.68	-10	-11664.68
26-Oct-26	Membership	450	-13.35	436.65

2026 EPHEA AGM - Secretary Report

As per the EPHEA Constitution (the Constitution), Part 4 clause 25.2(a), the EPHEA Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2026 is being held on 25 November 2026, within six months after the close of the Association's 2026-2027 Financial Year (30 June 2027).

1. EPHEA Executive Committee meetings

The EPHEA Executive Committee met nine times in 2026. In accordance with the Constitution Part 4 clause 30.2, at each meeting there was a quorum of five members.

2. EPHEA Executive Committee roles

In 2026, there were 36 EPHEA Executive Committee members, including the office-bearers as detailed in Part 3 clause 15.3 of the Constitution. Executive Committee roles and their office-bearers are published on the EPHEA Executive committee and chapter convenors webpage. Office bearer responsibilities are published on the Responsibilities and roles of EPHEA Committee members webpage.

In 2026, the Co-President (President elect) and Co-Vice-Presidents (Vice-President elect) transitioned into the President and Vice-President roles respectively. The President and Vice-President roles will serve a three-year term ending in December 2028. Nominations for the Co-President and Co-Vice-President roles will next be held in late 2027 and assume office in January 2028.

3. Resignations

The following EPHEA Executive Committee members resigned during 2026:

i. Amanda Moors-Mailei, Executive Lead (Pacific), UTS

ii. Amelia Dowe, Tasmania Chapter Convenor, UTAS

iii. Amber Elliot, Secretary, Monash U

iv. Bronwyn Williams, Executive Lead (Mentoring), WSU

v. Rehana Lakhani, Queensland Chapter Convenor, Griffith U

vi. Sophie Partridge, Ordinary Member, WSU

vii. Shannon Vincent, Public Officer/New South Wales Chapter Convenor, ACU

I thank all resigning members for their sustained commitment to advancing equity in higher education, sharing perspectives, and delivering valuable programs within their own and across institutions. I particularly thank Amber Elliot for her tireless and valuable work supporting EPHEA as Secretary since 2023.

I look forward to working with the EPHEA Executive Committee again in 2027, including with both new and continuing members.

Joshua Dale (Co-Secretary)

Membership Officer's Report 2026

EPHEA Annual General Meeting

Prepared by Ciaran Smyth, Membership Officer

Overview

I am pleased to present the Membership Officer's Report for 2026. EPHEA currently has 937 active individual members and 50 current institutional members across Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific. This represents an increase of 98 active individual members compared with the 839 reported in 2025, and an increase of 5 current institutional members compared with the 45 reported last year.

The 2026 institutional position includes 36 institutions with payment recorded, 2 institutions operating under complimentary arrangements, and 12 renewals not yet finalised. These categories are reported separately so that administrative delays, complimentary memberships and discontinued memberships are not treated as equivalent.

937	50	3	12
Active individual members	Current institutional members	New institutions in 2026	Renewals not finalised

Membership distribution and change

The geographic distribution remains concentrated in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, which together account for 75.5% of registered members. EPHEA nevertheless maintains representation across every Australian state and territory, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific region.

New South Wales remains the largest membership base with 346 members (36.9%), followed by Queensland with 189 (20.2%) and Victoria with 172 (18.4%). Aotearoa New Zealand accounts for 75 members (8.0%). Northern Territory and Pacific membership remain comparatively small, highlighting opportunities for targeted engagement in 2027.

Location	2025	2026	Change	Growth	2026 share
New South Wales	308	346	+38	12.3%	36.9%
Queensland	179	189	+10	5.6%	20.2%
Victoria	145	172	+27	18.6%	18.4%
Aotearoa New Zealand	74	75	+1	1.4%	8.0%
Western Australia	61	73	+12	19.7%	7.8%
Australian Capital Territory	33	36	+3	9.1%	3.8%
South Australia	15	22	+7	46.7%	2.3%
Tasmania	20	20	+0	0.0%	2.1%
Northern Territory	1	2	+1	100.0%	0.2%
Pacific Region	2	2	+0	0.0%	0.2%
Total	**838**	**937**	**+99**	**11.8%**	**100.0%**

Data note: The 2025 AGM reported 839 active members. For the state-by-state comparison, 2025 figures have been reconstructed from the current membership dataset using registrations recorded before 1 January 2026. This identifies 838 members, one fewer than the official 2025 total.

