

# CANBERRA REGION

## TOURISM CONFERENCE

*Connecting and looking ahead* | Mon 6 June 2022



# PROGRAM

Monday 6 June 2022

0830 **Conference registration** / arrival tea and coffee

0900 - 1030 **Welcome**

**Cam Sullings**  
Emcee

**Tyronne Bell**  
Owner, Thunderstone Aboriginal  
Cultural Services Pty Ltd

**Opening address**

**Andrew Barr, MLA**  
ACT Chief Minister

**Road to recovery**

Hear from Tourism Australia's Managing Director on future opportunities and trends for travel, as well as Tourism Australia's strategies for the year ahead and beyond, as international tourism to Australia rebuilds.

**Phillipa Harrison**  
Managing Director, Tourism Australia

**Australia's tourism future**

Hear from Austrade's General Manager, Visitor Economy & Client Programs, Samantha Palmer, on key insights, trends and opportunities for tourism growth.

**Samantha Palmer**  
General Manager Visitor Economy  
& Client Programs, Austrade

1030-1100 **Networking break** / morning tea

1100-1245 **Adapt: innovating in rapidly changing times**

Organisations should focus on improving their ability to adapt to anything. How can your business or team become more adaptable in order to succeed in rapidly changing environments?

**Gus Balbontin**  
Adventurer and Alternative Futurist

**What Australians think: consumer trends and insights**

Hear from Pollinate's Managing Director on Australians' attitudes towards society, the environment and the economy taken from Pollinate's Pulse of the Nation and VisitCanberra research.

**Garrett Tyler-Parker**  
Managing Director Canberra,  
Pollinate

1245-1345 **Networking break** / lunch

1345-1530 **Reaching today's traveller**

How to reach today's traveller through digital presence and engagement.

**Jeremy Jauncey**  
Founder, Beautiful Destinations

**Creating exceptional experiences for your high value visitors**

Hear from the Directors of Tourism eSchool, Paige Rowett and Rebecca White, on how to create exceptional experiences and deliver genuine hospitality that is memorable and drives advocacy.

**Paige Rowett & Rebecca White**  
Directors, Tourism eSchool

**Collaborating for future success**

Collaboration is vital for Canberra's future success in a very competitive tourism landscape. In this panel discussion, hear different perspectives on what collaboration means and first-hand examples of collaborating for success.

**Amelia Bidgood**  
Owner, Eat Canberra

**Karen Fitzgerald**  
General Manager Experiences,  
Tourism Australia

**Russell Jackson**  
Executive Manager of Business and  
Marketing, National Zoo & Aquarium  
and Jamala Wildlife Lodge

**Sean Haylan**  
General Manager, Destination  
Southern New South Wales

1530-1600 **Networking break** / afternoon tea

1600-1700 **Towards 2030**

As we kick-start development of a new Tourism Strategy for the ACT, this interactive session facilitated by VisitCanberra will generate initial discussion on how we want our tourism sector to be transformed and defined by the year 2030, and how the collective efforts of industry and government can help us get there.

**Jonathan Kobus**  
Executive Branch Manager,  
VisitCanberra

**Closing remarks**

1700 -1800 **Networking drinks and canapes**



# PRESENTERS



## Cam Sullings

### Emcee

Cam Sullings is a long-time radio, television and online presenter in Canberra.

He has been behind the mic, in front of a lens or presenting on stage for almost 30 years. Cam hosts many of Canberra's top corporate events, gala evenings, awards nights and community gatherings. He is the on-screen presenter and ground announcer at Canberra Raiders home matches.

Through the day Cam manages his business, combining his presenting roles with public speaking tuition. He shows CEO's and executives how to speak with impact.



## Andrew Barr

### ACT Chief Minister

Andrew Barr has led a positive agenda for Canberra since being elected ACT Chief Minister in 2014. He has improved the lives of Canberrans through major changes to the ACT's tax system, leading the nation on climate action, reaching 100% renewable electricity and making Canberra the most LGBTIQ-friendly city in Australia.

He is Australia's longest-serving Tourism Minister, leading significant growth in tourism and business travel to Canberra, particularly by bringing major aviation partners to the ACT for the first time.

Strong and decisive leadership by Andrew and his team has steered the ACT through the health crisis and economic impact of the global pandemic. The ACT has proved resilient over the past two years especially, delivering one of the best health responses in the world.



