

SACOSS Energy, Water and Telco Conference 2020 – Speaker Bios

Saunoamaali'i Karanina Sumeo, Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner at the New Zealand Human Rights Commission



Saunoamaali'i Karanina Sumeo is the Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner at the New Zealand Human Rights Commission following working as a Principal Practice Advisor (Pacific) at Oranga Tamariki, working to improve outcomes for Pacific children and families. She is of Samoan descent, originally from the village of Vailima, Upolu, Samoa and is a mother to three children. Saunoamaali'i has worked as a public advisor, consultant, and social worker, advocating for the rights and interests of children, youth, women, Rainbow, and Pacific communities.

Her previous experience within the public sector includes roles with the Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Tertiary Education Commission, and the Auckland District Health Board. Her professional and academic background has involved advocating for the promotion of economic development, social, and employment interests of marginalised groups particularly women, Pacific people, learners and young people.

Saunoamaali'i holds qualifications in science, social work, and social policy including a PhD in public policy from the Auckland University of Technology

Emma Dawson, Executive Director, Per Capita



Emma Dawson is Executive Director of public policy think tank Per Capita. She has worked as a researcher at Monash University and the University of Melbourne; in policy and public affairs for SBS and Telstra; and as a senior policy adviser in the Rudd and Gillard Governments.

Emma has published reports, articles and opinion pieces on a wide range of public policy issues. She is a regular contributor to Guardian Australia and The Australian Financial Review, is a frequent guest on various ABC radio programs nationally, and an occasional panellist on The Drum on ABC TV. She appears regularly as an expert witness before parliamentary inquiries and often speaks at public events and conferences in Australia and internationally.

Emma is the co-author of Per Capita's landmark report **Measure for Measure: Gender Equality in Australia**, and co-editor, with Professor Janet McCalman, of the upcoming collection of essays **What happens next? Reconstructing Australia after COVID-19**, to be published by Melbourne University Press in September 2020.

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Jess Perrin, Head of Social Innovation and Digital Inclusion, Infoxchange



Jess leads Infoxchange’s social impact programs to ensure no-one is left behind in today’s digital world. With a focus on inclusion by design in digital, Jess oversees Ask Izzy, the award winning mobile website that connects thousands of people in need to housing, meals, support and counselling, as well as Infoxchange’s digital inclusion initiatives such as Digital Springboard in partnership with Google. With a formidable bunch of partners, she leads the team to tackle some of Australia’s most pressing social challenges through the smart and creative use of technology.

Prior to joining Infoxchange, Jess was Head of Global Programs at the Thomson Reuters Foundation in London where she led the Foundation’s global pro bono program, TrustLaw, and the Trust Conference human rights forum.

Her career has focused on building partnerships to support and scale innovative social justice projects with organisations such as CARE Australia, Amnesty International and UNICEF. She has held a number of Board positions with UK-based charities and co-founded Not My Style, an app that shows how much fashion brands share about how they treat the women and men who make their clothes.

She holds a Masters in International Communications and Development from the City University of London, received a scholarship to the McKinsey Executive Leadership Program in 2019 and in 2015 was a finalist for the UK Women of the Future Awards.

Alison Pennington, Senior Economist, Centre for Future Work



Alison Pennington is Senior Economist at the Centre for Future Work, with The Australia Institute. She conducts research on economic issues facing working people including the evolution of collective bargaining, future of jobs, skills and training, and the role of government.

Alison has held previous roles in public finance, public sector unions, and music teaching. She considers economics a powerful tool for reinvigorating popular consciousness about how society is organised, and the discipline a natural home for building a vision of a more democratic and meaningful life for everyday people. @ak_pennington

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Dr Cassandra Goldie, CEO, ACOSS



Cassandra Goldie has been CEO of ACOSS since July 2010. With public policy expertise in economic and social issues, civil society, social justice and human rights, Cassandra has represented the interests of people who are disadvantaged, and civil society generally, in major national and international processes as well as in grassroots communities.

Prior to joining ACOSS, Cassandra held senior roles in both the NFP and public sectors, including with the Australian Human Rights Commission, Darwin Community Legal Service and as Senior Executive with Legal Aid in Western Australia.

Cassandra has a PhD from the University of New South Wales and a Masters of Law from University College London, and is an Adjunct Professor with the Law Faculty at the University of New South Wales. She is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She serves on the Advisory Committee for the Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law, the UNSW Law Advisory Committee, the Australian Climate Roundtable, the Pinnacle Foundation Board and the Energy Charter Independent Accountability Panel. She is a member of Chief Executive Women.

Teresa Corbin, CEO, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network



Teresa Corbin is a co-founder and now CEO of ACCAN, Australia's peak body for communications consumers. She has many years of experience working in telecommunications policy both in Australia and internationally. Teresa is a director on the Board of the International Telecommunications Users Group (INTUG).

In Australia she currently sits on several bodies including the ACMA Consumer Consultative Forum and she chairs Standards Australia's Consumer Policy Committee. In 2015, she was awarded the Charles Todd Medal by the Telecommunications Society for having made an outstanding contribution in recent years. Teresa holds a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Linguistics from La Trobe University and is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

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Robert Morsillo, Digital Inclusion Senior Specialist, Telstra



Robert started talking to Telstra in 1988 as a consumer representative, working in the community sector, and pushing for improvements to the access and affordability of the telephone. In 1995 he was invited to join Telstra to continue some of that work. In 2002 he assisted Telstra in putting together its Access for Everyone programs that seek to assist all Australians to have a basic communications service no matter what their circumstances. In 2011 Telstra formed its Chief Sustainability Office, with a prime focus on digital inclusion, and Robert is now a Senior Specialist in that team. He is a director at Infoxchange and a member of the governing Council of the University of Divinity. From 2013–20 he was an Adjunct Associate Professor at Swinburne University. Robert has a background and formal qualifications in computer science, theology, community development, public policy and communications. He is particularly interested in the role of technology in encouraging a sense of connectedness, and in encouraging user innovation within the communications industry, on which he has published a number of journal articles.

Fun fact: Robert has a split personality, half-Czech and half-Italian, from which he draws his intellectual and culinary predilections.

Mel Homes-Allen, Customer Advocacy Program Lead, Origin



Mel Homes-Allen is the Customer Advocacy Program Lead at Origin and her role is all about ensuring vulnerable customers receive the support they need, so they can continue to turn on their lights and get back on track.

With a background in social work, Mel always wanted to make a positive impact in the community. For over 18 years, she has been part of the Origin team, promoting financial inclusion and resilience and providing support for disadvantaged people.