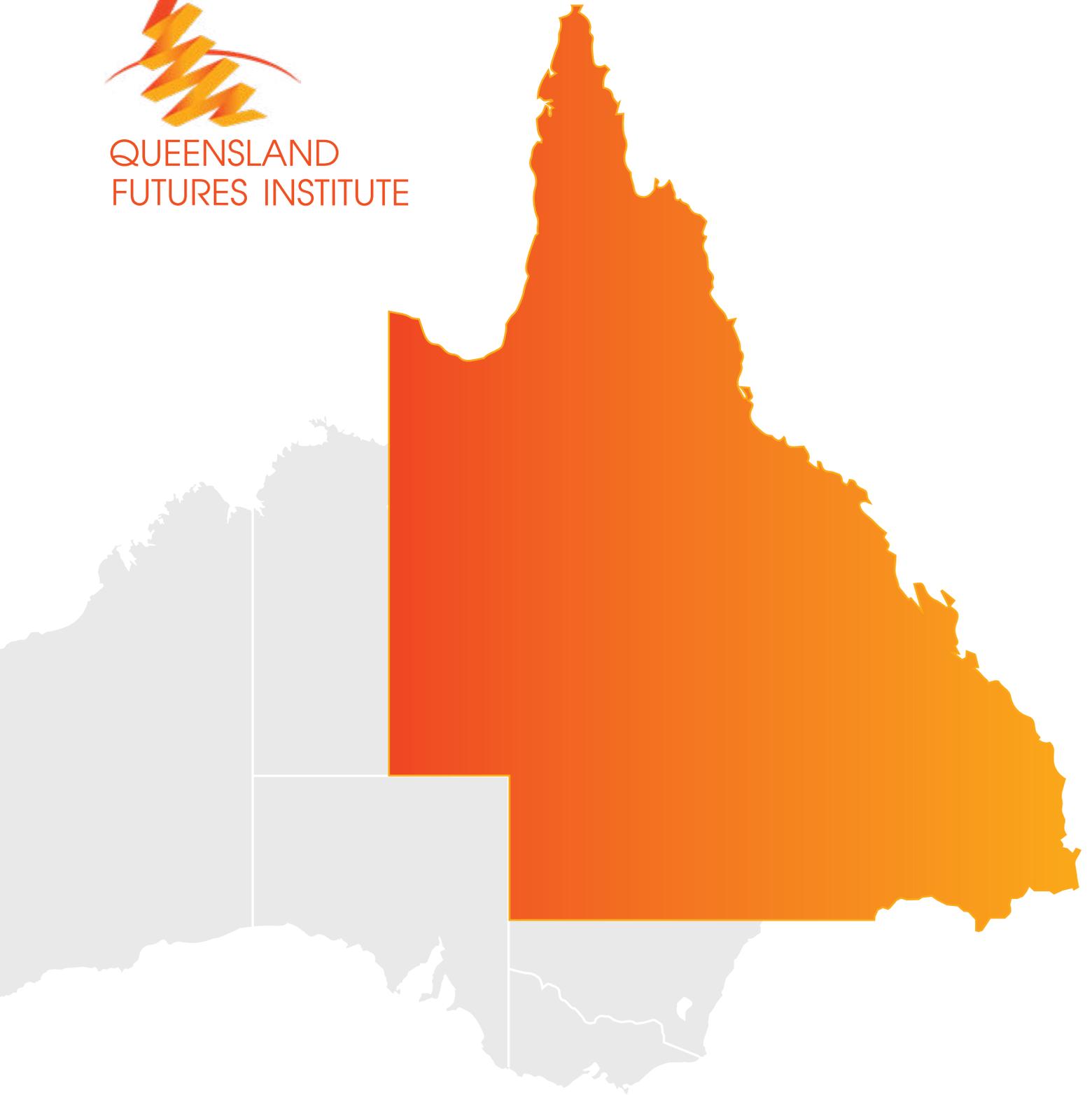




QUEENSLAND
FUTURES INSTITUTE



Annual Leaders Survey

Advancing Queensland's Prosperity – Initiatives for 2023

Introducing the QFI's Annual Leaders Survey

The **Queensland Futures Institute (QFI)** is a unique and powerful collective of Queensland's most influential organisations. Our members are prominent, forward-looking organisations dedicated to advancing State-wide economic prosperity and social well-being.

Each year the QFI publishes an Annual Leaders Survey, which harnesses the latest ideas, proposals, and initiatives from the leaders of our member organisations to further Queensland's growth. It is an important part of our suite of expert thought-leadership and innovative future focused forums.

Since its inception, the Survey has become a valuable resource to all those with an interest in Queensland's future. It is launched at our Annual Leaders Dialogue held at Queensland's Parliament House toward the end of each calendar year, attended by many of Queensland's government leaders and a significant cross section of Queensland's senior academic, business, industry and charity representatives.

We thank our member organisations for their contributions and commend their thoughts and initiatives as a compelling read and valuable compass to further build Queensland as the greatest State in Australia.



Steve Greenwood

Chief Executive Officer,
Queensland Futures Institute



Julieanne Alroe

President,
Queensland Futures Institute

Strategic Foundations to Grow Queensland's New Economy



Developing a shared narrative for Queensland's future economy



Playing to Queensland's strengths



Equipping Queensland with skills for the future



Managing environmental and social barriers to growth



Supporting inclusive growth in Queensland's regions

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Vice-Chancellor and President,
The University of Queensland



Paul Arnold
Chief Executive Officer,
Urban Utilities

Twelve months ago, in November 2021, South East Queensland was in the voluntary conservation stage of active drought response, with the drinking water capacity of the South East Queensland Water Grid sitting at a worryingly low 55%.

Just three months later, our region was stricken by days of record-breaking rainfall, which broke riverbanks, flooded houses and infrastructure, and tragically claimed lives. It also saw soil and debris flow into Seqwater's Mt Crosby Water Treatment Plants, which temporarily forced them offline, once again putting our drinking water supplies at risk.

