

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**1 November 2023**

### **AAGE Director Appointments and Transition of Chair**

Following the recent Annual General Meeting, the Board of Directors of the Australian Association of Graduate Employers (AAGE) would like to update the AAGE membership on changes to the Board. These include the departure of Cheryl Koe who has stepped down at the end of her Director term, the appointment of Kelly Pfeffer as Director and the transition of the Chair role to Robert Blaze.

Cheryl Koe has served on the AAGE Board since November 2020, during which time Cheryl has contributed to the development of the new strategy and supporting the AAGE through a period of significant change. The Board thanks Cheryl for her service to the Board, the AAGE and the industry.

With Cheryl's departure, Kelly Pfeffer was appointed as a Director during 2023 AGM. The Board is thrilled to welcome Kelly onto the Board given the depth of both industry and governance experience she brings.

In addition to this Director appointment, Thomasin Schmidt who has served as the Chair of the AAGE Board from October 2020 has reached the end of her term as Chair so the Board has voted Robert Blaze as the new Chair of the AAGE Board of Directors. "I am both honoured and privileged to have been able to serve as Chair of the AAGE for the past three years and am proud of what the Board and the AAGE team has achieved together over this time. The Board is delighted to appoint Robert Blaze to the role of Chair and is confident that we will continue to progress on our strategic journey under his leadership" said Ms Schmidt, ex-Chair of the AAGE Board. Incoming Chair of the Board Mr Blaze said, "I am delighted to have been appointed to Chair of the Board of Directors and thank Thomasin for her unwavering leadership and devotion in leading the AAGE Board in a time of unprecedented change and strategic focus. The AAGE has been a huge part of my professional life for several years and I am extremely excited at the direction the organisation is heading. I am fully committed to assisting the AAGE team, Board and Committee in driving the organisation's strategic direction and will continue the amazing work that that has already commenced in this space."

#### **Kelly Pfeffer** **Graduate Talent Lead, Suncorp**

Kelly is located in Brisbane and is the Graduate Talent Lead at Suncorp, specialising in early careers talent programs for 15+ years in both private and public sector organisations. This includes working in industries such as Finance, Insurance, Technology, Engineering and Consulting with programs operating across Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada. Prior to this, Kelly worked in a number of human resource related roles including policy, performance management, diversity and learning and development. Kelly has been an AAGE member since 2006 and has previously volunteered on the Committee and Board from 2011 to 2019.

With these appointments, the AAGE Board will be:

- Rob Blaze, Member Director and Chair
- Ann Brinkamp, Member Director
- Joanne Dean, Member Director

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- Kelly Pfeffer, Member Director
- Thomasin Schmidt, Member Director
- Fulvio Barbuio, Co-opted Director
- Amita Laroia, Co-opted Director.

Please contact [info@aage.com.au](mailto:info@aage.com.au) for further information.