## Tyronne Bell

### Owner, Thunderstone Aboriginal Cultural Services Pty Ltd

Tyronne Bell is the youngest of seven children and grew up in Yass, learning traditional culture from his father, Don Bell (senior). Challenging early experiences helped shape his lifelong passion for the advancement of Aboriginal issues. Tyronne has become a strong advocate for the recognition of Aboriginal culture and language, in particular, the culture and language of the Ngunawal people.

Tyronne has worked as a ranger in ACT Parks and Conservation and spent ten years in the public service, mainly in the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio. In 2013, Tyronne started his own business, Thunderstone Aboriginal Cultural and Land Management Services to educate the wider community about the local history and culture of the Canberra region and its traditional custodians the Ngunawal people.



## Phillipa Harrison

### Managing Director, Tourism Australia

As the Managing Director of the nation's global tourism marketing agency, Ms Phillipa Harrison is responsible for driving Tourism Australia's strategies to create sustainable demand for Australia's tourism experiences internationally; and working with the tourism industry to achieve its Tourism 2020 strategy goals of growing overnight visitor spend to more than \$115 billion annually.

Ms Harrison and her team at Tourism Australia, in partnership with industry, have sought to drive the contribution from international visitors to the Tourism 2020 goal, with spending by international visitors reaching a record \$44 billion in 2018. Prior to joining Tourism Australia in 2017, Ms Harrison spent six years working for Hamilton Island Enterprises and before that held a variety of senior sales, marketing and product roles at Viator Systems (Sydney), Base Group (Sydney), STA Travel (London), Contiki Holidays (London), and Trailfinders (London).



## Samantha Palmer

### General Manager Visitor Economy & Client Programs, Austrade

Samantha Palmer is the General Manager of Austrade's Visitor Economy and Client Programs Division. She leads the nation's tourism and broader visitor economy policy and programs. She also oversees strategic reforms to Austrade's client-centred grants schemes including the Export Market Development Grant program.

Samantha brings 20-plus years of diverse experience in senior executive service roles and is a National Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA). She was one of the 2013 Australian Financial Review/Westpac 100 Women of Influence, and the 2013 Australian Human Resource Institute Diversity Champion of the Year (HR).



## Gus Balbontin

### Adventurer and Alternative Futurist

Born and bred in wild Patagonia, Gus Balbontin never allowed his small town and humble beginnings get in the way of his big dreams. A healthy disrespect for authority and a severe case of fomo (fear of missing out) landed him in Australia at the young age of 17.

By the age of 22 he had dropped out of uni, hitchhiked South America, set up his first business and landed his dream job at Lonely Planet. Fast forward a few more years and he was leading the company globally, working with companies such as Google X, Nokia and Amazon on the latest technology, creative cultures and high performing teams. Seeking a change from corporate life, he hung up his boots as the Executive Director and CTO of Lonely Planet and decided to move back to his entrepreneurial roots, becoming an investor, founder and mentor across the start-up ecosystem in Melbourne.



## Garrett Tyler-Parker

### Managing Director Canberra, Pollinate

Garrett is the Canberra Managing Director of Pollinate, and is a market and social researcher. Garrett specialises in strategic research and consulting. Leading the Canberra office, he builds on his commercial-focused experience and the interrelation with government and governing bodies to ensure results are insight driven and actionable.

With experience working in research across Canberra, Sydney and Bangkok and previous experience working in the Parliament House Federal Press Gallery, Garrett brings a well-rounded, real-world perspective to research, taking into account client, category, human behaviour and systems thinking. Garrett is also a guest lecturer at ANU on Market Research and is currently undertaking a PhD at the ANU Research School of Management.

# PRESENTERS



**Jeremy Jauncey**  
Founder, Beautiful Destinations

Jeremy is a serial entrepreneur, investor, and advisor with a passion for travel, health & sustainability. He is the Founder & CEO of Beautiful Destinations, an award-winning strategy & creative agency for the travel industry. FAST COMPANY voted Beautiful Destinations one of the most innovative companies in the world and over 40 million people follow on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Tiktok and Weibo. The Financial Times called him the 'world's most influential traveler' and he has given keynote speeches for the United Nations World Tourism Organization, the World Travel & Tourism Council, Hilton, Marriott, Rosewood, Mandarin Oriental and many more leaders in travel.