Accordingly, the official overall increase in membership is 98 members, while the geographic comparison reflects 99 additional records. This minor difference does not materially affect the state-level trends.

Institutional membership movements

Three institutions joined EPHEA in 2026:

5. Study Hubs Australia
6. Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury
7. Uni Hub Spencer Gulf

The University of Canterbury membership is recorded as complimentary until 2028. Uni Hub Spencer Gulf joined directly in March 2026, with its institutional order recorded and payment still to be finalised.

Adelaide institutional transition

A significant institutional change during 2026 was the establishment of Adelaide University. EPHEA's records now treat Adelaide University as the active, paid institutional member. The former University of Adelaide and University of South Australia records have been merged into the new institution, with Children's University Adelaide also being consolidated under the Adelaide University membership. This should be understood as a structural transition rather than a reduction in EPHEA's South Australian institutional reach. South Australian individual membership increased from 15 to 22 in the reconstructed comparison.

Institutional renewals and changing payment processes

A growing number of institutional renewals now require EPHEA to navigate more complex procurement and payment processes. These include purchase order requirements, supplier registration, revised invoicing arrangements and additional internal approvals before payment can be completed. Several renewals remained in progress at the time of reporting, and in many cases this reflects administrative requirements rather than a decision to discontinue membership.

Normal movement across the higher education sector, together with organisational change and disruption within some institutions, has also meant that a number of EPHEA's key institutional contacts are undergoing renewal. This can affect continuity around invoicing, renewals and management of institutional membership, particularly where knowledge of the arrangement has previously rested with one person.

A piece of work is underway to confirm, update and expand EPHEA's institutional contact network, including identifying multiple appropriate contacts at each institution where possible. This will reduce reliance on individual contacts, improve continuity and support more consistent engagement beyond the annual renewal cycle.

Institutional renewals not yet finalised

At the time of reporting, payment had not been recorded for the following current institutional memberships:

8. Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success
9. Canberra Institute of Technology
10. Charles Darwin University
11. Federation University
12. Flinders University
13. La Trobe University
14. Open Universities Australia
15. Queensland University of Technology
16. Te Pūkenga trading as Unitec
17. University of Sydney
18. Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington
19. Uni Hub Spencer Gulf

These institutions should be treated as renewals in progress unless and until non-renewal is confirmed. Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University is recorded separately: it withdrew during 2026 and was subsequently provided complimentary membership for the year. Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury is also operating under a complimentary arrangement.

Organisational contact details

During 2026, EPHEA established a dedicated organisational PO Box, consolidating its postal address and providing a stable contact point that is not tied to the workplace address of an individual Executive member. Mail redirection was arranged for the transition period, with address details progressively being updated across banking, supplier, regulatory and other organisational records. This provides greater continuity as Executive roles and institutional affiliations change over time.

Membership systems and communications review

Implementation and refinement of the ListServ communication system introduced in 2025 continued throughout 2026. Some configuration issues were identified during the year, particularly in the way ListServ messages interacted with mail filtering and delivery systems at some member institutions. These issues are now believed to be largely resolved, with delivery reliability continuing to be monitored.

The experience has nevertheless highlighted the challenges of relying primarily on direct email across a large and diverse institutional network. Differences in institutional security settings, mail filtering and other technical controls can affect whether communications successfully reach members. This has reinforced the need for a broader review of sustainable and accessible member communication channels, including options that do not rely solely on direct email.