Our increasingly variable climate, together with demands of a rapidly growing population, highlight the importance of having a diverse mix of water sources to meet the needs of water users well into the future, whatever the weather.

As Queensland's largest water utility, Urban Utilities is planning well ahead to ensure water security for our region and we're keen to help everyone – particularly residents and businesses within our service territory – understand what this involves.

In August this year, we were proud to launch our water leadership plan, titled *Our Water Way*, which details the future we're shaping, the challenges we're all facing, and the steps we're taking to fulfil our valued role of enhancing the liveability of our communities.

As part of our plan, we're taking a diversified approach to creating water for the future. This includes increasing our water reuse for industry,

agriculture and irrigation, which will ease pressure on our precious drinking water supplies. We're also progressively managing, re-using and recycling water closer to where it's used and collected. This is an integral part of our plan to reshape the water cycle from the linear 'catchment-to-sea model' of water use, to a circular model that manages water far more sustainably.

And with Brisbane to host the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic games, we're already exploring opportunities to design and build innovative and sustainable water and wastewater infrastructure for key Olympic and Paralympic precincts that will form part of our network.

Our 'all options' approach also embraces rainfall-independent supplies, like purified recycled water and desalination. Our region already has access to climate-independent infrastructure built during the Millennium Drought – namely the Gold Coast Desalination Plant and the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme – and it makes sense to use this to support the region's water security.

Importantly, our plan works in concert with Seqwater's Water Security Program for the region, and we will continue to work closely with them – as well as our shareholders and peak industry bodies – to care for the water we have today while creating the water we need for the future.



Professor Helen Bartlett
Vice-Chancellor and President,
University of the Sunshine Coast

Queensland has weathered the Covid-19 pandemic better than most jurisdictions in Australia and as a result our economy has performed strongly during 2022. However, this strong recovery is at risk as we head into 2023 due to a wide range of domestic and international headwinds, not least high inflation, labour and skills shortages, energy prices and the impacts of climate change. Addressing these risks will require better collaboration and partnerships between government, industry and the community.

As the Vice-Chancellor of a regional university, I see every day the heightened impacts these issues have on regional communities who must compete harder for investment, who struggle with attracting and retaining people with the right skills, and in many cases who can't accommodate unprecedented population growth.

Conversely of course, these challenges provide opportunities to do things better, particularly for regional communities. This includes the need for governments, industry and cornerstone regional institutions like universities to more strategically partner on areas of mutual interest if we are going to deliver faster and better solutions. We know for example that seven out of ten graduates who study at regional universities stay in the regions to work and contribute to their communities' social and economic prosperity. Education, training and infrastructure policy and funding settings need to recognise this important fact and appreciate that successfully and sustainably delivering quality education and training in regional locations requires a different approach to the cities, which often comes with higher costs.

For our part, education and training institutions need to be more agile and responsive to the changing nature of learning and work, much of which driven by technology. For example, increasing the investment in, and improving national recognition of, micro-credentials will be a critical enabler to supporting future skills and driving a life-long learning mindset. Universities also need to develop closer relationships with industry so we can continue to produce the right type of graduates and keep supporting their skill development as they progress or change their careers. All levels of government can assist by playing a stronger role in bringing industry and education institutions together in a way that aligns with local, state and national interests.

I am encouraged by the opportunity that a new Federal Government brings to this dynamic, including their focus on reforming key sectors like education and training. Via the University Accord process, our sector will have many opportunities during 2023 to discuss what a future higher education teaching, research and funding model could look like.

When you combine this with Federal and Queensland government reviews of VET and the Employment White Paper process, 2023 has the potential to be a once in a generation opportunity to redesign the way Australia trains and upskills our workforce. An aligned 'Team Queensland' approach across government and industry will be important to ensure 2023 delivers the right outcomes for our State, particularly our regions. I am excited about the year ahead and look forward to UniSC playing its part in these important discussions.



Professor Scott Bell

Chief Executive Officer,
Translational Research Institute

Gaining an edge in health and medical research

In 2022, the Queensland Government released the Advance Queensland “Innovation for a future economy” 2022-2023 Roadmap. Of the six key priorities, one resonates strongly with the health and medical research community: “Queensland’s world-class research and collaborations are translated into creating commercialisation opportunities” and within this priority two objectives of i) supporting the growth of university research income and ii) improving research-business collaboration and key drivers for health and medical research (HMR) translation.

So what is the current state of play and how competitive is Queensland? Queensland is the home of 20% of the Australian population and contributes to 19% of the national GDP. Yet Queensland receives <14% of National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funding and <13% of Medical Research Futures Fund (MRRF) funding – these two major streams of funding for the field. By comparison, Queensland performs relatively well for non-medical research through the Australian Research Council (ARC) securing 20% of the funding pool available. In a recent analysis undertaken by Queensland’s Advanced Health Research Translation Centre, Health Translation Queensland (HTQ), it has been estimated that the gap in funding from NHMRC and MRFF coming to Queensland equates to a loss of ~\$65 million per annum and the loss of 600-700 highly skilled workers ([Roadmap for Strengthening Health Research and Translation in Queensland](#)).

The reputation of components of the HMR sector are rated amongst the strongest internationally exemplified by the R&D of the human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine by Prof Ian Fraser’s team. We need to do better to attract and retain the best HMR researchers to, and stop the drain of the next generation of translational researchers out of the state.

There are many factors thought to contribute to the relative under-performance in the HMR sector. It is thought the quantity rather than quality is a factor. Successful applications are dominated by a few universities/Medical Research Institutes (MRIs) suggesting limited depth in the sector and Queensland has fewer clinician researchers adjusted for population

than in NSW and Victoria. A single HMR precinct (Parkville) in Victoria has three tertiary hospitals, the University of Melbourne and numerous independent and university-affiliated MRIs – the close proximity of these partners supports deeper linkage between clinicians (and their patients) with the centres of research excellence. Recent funding support in Victoria has enabled the precincts to be strengthened by industry partners such as CSL, Moderna, etc.