**Paige Rowett & Rebecca White**  
Directors, Tourism eSchool

Tourism eSchool are a micro tourism consultancy who has a passion for working with tourism businesses and destinations to support them to grow sustainable visitor economies and tourism businesses.

Over the last 10 years they have mentored thousands of tourism businesses, local government and destination marketers around Australia in best practice experience development via their tailored mentoring programs, speaking and workshops, including the VisitCanberra Tourism Reboot program.



**Karen Fitzgerald**  
General Manager Experiences, Tourism Australia

An accomplished practitioner with over 30 years' experience in the Australian tourism industry, Karen Fitzgerald's career has spanned a range of senior managerial and influential roles with tourism businesses, state/regional/local and national tourism organisations, visitor information centres and tourism industry councils. From the Northern Territory to South East Queensland and now Tasmania, Karen believes she has the best job in Australia!

Karen leads Tourism Australia's Signature Experiences of Australia program, which is designed to inspire travellers from around the world to visit Australia by highlighting special interest sectors that align to their passion points. The Program, which originally began as a 3 year pilot program but has now been running for 10 years, includes 8 marketing collectives and represents 190+ businesses offering a qualified inventory of over 700 tourism experiences that have been carefully designed to capture the imagination of consumers around the world.



**Russell Jackson**  
Executive Manager of Business and Marketing, National Zoo & Aquarium and Jamala Wildlife Lodge

Russell Jackson is the Executive Manager of Business and Marketing at Canberra's National Zoo & Aquarium and Jamala Wildlife Lodge - one of the most highly regarded globally unique luxury zoo hotels. Russell has been involved with the zoo for over 13 years and has played a crucial role in the development, marketing and operations of both facilities.

With a background in animal management, he began his zoo career as a casual zookeeper before progressing to the senior management team and utilising his other skills and experience in marketing, IT and business analysis. Russell currently manages, oversees and contributes to a large variety of areas across the National Zoo & Aquarium and Jamala Wildlife Lodge, including a focus on guest and visitor experience and destination marketing.



**Amelia Bidgood**  
Owner, Eat Canberra

Amelia Bidgood is the Founder and Managing Director of Eat Canberra Food Tours, Editor and Managing Director of popular online food publication, Eat Canberra. She's passionate about showcasing Canberra's food scene and has taken thousands of locals, interstate and international visitors on food tours in Canberra. She has grown Eat Canberra to have a social media audience of more than 36,000 food and travel lovers.

Amelia is a qualified journalist and communications professional with more than 10 years experience working in communications and more than 8 years experience working with and in the tourism and hospitality industry. She's a freelance food writer, presenter, content creator, and runs a boutique communications business. Amelia is obsessed with all things food and travel and has travelled to 26 countries. She also enjoys being active and is passionate about increasing awareness for mental health.



**Sean Haylan**  
General Manager, Destination Southern New South Wales

Sean Haylan is the General manager of Destination Southern NSW and a board member of Regional Development Australia Southern Inland. His team at DSNSW is tasked with helping grow the regional visitor economy in the patch from the Hilltops and Upper Lachlan shires, down through the Snowy Valleys and Alpine region to the coast of the Eurobodalla and Sapphire coast regions. His career has been focussed on building the tourism industry through collaboration and partnerships and his tours of duty in the industry includes time served on the front line as a tourism and economic develop manager in Yass Valley, Visitor services manager in Wollongong, General Manager of the Illawarra Fly Treetop Adventure and a stint in the sun on Hayman Island.



**Jonathan Kobus**  
Executive Branch Manager, VisitCanberra

Jonathan Kobus is the Executive Branch Manager, of VisitCanberra. VisitCanberra leads the Canberra and region tourism industry to create and implement a range of marketing and development programs that aim to increase the economic return from domestic and international visitation. Prior to joining VisitCanberra, Jonathan was the Senior Manager, for trade and investment programs in the ACT Government promoting Canberra as place to invest and do business as well as connecting Canberra businesses with opportunities in international markets. Prior to that, Jonathan led the development of the ACT Government's 2020 Tourism Strategy as well as the ACT Government's International Engagement Strategy.

Jonathan has more than 15 years experience in the tourism industry across private sector and government and was recognised by the ACT tourism industry with the Outstanding Contribution by an Individual Award at the 2015 Canberra Region Tourism Awards.