Alongside this work, EPHEA is exploring options for a new membership portal or platform that could provide members with a more streamlined way to join, renew, update their details and access membership information, resources and updates. The broader review will consider communication across institutional, individual and Chapter levels, as well as ways to reduce the manual administration associated with maintaining membership records, institutional contacts and communication lists. This work will form a key part of EPHEA's 2027 priorities, with a focus on communication reliability, accessibility and a more sustainable member experience.

Priorities for 2027

20. Complete outstanding institutional renewals and begin renewal activity earlier to accommodate procurement lead times.
21. Develop clearer guidance for purchase orders, supplier onboarding and institutional invoice requirements.
22. Confirm and broaden institutional contact networks, with more than one contact recorded wherever practicable.
23. Assess membership portal options and identify a preferred future platform and implementation pathway.
24. Complete the review of membership communication needs and strengthen targeted institutional and Chapter communication.
25. Increase individual registration and engagement within existing institutional memberships.
26. Prioritise engagement in underrepresented locations.
27. Following completion of the 2027 institutional renewal cycle, undertake a comprehensive review of existing member records to confirm current members, institutional affiliations and contact details, and identify records that should be updated or moved to inactive status.
28. Continue improving membership definitions, data quality and reporting consistency.

Conclusion

The 2026 membership position reflects continued growth in both individual and institutional participation, alongside significant work to maintain accurate records and support increasingly complex institutional renewal processes. Growth was recorded in most locations, with the strongest numerical increases in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. The next phase of work will focus on

strengthening the systems behind membership, renewing and broadening institutional contacts, improving communication and creating a more consistent experience for members and institutions.

Yours in Equity,

Ciaran Smyth
Membership Officer 2026

AGM 2026 – Conference Report

Prepared by Caitlin Pyle, Executive Lead, Conference

In 2026, as this is a conference year, the Conference Lead worked with the host institution, EPHEA Executive and EPHEA conference team to support the planning and delivery of the conference at WSU.

The Conference Lead developed an EOI calling for 2028 host universities which should be announced at the end of the 2026 conference.

In 2027 the Conference Lead will work with WSU to develop a EPHEA Conference handbook to share with the next host institution to support the successful planning and delivery of the 2028 conference.

EPHEA Mentoring Program 2026

Melissa Keenan, RMIT

Ciaran Smyth, WSU

In 2026, the EPHEA Executive Committee continued to strengthen professional connections and peer learning through the Mentoring Program. The program supports equity practitioners in their professional development by fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing and a strong sense of community across the sector.

This year, 16 mentoring pairs were established across 18 institutions, bringing together practitioners with diverse roles, experiences and perspectives. The program provided a framework for participants to build professional relationships, exchange insights and explore opportunities for growth; supported by program resources, check-ins and dedicated guidance.

The Mentoring Program continues to provide a valuable opportunity for connection, skills development and leadership growth across the EPHEA network. By facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience, the program helps strengthen professional practice and foster a collaborative and supportive community of equity practitioners.

EPHEA AGM 2026

Report – Executive Lead (Indigenous)

Prepared by Tania Shepherd

I commenced in this role officially after the 2025 AGM and was able to immerse myself into the space this year.

Traction is building on engaging with the EPHEA membership who identify as either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and membership at the EPHEA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Group meetings has been sporadic but building.

In partnership with Ciaran Smyth, Memberships Officer, we were able to ensure that members are asked if they identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander when joining EPHEA.

EPHEA Executive Professional Development Report 2026

As 2026 is an EPHEA Conference year, a significant proportion of professional development activity has centred on supporting the conference and broader sector learning, alongside sector engagement and planning for future discussions on equity reform.

29. **Abstract writing workshop**

    Delivered an EPHEA Abstract Writing Workshop ahead of the 2026 EPHEA Conference to support emerging equity practitioners within the membership to develop and strengthen their conference abstracts.

- **EPHEA Conference Organising Committee**

  Contributed to the EPHEA Conference Organising Committee, supporting the planning and development of the 2026 conference program.