Whilst there are several emerging HMR precincts (Herston Health, Boggo Road Bioeconomy and the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precincts), the links between the clinic and the bench remain underdeveloped. There is great potential, yet work is required to build stronger partnerships between health providers, research organisations and policymakers to ensure the pipeline of bench discoveries is strong and able to be efficiently translated to better health outcomes. The recent announcements of the Queensland Government’s funding support for the Translational Manufacturing Facility at TRI (TM@TRI) and the Herston Biofabrication Institute (HBI) collaboration with Stryker are excellent examples of the leverage these precincts can bring supporting stronger connections between the bench, bedside and business (B2B2B).

In their recently launched report, HTQ sets out three priority areas:

1. Strengthen the ecosystem;
2. Build workforce capability and capacity;
3. Optimise funding.

HTQ has proposed several approaches to grow Queensland’s pipeline of basic and clinician researchers; to maximise collaboration within Queensland’s health precincts; and to increase investment in securing philanthropic funds. HTQ also identified the importance of improving Queensland’s representation on national funding decision-making bodies and emphasises the importance of a collaborative approach and effort rather than competing amongst the HMR community in Queensland.



Mary Campbell
Chief Executive Officer,
TAFE Queensland

Accelerating investment and growth opportunities across Queensland is pivotal to the future of the state and can only be achieved through an increase in skilled labour supply. A key to filling this supply is keeping ahead of changes to industry sectors in Queensland as growth and transformation occurs and influences jobs and the skills required to perform them. With relevant skills training, industries are able to fill labour shortages and produce more output, providing growth for the Queensland economy.

Collaboration with government, industry and all tiers of educational institutes can deliver training to meet the future needs of the Queensland economy and, in the process, support the Queensland Government's ability to deliver on its investments, particularly in sectors and job clusters that are aligned with economic growth areas.

Skills training is vital – whether it be leading the 'charge' for battery electric vehicles training in Australia by working to integrate clean energy technologies into the range of automotive and electrical qualifications or shaping Queensland's hydrogen industry by delivering training to upskill and reskill the workforce to ensure the safe production, handling and use of hydrogen across various applications.

Every year TAFE Queensland works closely with both Commonwealth and State Governments, industries and communities to develop and deliver new training for priority industries to ensure Queenslanders are ready for the jobs of the future. In addition to energy/renewables, this work is spanning a number of industry sectors including manufacturing, agribusiness, screen and digital.

As a public sector agency, TAFE Queensland also has a role in providing substantial services to the public and in supporting local communities. The public charter that TAFE Queensland fulfils is extensive – including the breadth of education and training offered, even when there may be low demand, and the extensive locations of campuses across the state that provide training and support services into regional and remote communities. This charter is complemented by strong, longstanding industry partnerships, engagement with rural and remote communities and reaching out to Queensland's more marginal student cohorts.

Skills development has a critical role in sustaining and growing Queensland's future prosperity and is a key tenant of the Queensland Government Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032 – a blueprint to strengthen Queensland's current and future workforce. With local training solutions being pivotal into the future, the reach of Queensland's public training providers will ensure the provision of the skills needed to enrich local communities, support local industries and strengthen local economies.



Andrew Chesterman
Chief Executive Officer,
Redland City Council

The Queensland Style-guide

As a father to a 19 year old son with an intellectual disability and no speech, I often reflect on the role of all levels of government and how they 'speak to' my son and how they understand and respond to his needs. I am also curious as to why the businesses who want him as their customer, sometimes make interacting with them so difficult.

So in the case of my son, and others without a voice, in this decade of ideas, planning, excitement and major projects, the opportunity ahead is that of creating a Queensland that takes *everyone on the journey*.

What would Queensland look like if it capitalised on its already international brand of lifestyle and liveability, if it was truly known for its friendliness and inclusiveness?

One symbol that we are a *State for all* is to use common, and universal, forms of communication when the message is for us all to consume.

Spend just part of your day looking at signs and instructions competing for your attention and then wonder - what if you couldn't read? What if you were from a non-English speaking country? What if you were functionally illiterate, as almost half of the Australian population is? That's the hidden statistic that reveals the millions who find it difficult to read a map, follow a recipe, and have reading and writing skills that are inadequate to everyday needs.

Almost all written, instructional, and way-finding signs can be simplified by using symbols.

Where symbols don't work, simplifying language is an acquired skill - writing for the same meaning, with less words, is something most organisations could do well to learn.

So what about a Queensland Communication Style-guide? Let everyone keep their logos and company brands - but lets just settle on the signs, symbols and language we use to explain common content. And as we move forward, use available technology to provide progressive levels of information - dependent on the needs (and literacy levels) of the user.

My son talks with his hands, his phone, his watch and iPad. He reads simple language and uses his technology to translate the complex. I'd love to see Queensland, by-design and by default, take his needs, and others like him, into account in the decade ahead to make the legacy we talk so much about, an impact for all people for the rest of their lives.



Councillor Jack Dempsey

Mayor,
Bundaberg Regional Council

A stronger Queensland defence investment policy

In August 2022 the Prime Minister announced the Defence Strategic Review. According to its terms of reference, the review will help prioritise the estate, infrastructure, logistics and security investments required to provide Australia with the defence force posture required by 2032.

In meeting Australia's changing security challenges, Queensland offers a number of advantages that could assist defence deliver operational responses over the next decade.

Bundaberg has been actively seeking defence investment at the Port of Bundaberg for more than a decade. Many of the factors that make Bundaberg a strategic location for defence investment, also apply to Queensland.