30. **Sector professional development opportunities**

    Promoted Refugee Education Australia (REA) Community of Practice webinars to EPHEA members, providing access to relevant professional development and knowledge-sharing opportunities.

31. **Sector engagement on funding and reform**

Held several discussions with Professor Ian Li, Director of Research and Policy, Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES), about EPHEA's data, themes and questions. Ian suggested a joint panel for ATEC to address these issues.

Laurie and Jindri will consult EPHEA members on key themes, questions and clarification needed about higher education funding, Needs-Based Funding (NBF) and ATEC. Members' priorities and concerns will shape engagement with ATEC to seek practical answers relevant to equity practitioners.

32. **Collaborative EPHEA/ACSES equity reform panel: Q1 2027**

Discussions have laid the groundwork for a joint EPHEA/ACSES panel planned for Q1 2027. The panel will explore the next phase of equity reform, drawing on ACSES insights.

Next steps
Continue identifying and promoting relevant sector professional development opportunities, and advance planning for the proposed equity reform webinar/panel.

AGM 2026 – Recognition Report

Prepared by Caitlin Pyle, Executive Lead, Recognition

In 2026, the EPHEA Executive Committee successfully executed the revised criteria for the Lifetime Member Award.

Consultation and discussion was had around the range of EPHEA awards complimenting each other and which were to be awarded on conference and non-conference years.

An overview of the updated criteria is provided below.

The 2026 award will be presented at the Dinner during the 2026 Conference.

Purpose

The EPHEA Lifetime Member Award recognises an individual who has made an outstanding and sustained contribution to equity in higher education and/or EPHEA over an extended period of their career.

The award honours those whose leadership, advocacy, innovation, and influence have created lasting positive impact within their institution and across the sector.

Eligibility

Nominees should:

- Have demonstrated a substantial and sustained contribution to the higher education equity sector over a significant period of time, OR have demonstrated a substantial and sustained contribution and impact to EPHEA over a significant period of time.
- Be approaching retirement, leaving the higher education sector, or transitioning from an equity-focused role to a substantially different professional pathway.
- Be recognised by peers as having advanced equity practice, policy, research, partnerships, or student outcomes.

Assessment Criteria

Nominees should provide evidence of achievement in several of the following areas:

1. Sustained Sector Contribution

Demonstrated long-term commitment to advancing equity, participation, access, retention, success, and/or attainment outcomes in higher education.

2. Leadership and Influence

Demonstrated leadership that has shaped institutional practice, sector policy, collaborative initiatives, or strategic direction.

3. Lasting Impact

Evidence that their work has resulted in enduring positive outcomes for students, institutions, communities, or the broader sector.

4. Innovation and Advancement

Contribution to innovative programs, research, frameworks, partnerships, or approaches that have strengthened equity practice and understanding.

5. Mentorship and Capacity Building

Significant contribution to supporting and developing emerging practitioners, leaders, and networks within the sector.

6. Professional Reputation

Recognition by colleagues and peers as a respected leader, collaborator, advocate, and champion for equity in higher education.

Nomination Requirements

Nominations must include:

- A nomination statement (maximum 1,500 words) addressing the assessment criteria and nominee's professional achievements.
- At least one letter of support from a colleague at a different institution, organisation, or sector body that demonstrates the nominee's broader sector influence and contribution.
- Optional supporting evidence, such as publications, awards, project outcomes, testimonials, or examples of sector leadership.

Award Cycle

33. Awarded and presented during EPHEA Conference years.

Lifetime Award Recipient Recognition

Recipients may be invited to remain actively connected with EPHEA through one or more of the following opportunities:

7. EPHEA Lifetime recognition.
8. Ongoing complimentary EPHEA membership.
9. Conference attendance or guest speaker invitation.
10. Mentoring opportunities through EPHEA's mentoring program.
11. Participation in special panels, advisory groups, or sector conversations.

EPHEA Executive Lead (Chapter) Report 2026

Executive Leads:

Nurul Huda Sanny Yap, Curtin University/ACSES, Nathan Coffey, Deakin University

State Chapter Convenors:

Australian Capital Territory: Rizwan Khan

Queensland: Rehana Lakhani, Griffith University, Joshua Dale, University of the Sunshine Coast

South Australia: Stuart Dinmore, Adelaide University, Andrea Parks, Adelaide University

Tasmania: Dr James Brann, University of Tasmania

Victoria: Nathan Coffey, Deakin University, Lisa Buchner, Monash University

Western Australia: Nurul Huda Sanny Yap, Curtin University/ACSES

Aotearoa New Zealand: Kaisa Wilson, University of Auckland

Australian Capital Territory

Context

In 2026 the ACT equity landscape was shaped by recovery and recalibration. The University of Canberra and the Australian National University both continued to rebuild after a period of significant change and testing times, with restructures, financial pressures and organisational change affecting staff, programs and the communities they serve. With the recent set-up of UNSW city, and widening participation role at ACU, members are establishing programs and navigating the challenges that commonly arise with that.

At the same time, equity practitioners across the sector worked through changes to funding arrangements and growing expectations about evaluation, impact and accountability. In this environment, practitioners in the Territory showed considerable resilience and a continued commitment to students and communities from equity backgrounds.

Collaboration and partnership in outreach

The year brought real progress for the ACT Chapter in collaboration and partnership, particularly in outreach. Rather than working alongside each other, institutions increasingly chose to work together, sharing expertise, resources and relationships so that communities benefit from a more coordinated approach.

Key developments included:

- ANU and the University of Canberra formally partnered to deliver the UC Small Schools Program, an important step towards shared outreach delivery across the Territory's two largest universities.
- A collaboration between Australian Catholic University ANU, UC, University of Wollongong, Charles Sturt University and University of New England to consult with communities in the Snowy Valleys region. Is initiated
- The partnership is designing and delivering outreach that responds to the local context, grounded in consultation with the community rather than set in advance.
- The model shows how cross-institutional partnership can reduce duplication, strengthen relationships with regional communities and make better use of limited resources in a constrained funding environment.

Connecting the practitioner community

The Chapter also made time and space for practitioners to come together. A chapter event brought together members from universities across the Territory and from Regional University Study Hubs, giving practitioners working in different settings the chance to share their experiences.

The gathering mattered most to recently established equity teams at ACU and UNSW Canberra City. For these colleagues it was a chance to build relationships with peers, and also to reflect together on what members expect from the EPHEA ACT Chapter.

Key reflections from the event included:

- Most of all, practitioners asked for more opportunities to connect and network across institutions.
- Newer teams valued the chance to learn from established colleagues and to understand the local equity landscape.
- Members recognised the value of the Chapter as a space for collegiality, peer support and shared reflection, especially in times of change.

Looking ahead to 2027

Building on this feedback, the Chapter will focus in 2027 on providing regular, meaningful opportunities for connection and networking among members. The Chapter will also continue to support the collaborative outreach partnerships established this year, and to encourage shared approaches to evaluation and practice across institutions in the ACT and surrounding regions.