Some of these, that formed a part of my recent submission to the Defence Strategic Review include Queensland's ports, people, and potential.

Ports - Defence already has arrangements with various Queensland ports. While Bundaberg Port is not currently used by defence, it is Queensland's most northern port outside the Great Barrier Reef. It is also unimpeded by congestion and competition from commercial shipping, or coal and gas sectors which use ports such as Gladstone. Other Queensland ports should be strongly put forward for defence investment.

People - 3.9 % of Queenslanders have ever served in defence, compared to 2.8 % for Australia. The majority of Queensland's serving personnel live in the regions, with Townsville home to Australia's largest number (4,960) of serving personnel.

It makes sense for defence to consolidate its investment around current bases and where defence personnel (incl retired) already reside.

Queensland's regional towns would welcome defence investment and the population it would bring, while offering defence families a lifestyle without the affordability and congestion issues of the big cities.

Potential - Queensland offers defence other potential advantages. With large training bases at Townsville, Shoalwater Bay, and the Wide Bay (to name a few) the state hosts Australia's largest joint training exercise, Talisman Sabre.

Queensland has the capacity to deliver large and complex defence programs such as Land 400 phase 2 and Stage 1 of Land 159 projects. Hundreds of innovative Queensland companies and workforces are already delivering these programs, including through several established centres of excellence.

Projects such as the Inland Rail (currently under federal review) and the outer harbour feasibility being conducted for Bundaberg Port should be considered to support defence investment in Queensland.

The state's bioeconomy presents a further opportunity for defence and its training partners to secure renewable energy to power future fleets navigating off the coast of Australia, and beyond.

While it's hard for any jurisdiction to push a case for defence for investment, Queensland is better positioned than other states. We need a stronger state policy push for defence investment in Queensland.



Shayne Elliott
Chief Executive Officer,
ANZ

Queensland is growing faster than any other Australian state or territory¹ and that growth brings significant opportunity.

In September, the Queensland Government announced its Energy and Jobs Plan that targets a 70 per cent renewable energy target by 2032. The Plan sees an estimated 100,000 jobs. These are good jobs for the regions as well as the cities and will have flow-on affects for local communities.

Some estimates we have seen show the world will need to spend about \$275 trillion on the transition to net zero emissions. That figure provides a sense of scale for this challenge, but also for the enormous opportunity for industry, governments and communities to work together and benefit.

Importantly, this opportunity does not just exist for large energy and resources companies; there are opportunities for small and medium sized businesses to be involved too. The Queensland Government is already in discussions with many of these businesses to manufacture and produce goods and services required to help build out the energy plan.

A transition of this scale can't happen overnight, so it's important for organisations like ANZ to support the plan by helping companies through the changes needed to support net zero. We need to support the economy through what will be a challenging transition, and individual companies with their own plans to reduce emissions.

ANZ is already doing this through conversations with 100 of our largest emitting business customers and our program with the Clean Energy Finance

Corporation, which helps small to medium sized businesses transition to net zero emissions through access to discounted finance for eligible energy efficient related assets.

This energy transition is not the only area in Queensland that ANZ sees enormous opportunity; the state's agricultural industry is equally compelling.

Queensland dedicates more than 80 per cent of its 173 million hectares to the agriculture industry. From beef and poultry to sugar cane, nuts and even bees, Queensland's agriculture, forestry and fisheries sector in 2023 is forecast to produce more than \$17 billion total production for the second year in a row. This constitutes almost 21% of total Australian agricultural production.

As the State continues to grow, Queensland's agricultural industry will need to grow with it and ANZ is well positioned and ready to help with finance, insights and expertise.

This is a growth opportunity beyond Queensland and Australia. The world requires more food, but importantly, food and fibre of high credential in all respects. Queensland has a reputation for clean, safe, ethically sourced and sustainable produce that competes strongly in global markets. Regional areas across the state will continue to attract significant interest and investment from within Australia and across the globe.

The future is looking very bright for the Sunshine State without even considering the many opportunities the 2032 Brisbane Olympics will provide.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (for March 2022, released September 2022) National, state and territory population.



Professor Carolyn Evans
Vice-Chancellor and President,
Griffith University

Leadership on the Current and Looming Skills Crisis

Queensland is facing both a skills shortage which is beginning to impact businesses and individuals. Whether it is a local café opening fewer days a week because they can't get staff or regional areas where it is almost impossible to attract qualified doctors, the need for employees is evident.

The National Skills Commission's 2022 update revealed there are 286 occupations with national shortages, up from 153 in 2021. They range from areas such as healthcare where years of training is required to hospitality where there is less need for substantial training.

Solving these problems in the short-term will not be easy. Eased border restrictions will help bring back in some types of workers who will help to fill some of the gap but will not solve the problem.

At this moment there is a real opportunity to focus attention on bringing into the workforce those who have been excluded. Australia does not make enough use of the talents of people with disabilities, immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, women with children, and older people. Government schemes which reduce barriers to entry to the workforce, for example by providing cheaper childcare or enabling people to earn more while receiving a pension, are a step in the right direction. Creating more ambitious programs that incentivise employers to engage with those who have been kept out of the workforce will be another critical step.

While we are appropriately looking to short-term measures to fill critical needs, we need to ensure we also keep an eye on the longer-term horizon. Universities will play a critical part in ensuring we have trained the workforce needed in healthcare, education, engineering, and IT to name but a few areas of current shortages. The Productivity Commission report tells us 53% of newly created jobs over the next five years will require higher education and 39% will require vocational education.

We need coordinated action by government, industry and educators to prepare the workforce we will need in coming years. There are currently barriers including limitations on placements for nursing and teaching students and limits on industry partnerships, which constrain the ability of universities to provide as many graduates who are ready for employment as are needed.

The pressing need for more employees creates a challenge but also an opportunity – we need to grasp the chance to work together constructively to create strong pathways to good jobs for the benefit of all Queenslanders.



Councillor Peter Flannery

Mayor,
Moreton Bay Regional Council

Council is the closest level of Government to the community, 2022 has certainly reminded us of that. The continuing impacts of the pandemic, flood clean-up bill, soaring power prices, as well as rising fuel expenses and a 14% increase in the costs of goods and materials for Council have combined to create a perfect economic storm.

And Moreton Bay is not immune... But I'm proud to say that we have also never been better prepared for the challenges ahead. And we are ready to transform the Moreton Bay Region over the next two decades into a \$40 billion economy.

We need to act now to preserve the identity, character and lifestyle of this place we all love.

As a Council we are planning for growth strategically. We are ensuring that we are getting the balance right, with a focus on Go Green - As We Grow. Meaning we will ensure that we maintain green corridors, and green space within our region, as well as maintain important wildlife habitat. In the past two years we have purchased 83 hectares of land through the Land Buy Back scheme that ensures wildlife habitat is restored, especially for species like koalas. With Moreton Bay's human population set to increase by roughly 40% over the next 20 years we are ramping up our efforts to lock away key habitat for preservation now before it's too late.

We are a large, diverse region with six established business precincts and 10 new growth areas designed for businesses of the future. One of which is Caboolture West which in the coming decades will be home to 70,000 people. Our region's population is growing, but development cannot just occur on greenfield development sites. We are also appointing

an Infill Housing Expert Panel to ensure we get the development mix right. We know that we need to do infill housing better to meet the needs of our growing population into the future, and we are looking to hear from experts on how we best achieve this.

Housing across Queensland is a critical issue as the State Government recently heard at the Housing Summit they held. Moreton Bay Regional Council is ensuring we are doing what we can to support community and social housing by reducing red tape for social and affordable housing in our region. Specifically, we will look to waive the application and infrastructure fees, as well as waive fees for council infrastructure charges for infill development that capitalises on existing infrastructure proximate to employment catchments.

For these reasons and more, I have led the call for Moreton Bay Regional Council to become a City Council. As one of the country's fastest growing regions there is a lot of change that will happen whether we like it or not.

Becoming a city is one way to harness the change already occurring. Moreton Bay is creating a new kind of city, a city that celebrates its natural assets and offers unique, local places. By creating stronger ties between the existing community centres, through green corridors and transport connections, we can develop a new kind of city. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to deliberately evolve into a city that enriches its residents and protects the surrounding environment. Through city status we will have a bigger platform to advocate for State, Federal, and private sector investment.



Professor Ian Frazer AC

Ambassador and Chair,
Translational Research Institute Foundation

Quality health services, informed by quality health research, are recognised increasingly as critical as we recover from the Covid pandemic.

Demonstrating that we have a quality health system will be important to support the recovering tourist industry, and the upcoming Brisbane Olympics, and will also ensure a work force fit for purpose, aiding Queensland's ability to recover from the recession it seems likely we are about to experience.

Fortunately, the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences has recently put together a blueprint for the future development and enhancement of our health system. The Academy's proposal envisages the application of an enhanced health knowledge base, derived from research, and will be put into practice by ensuring that the knowledge from that research drives the delivery of health care.

Health service precincts with integrated research capacity, such as can be found in our major teaching hospitals in Brisbane, but equally in facilities as diverse as Springfield Lakes and Townsville, will be leaders in instigating and in benefitting from the application of the recommendations of the AAHMS vision report, entitled "Research and innovation as core functions in transforming the health system" which is available on the Academy web site.

Translation of research into practice not only benefits the health of Queenslanders, but also their financial wellbeing. Poor health practices are no cheaper than quality health care delivery – indeed in the long run they are more expensive, as failure to avoid the consequences of chronic disease results in increased expenditure to fix rather than prevent a problem.

Eventually, good health is a partnership between the health system and the general population. A critical part of this partnership is public education in how to best use the health system. Health services are complex, and come with no "user manual".

This failing can be fixed: education in how to stay healthy is important, but education in how to use the health system when things go wrong is of equal importance. This education needs to start early and be reinforced regularly, and it also needs to be delivered as available advice rather than mandated instruction, in much the way that health care is delivered with consideration of what will be best for the disease in the context of the particular patient, and not just the disease.

We are fortunate to have a good health system already: a research based system will ensure that good becomes "world class".



Gert-Jan de Graaff
Chief Executive Officer,
Brisbane Airport Corporation

Queensland's population is growing by one person every 5 minutes and 37 seconds.

People will continue to move to the Sunshine State in the coming years but *sustainable growth* that protects our unique lifestyle can only be delivered through quality planning, a vision for the future, and a united approach across government, business and our community.

At Brisbane Airport Corporation we are planning for that sustainable future.

Every day around 60,000 people rely on the airport for holidays, to connect with loved ones, to get urgent medical treatment, for business, and for FIFO work. By 2040 our airport will need to serve 50 million passengers each year.

Queensland's tourism industry relies on us to deliver interstate and overseas guests to support the \$23 billion dollar tourism economy which employs 1 in 12 workers.

Every day, farmers and small businesses depend on us to send their goods around the globe. In the past year \$1.9 billion worth of time-critical exports including beef, seafood and manufactured goods were dispatched from BNE.

Today, 24,000 people come to work at Brisbane Airport, and we know there will be another 10,000 jobs created on site in the coming decade.

That's why we're planning to invest more than \$5 billion in the next 10 years to upgrade both terminals, build extra car parking, develop a regional aeromedical hub, expand Skygate and DFO, and

build more freight facilities. And right now we're discussing the need for a new, third terminal with our airline partners.

We are well-placed to further develop the airport's air connectivity to meet travel demand, but equally important is BNE's connectivity on the ground.

All levels of government need to collaborate to ensure fast, reliable and affordable road and public transport connections for travellers and workers to BNE. We need mass transit connections not just to the CBD and Brisbane suburbs, but also the Gold and Sunshine Coasts.