Queensland

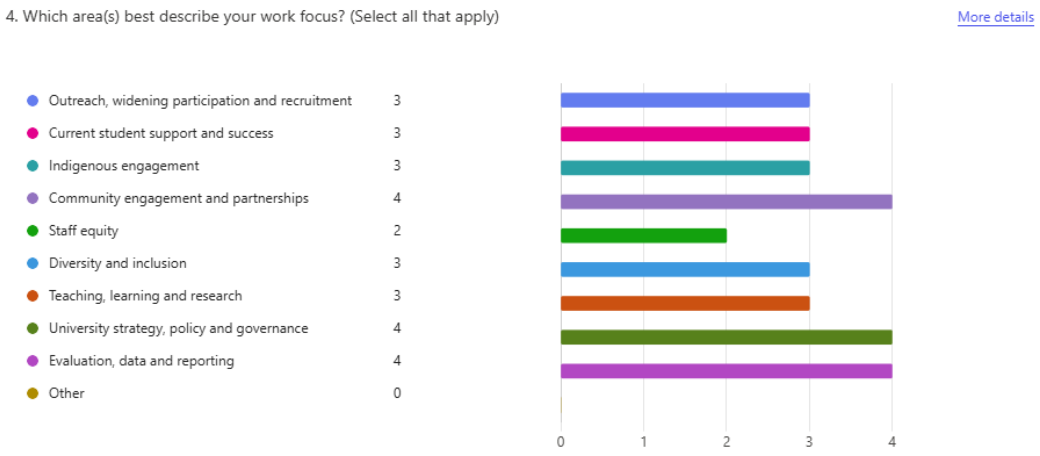
The Queensland Chapter commenced 2026 by surveying members to better understand their priorities, interests and preferences for Chapter engagement. The survey aimed to inform future opportunities for networking, collaboration and knowledge sharing across the Queensland equity sector.

The survey received 6 responses representing the following organisations:

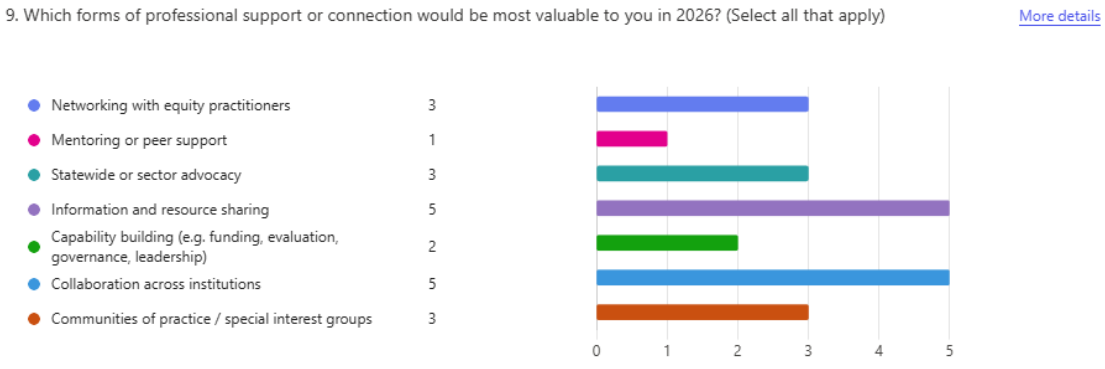
- ACU (n=1)
- CQU (n=3)
- Griffith (n=1)
- UniSC (n=1)

Although the Queensland Chapter includes members from JCU, QUT, USQ, UQ, and the CUC, no responses were submitted from these organisations.

Respondents identified themselves as having the following work foci (noting they could select multiple):



Respondents also identified the following forms of professional support or connection that would be most valuable to them in 2026.



Respondents were asked to provide long-form responses to identify the topics or challenges they would most like the Chapter to focus on in 2026. The following responses were received:

#	**Response**
1	Equitable representation in projects/research and policy reform from people of diverse backgrounds (Pasifika, Māori, First Nations for instance).
2	Implementation of UDL principles as a foundational requirement not just in principle.
3	Encourage local data collection, information sharing, and publishing on pre-access engagement so we can stop importing international strategies that are not fit or effective for Australian communities.
4	Accord and SSAF developments

The low number of responses made it difficult to understand which should be actioned and alternative means of collecting this information was considered. On exploration of the low response rate, the Co-Convenors identified both the outdatedness of the current Queensland Chapter's member list, as well as a technical error causing the invitation email to be blocked by some organisations.

Throughout the year, the Co-Convenors explored opportunities to bring members together face-to-face, including potentially aligning a Chapter event with the STARS Conference or ACSES Policy Symposium. While these opportunities did not eventuate, they remain potential avenues for future engagement.