Our vision for Brisbane Airport is *To Connect the World and Create the Future*. At the heart of that, is sustainability. It's why Brisbane Airport Corporation has hit fast forward on our plans to be net zero by 2025.

At the end of the day if we get sustainability and connectivity right, together we can ensure Queensland remains the greatest place in the world to live, work and visit.



James Harman
Chief Executive Officer,
EDL

As a leading global producer of sustainable distributed energy, and proudly headquartered in Brisbane, EDL believes in embedding sustainability in all that we do.

Every day, our people are striving to provide energy solutions for the benefit of our world – they're excited about the transition to green energy and want to make a difference.

But we're not simply talking about making a difference by decarbonising industries, lowering power bills or ensuring the lights stay on.

For us, sustainability is about much more. We believe if done correctly and considered in every business decision, sustainability not only positively impacts those around us, but offers incredible value as well.

A global business providing renewable power solutions for communities and industry in regional areas, EDL has a unique chance to help shape these communities.

And we want more team members – who reflect the communities where we operate – to help us in this important work.

With Australia's gender pay gap currently at 14% and women over 65 having a median superannuation balance of \$40,000 less than males, the fact is Queensland companies must do more to support women in the workforce – and with historically low unemployment levels, it is in our economy's best interest to do so now.

At EDL, I'm proud we have boosted female representation across the organization from 13% in 2016 to almost 25% in 2022. Recognising our commitment to fantastic and fulfilling careers for all, we've also been endorsed by Work180 as an employer committed to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Fostering and supporting culturally diverse talent, including people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, is equally important. Through our Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan, we are focused on having strong, sustainable and trusting relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities; respecting their customs; and most importantly, providing long term- sustainable employment, training, education and business opportunities. That's why we also work with Career Trackers to provide internship opportunities and career paths for Indigenous students.

There's more to be done. We must continue to support and encourage young people to pursue technical careers – and with 50% more girls staying in school in 2021 than in 1981, there's a huge population Queensland business must be reaching out to now.

From the Royal Flying Doctor Service, to the Gardasil cervical cancer vaccine and even the great pineapple peeler... Queensland has led the way with changes to improve opportunities for future generations. Sustainability through diversity offers perhaps an unparalleled chance for the State to once again take the lead – and EDL will be playing our part.



Councillor Jenny Hill

Mayor,
City of Townsville

Since my 2021 contribution to the QFI Annual Leaders' Survey, global challenges have evolved and emerged at a rapid pace.

Then, I envisioned regional Queensland as the powerhouse of our State's and nation's economic recovery post COVID-19. Events in the last twelve months have only served to reinforce this perspective, even with the worst of the pandemic now behind us.

With global energy security at the lowest point in decades due to Russia's brutal military ambitions, never has there been a more important time for Australia to step up as a new energy superpower, with our enormous potential to supply energy-hungry industrial giants with decarbonised power supply options.

The Japanese, Korean and European economies are desperate for supplies of clean power to power their manufacturing industries and domestic power grids.

European industry, particularly in Germany, is especially enthusiastic to eliminate its reliance on Russian oil and gas in the wake of their invasion of Ukraine.

Green hydrogen is identified by the governments of Europe, Japan and Korea, as well as those of the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, as a key piece of this puzzle. Regional Queensland, particularly Townsville and the broader North Queensland region, has the capacity to benefit from this demand.

There is ample private green finance around the world seeking to invest in projects enabling the manufacture of zero-carbon and low-carbon hydrogen, as well as battery technology, but it needs Australian governments – State and Federal – to provide an environment that makes Australia an attractive place for that capital to be invested.

Innovative models of subsidy, incentive and government support must be examined to bring these investors to communities in regional Queensland.

Reducing overheads for companies to set up in regional Queensland are a must. Payroll tax relief, abolishing stamp duty on insurance premiums for policies in regional areas, long-term fixed-price power agreements for industry are all levers that the State Government can pull.

The Albanese Government should invest in key infrastructure, such as CopperString 2.0, as part of the Rewiring the Nation policy to connect a renewable energy province in North Queensland – with up to 16 gigawatts of renewable resource potential – to our power grid and to allow for the decarbonisation of mining operations in the north-west of our State.

North Queensland has enormous potential as a renewable powerhouse for the world. It just requires governments to see beyond the short-term and the electoral cycle to realise it.



Michael Hiller

Queensland Chairman,
KPMG

Queensland steps up to 2032: Delivering the world's first Climate Positive Olympic and Paralympic Games

In a landmark event for the world, Queensland has committed to deliver 'the world's first climate positive Olympic and Paralympic Games - 'Brisbane 2032'. It will act as further catalyst for Queensland's decarbonisation agenda.

Sporting events and the sporting industry are no exception when it comes to feeling the impacts of and contributing to climate change. The industry contributes approximately 0.6% of global GDP (\$500B), responsible for around 300- 350 million tonnes of CO2 emissions (0.3% of total global emissions), equivalent to the emissions of Spain or Poland.

As a result, the International Olympics Committee (IOC) has planned two climate-neutral Olympic Games (Paris 2024 and Los Angeles 2028) followed by the first ever climate positive Olympics -Brisbane 2032.

So, what is the difference between 'carbon neutral' and 'climate positive'?

'Carbon neutral' refers to implementing positive actions that compensate for the negative climate effects of the Games. 'Climate positive' extends beyond this and requires positive actions that compensate for more emissions than are caused by the Games.

Undeniably, Brisbane 2032 is a step up for Australia and the world as we journey towards net zero. To date, 91% of global GDP is covered by net zero targets – around 768 companies world-wide. The OECD estimates that USD 6.9 trillion a year is required up to 2030 to meet climate and development net zero targets. Australia's Paris Agreement commitment is 43% emissions reduction by 2030 with a target to achieve net zero by 2050. A climate positive Olympic and Paralympic Games will be an important milestone for the 2050 agenda.

How can the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games achieve 'climate positive' status?

Brisbane 2032 is a unique challenge. While traditional carbon footprints use retrospective accounts of environmental impacts, successful delivery of a climate positive Games relies on a forward-looking inventory of the event's anticipated impacts. An analysis of the impacts of the Games

identifies how Brisbane can achieve a climate positive event including creating vehicle-free venues, investing in transport infrastructure and repurposing and upgrading existing venue infrastructure.

Declaring a climate positive 2032 Games is a significant opportunity for the State – driving sustainable urban development and creating a circular economy. The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP) is a 10-year plan to increase Queensland's renewable energy target to 70% by 2032. The State is on a rapid emissions reduction trajectory, and 2032 is a significant milestone in this transition.

Where to next for Queensland?

Now is the time to think not only about the legacy of the Games, but also to act intentionally to ensure the Games themselves deliver on their climate positive promises. Brisbane 2032 will put the State's net zero ambitions on an accelerated timeframe. Some questions about Queensland's next steps include:

- From which point in time will we begin to measure and allocate the emissions and other environmental impacts associated with the infrastructure development for the Games?
- What partnerships can be fostered to maximise the opportunities to build a circular economy ecosystem?
- What mechanisms might Queensland use to encourage active forms of transport and incentivise accelerated availability and uptake of electrified transport?
- How can the 2032 Games encourage more sustainable mobility and other lifestyle habits to support the abatement of emissions and reduction of other environmental impacts associated with transportation and international travel in 2032?

This opportunity, together with the SEQ City Deal, will accelerate critical conversations around climate change across all levels of government, positioning Queensland and Australia as global leaders in decarbonisation, hosting the world's first climate positive summer Olympic and Paralympic Games.



Steve Johnston

Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director,
Suncorp Group

Building greater resilience to natural hazards, responding to climate change and ensuring insurance remains accessible and affordable continue to be some of Suncorp Group's most important topics to address. We also know the rising cost of living is having broad reaching implications.

Queenslanders are no strangers to extreme weather events, from cyclones to bushfires, severe storms and devastating floods. In FY22, Suncorp's insurance business was confronted by 35 separate natural hazard events across Australia and New Zealand, resulting in around 130,000 insurance claims. With a third successive La Nina weather pattern, we have subsequently seen some areas of southern Australia record their worst flooding in more than 100 years.

This is why it is imperative that governments at all levels, together with the insurance industry and community groups, prioritise the work and investment required to reduce the risk from extreme weather for our communities, improve household and community resilience and in turn, the affordability of insurance.

A recently released research report from the McKell Institute shows that this year's flooding has compounded the cost-of-living pressure being faced by Australian households and consumers. The research also highlighted the fact that the Commonwealth had spent \$24 billion on disaster recovery since 2005, and only \$510 million on resilience.

While we welcome the increased funding and support announced by the Federal government, along with the QLD and NSW state governments in recent times, there is much more work to be done.

Therefore, Suncorp continues to advocate for further reform across four key areas. The first element is greater investment in community level infrastructure like flood levees.

The second is addressing inadequate building codes, planning laws and approval processes.

The third element is around the removal of inefficient taxes and charges, which can add 20-40% to a home insurance premium.

The final part of our four-point plan is to provide subsidies to improve the resilience of private dwellings. This can help to minimise the chance of damage to the home, minimise the costs and inconvenience of getting back to normal after an event and provide long-term savings from avoiding repetitive repairs to the home following natural hazard events.

If the right steps can be taken now, we can help the people in our community who are being impacted by poor decisions of the past, improve their quality of life, build more resilient communities, and ultimately make Queensland's future more prosperous.



Professor Geraldine Mackenzie

Vice-Chancellor,
University of Southern Queensland

As we continue to grapple with the aftermath of the global pandemic, other challenges have emerged for business, industry and communities across the State. The impact of economic and social pressures have placed even greater emphasis on the imperative for flexibility, resilience and agile decision-making, not only for us as providers of education and training, but across the board for all industries.

The University of Southern Queensland is united in a commitment to supporting our students and research partners, as well as boosting outcomes for regional communities and the State. We remain focussed on reimagining and reinventing as a response to a post-pandemic world, and supporting economic policy that lessens disadvantage, broadens aspiration and participation in higher education and, above all, bolsters resilience in the communities we serve. Technology, the digital economy, social capital, innovative ways of doing business, and jobs of the future are more important than ever in these endeavours.

The importance of skills as central to economic policy has been addressed at State and Federal level, with governments working closely with universities in producing a skilled workforce. To one degree or another, we have all experienced the increasing competition for talent and been reminded of the

relentless need for artificial intelligence, automation and technological innovation. Universities are critical components in underpinning the required transformation, perfectly positioned to partner with business and industry in identifying skills gaps, developing the means of addressing them and playing a key role in educating and developing the workforce that Queensland needs to succeed.

A seeming onslaught of natural disasters again in 2022 reminds us of the importance of continuing to address climate change, global warming and water and food security. The availability and affordability of housing and adequate health services remain top priorities in our regions, together with sufficient skilled labour to support our regional economies.

The University of Southern Queensland stands ready to continue our work in our flagship areas of space and defence, agriculture, health and regional development, driving capability and outcomes through investment and innovation that yields solutions to global problems.

It is more important than ever that we work together across all facets of government, business, industry and the community to reimagine a future for our State and, in this way, do what we can to collectively ensure prosperity and success.



Councillor Bob Manning OAM
Mayor,
Cairns Regional Council

Sustainable Funding for Tourism (Legislative Reform)

Access to appropriate and sustainable funding for tourism is fundamental to economic growth.

Tourism influences a wide range of non-tourism community outcomes including access to healthcare and education, social and cultural participation, and jobs in supporting industry sectors.