2026 also marked the conclusion of the Queensland Consortium after more than 15 years of supporting collaboration and connections across the sector. In previous years, the Chapter had secured EPHEA funding to support Consortium activities; however, no Chapter funding application was submitted in 2026. The conclusion of the Consortium presents an opportunity to consider how the EPHEA Queensland Chapter might support ongoing sector connections and collaboration going forward.

Looking ahead to 2027, potential opportunities include:

- Using member survey feedback to shape Chapter priorities and engagement activities.
- Increasing promotion of the Chapter in Queensland organisations to rebuild the current member list.

- Exploring an informal face-to-face networking event alongside an existing sector conference.
- Facilitating one or two online knowledge-sharing sessions on emerging equity priorities and practice.
- Exploring joint activities with other EPHEA state chapters to encourage broader sector connections.
- Considering Chapter funding to support a targeted networking or collaborative initiative.

South Australia

2026 was a relatively quiet year for the South Australian Chapter. Despite efforts to convene two events during the year, registrations were very limited, with only one or two registrations received for each. This occurred during a period of significant transition for us with 2026 marking the first year of Adelaide University. The demands associated with establishing the new university placed considerable pressure on staff and contributed to reduced capacity for engagement with external professional networks and activities across the institution.

Looking ahead, we are optimistic that engagement will strengthen as the new university becomes more established. The Chapter is well positioned to align future South Australian activities with Adelaide University's emerging Inclusion and Access Strategy, creating opportunities to build stronger connections between our institutional and the work of EPHEA. In addition, our intention to apply to host the 2028 EPHEA Conference at Adelaide University provides a significant opportunity to raise EPHEA's profile in South Australia, strengthen local networks, and drive renewed membership and participation.

Tasmania

In 2026, the Tasmanian Chapter of EPHEA has focused on strengthening equity and inclusion through collaboration, professional learning and contributions to wider work at the University of Tasmania. Against a backdrop of substantial change across the sector, this work connects long-term planning with practical improvements to access, participation and student success.

A major focus has been progressing the University’s Disability and Inclusion Strategy 2030. The strategy is being developed to guide a coordinated approach to removing barriers and strengthening inclusion across the University. It provides an opportunity to embed accessibility more consistently in everyday practice and to support wider improvements to the academic system.

The University has also completed a substantial project examining the future of the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET). This work has explored options for an expanded and sustainable national service, building on ADCET's longstanding contribution to inclusive tertiary education. Completion of the project represents an important planning milestone, with decisions about future funding and delivery still to be resolved.

A highlight was hosting the ADCET Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Symposium in Hobart from 24 to 26 June 2026. Delivered by ADCET in partnership with the University of Tasmania and the Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES), the symposium brought together 160 delegates in person and 366 online. Its theme, 'From Ideas to Impact: Sharing, Engaging, and Co-Designing Practice', supported the exchange of practical approaches to inclusive learning and teaching.

We have also continued to progress UDL initiatives through the Tiny Awards and the UDL Cooperative. The Tiny Awards recognise small, achievable changes that improve accessibility and inclusion in teaching, while the Cooperative supports colleagues to share ideas, learn from one another and develop their practice. Together, these initiatives help translate UDL principles into everyday action and build staff capability to create more inclusive learning experiences.

Victoria

In 2026, the EPHEA Victoria Chapter continued its focus on giving members purposeful ways to connect, learn and share practice.

Connection and Professional Development Day

The highlight of the year was our annual Connection and Professional Development Day in July, hosted by RMIT at its CBD campus. Nearly 100 people registered, and 70 attended on the day.

The program centred on a 2.5-hour workshop, *Trauma-informed Education*, led by Associate Professor Tom Brunzell (PhD) from the University of Melbourne. Drawing on more than a decade of his research and real-world examples, Tom showed how equity practitioners and university leaders can build institution-wide structures that support students at every level of need, from universal Tier 1 supports to targeted and intensive Tier 3 interventions. He also explored how to have a trauma-informed lens across all aspects of our work.

Participants explored three strategic priorities for sustaining both wellbeing and academic success:

- **Shifting mindsets.** Moving staff from reactive crisis management to proactive, relationally safe practice, and building staff buy-in.

- **Consistent institutional systems.** Reducing decision fatigue, increasing clarity, and ensuring fair and restorative responses to student needs and behaviour.
- **Building student capacity.** Using strengths-based, trauma-informed approaches and self-regulation strategies to help students thrive.

Attendees left with practical tools to gain staff buy-in, reduce burnout, maintain academic challenge, and create environments where students and staff can thrive. The day finished with time for members to connect and network across the chapter.

Member-requested online conversations

In response to member requests, the chapter also ran two online conversations. These explored Needs Based Funding and the Outreach Fund, and their impact in Victoria. The sessions attracted 35 attendees.

Western Australia

Chapter overview

2026 has been another year of meaningful connection and professional learning for the Western Australia (WA) Chapter. Under the coordination of Chapter Convenor Nurul Huda Sanny Yap, the Chapter has continued to bring together equity practitioners from across the state's five universities - Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University, The University of Notre Dame Australia and The University of Western Australia providing opportunities for meaningful connections across the sector.

Key event: Connecting through Cultural Narratives

The Chapter's key event for 2026, ***Connecting through Cultural Narratives***, was held on Wednesday 4 November and **hosted by Edith Cowan University (ECU) at its new City Campus in Perth**. The event attracted close to 50 participants from across the five WA universities, demonstrating strong interest in professional learning and networking opportunities.

The event was organised through a collaboration between the WA Chapter Convenor and ECU's Access and Equity team. The Chapter extends its sincere thanks to Dr Fiona Navin, Emma Lovegrove, Jillian Collins and Susan Edgar for their collaboration and contribution to making the event possible. Special acknowledgement also goes to the presenters and facilitators, Clothilde Bullen, Sarah Henneveld and Liz Beresford, as well as the ECU staff volunteers who supported the event.

The program commenced with an Acknowledgement of Country delivered by Dr Fiona Navin, Director of Access and Equity at ECU, followed by an address from EPHEA President Nicola Cull, who joined online to share a national perspective and updates on EPHEA's broader priorities and activities.

As WA Chapter Convenor, Nurul Huda Sanny Yap welcomed members and provided updates on EPHEA's national activities and opportunities for engagement. This included promoting the 2026 EPHEA Conference, upcoming professional learning opportunities, institutional membership benefits and ways for members to contribute to the Association, including hosting future events. The presentation also reinforced the value of EPHEA as a community that recognises the meaningful work of equity practitioners, supports peer learning and collaboration, and strengthens collective advocacy for equity in higher education.

The event explored the cultural narrative at the heart of ECU's new City Campus, centring Noongar knowledge systems and the interconnected stories of place, identity, relationships and shared knowledge. The program featured an introduction to cultural narratives and the Life Layers framework, followed by Liz Beresford's presentation on ***Life Layers in Transition***. Participants then engaged in a facilitated self-reflection and networking activity exploring reciprocity, connection and belonging.

The session encouraged participants to consider how cultural narratives and Indigenous knowledge systems can inform their leadership identities, student transition initiatives and equity practice, while highlighting the importance of culturally responsive and inclusive higher education environments.

Participant feedback and future priorities

Participant feedback was very positive, highlighting the value of ECU's Cultural Narrative Framework, its practical applications and the interactive activities, particularly the use of takeaway persona cards to encourage reflection and meaningful conversations. Participants also valued the opportunity to connect with colleagues across the sector and expressed interest in future events that showcase equity initiatives, share best practice and foster cross-institutional collaboration.

Looking ahead, the WA Chapter will continue to provide opportunities for professional learning, networking and knowledge-sharing, strengthening connections across the five WA universities and advancing equity and inclusion in higher education.