In Cairns and the Tropical North, we are well and truly bouncing back after COVID-19. Tourists are returning to our region. We've had record domestic visitor expenditure of \$3.12 billion in 2021-2022, and Tropical North Queensland has claimed the No.3 destination nationally in Google search trends for travel in the past few years.

However, results like these are powered by effective destination marketing, funded in large part through temporary State and Federal Government support programs.

With more and more destinations around the world competing for the visitor dollar, a sustained step change to tourism promotion investment is now needed to ensure Queensland destinations can retain and grow their share of the global tourism market.

A visitor levy, facilitated through a change in State legislation, can deliver this step change investment, providing the tourism sector with security while also taking financial pressure off ratepayers and reducing the burden on the State's balance sheet.

Here in the Cairns region, we have been championing the idea of the visitor levy for around five years.

Under the proposed opt-in approach, a visitor levy would give regions the financial autonomy to promote their destination, without an impost on ratepayers, to claw back market share lost to rival domestic and international locations.

For Cairns, our numbers show that a small, 2.5% levy on overnight accommodation revenue (incl Airbnb) can generate \$16 million annually to be spent attracting more visitors to Cairns. Why accommodation? Because it's broadly based and will catch all visitors except for those staying with family and friends.

And the ultimate beneficiaries will be accommodation providers. Every dollar collected will be spent promoting the regions through Regional Tourism Organisations to get visitor numbers back up in terms of both occupancy and yield.

Raising the same amount from ratepayers is just not feasible. A user-pays visitor levy is a much fairer way to ensure Queensland's tourism industry can thrive, while residents benefit from the flow-on impact to our economy and jobs.

This is not something new. We're just catching up with the rest of the world as tourism levies are global. Some 50 countries including Europe, Thailand, Bali, New Zealand and the US are well ahead of us on this. And there is no evidence that any city with a tourism levy has seen visitor numbers drop.

Governments are voted in to make decisions on behalf of their communities and Local governments should have the choice, in consultation with communities, whether to implement a visitor levy.

There are no downsides at the polls for the State on this legislative reform – Local Government is on the front line for the final decision.

The proposal had overwhelming support at the recent LGAQ conference. I would welcome your leadership and support in now delivering this major reform.



Kevin Mercer

Chief Executive Officer,
St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland

Key Social Policy Reform

The last twelve months has been a period of much uncertainty and stress for many Queenslanders and we are warned by our Federal Treasurer that 'tough times are ahead' for at least the next two years.

At the St Vincent de Paul Society we have seen the levels of assistance and support offered to those most vulnerable and experiencing hardship in Queensland communities increase by 30% over the previous year and in the first three months of this year to 30 September a further increase of 25% over our budget forecast.

As pressure has come on to the housing market driven up by interstate demand and now interest rates, the ripple effect down through the rental market impacting rental supply and rental pricing has meant those on low incomes and support payments can no longer participate. In all major cities and regional centers across the state, unfortunately there is increasing evidence of rough sleeping in the CBDs and 'tent cities' on riverbanks, before we consider the increased numbers sleeping in cars, caravans and over-crowded share homes. Homelessness is now not just a social justice issue for those on welfare and support payments, it is a very real concern and reality for many low-income working people and families.

Queensland currently has a state housing waitlist of 45,000+ people with an average waiting time of more than two years. In the last 12 months 7,294 people have been added to the list. Brisbane median rent prices increased by 12.5% (units) and 16.9% (houses) in the 2021-22 financial year on top of the cost-of-living pressures we are all enduring.

Whilst much progress has been made by both Federal and State & Territory Governments in shifting policy and providing much needed funding for the further development of more social and affordable housing in the years ahead, the short-term solutions are more challenging to support people whilst that stock is built.

If we consider Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the base level is physiological need - these are biological requirements for human survival, e.g. air, food, shelter, clothing, sleep. These are not provided or supported by economic policy but rather social policy. Without strong social policy as a societal foundation, economic policy will be limited or selective in its impact and effectiveness.

The here and now issue of over 3.3 million people (13.4%), 1 in 6 are children, living below the poverty line and growing due to the housing and cost of living concerns above is unacceptable in a wealthy developed nation such as Australia. Significant social policy reform, for both non-working and working people, is necessary and critical to support Queenslanders (and all Australians) above the poverty line with food, safe and secure housing, clothing and access to education over the next 3-5 years to ensure a fairer Australia so we all get through the 'tough times ahead'.



Derek Merdith
Chief Executive Officer,
QCN

Digital Infrastructure – the absent pillar of infrastructure planning and development.

We read the motherhood statements: *Infrastructure is the foundation of regional economic development.* To develop regional Queensland, we must invest in infrastructure – water, roads, power. It's a given.

But there is one fundamental pillar of infrastructure that is the "forgotten infrastructure" – telecommunications.

It is perhaps the ubiquity of mobile phones, and the marketing machine of nbnCo that many see telecommunications as just being "here". It just happens. Perhaps, for those looking at building infrastructure, it is "someone else's responsibility". Maybe that's for the Federal Government or the nbn?

Just as our economy relies on the underpinnings of our traditional pillars of infrastructure, so too does the Digital Economy rely upon the underlying Digital Infrastructure.

It would be naïve to posit that our need for data capacity has reached its logical limit – the nbn tells us we won't need more than 25Mbps. Really? We can look back to only the last decade when we were happy with 256Kbps. The drive for greater capacity and throughput will continue. Just as we build new highways for the increasing vehicular movements and improve access to regional economic zones, the same must be done for our digital infrastructure.

In the case of digital infrastructure, despite the hype around wireless technologies - with names like 5G, "Next"G and mmWave – when comparing high-capacity data transit mechanisms, optical fibre trumps all others in terms of capacity, upgradeability and economic lifecycle. Just one pair of optic fibres, in a cable that can carry dozens and even hundreds of fibre pairs, can transmit many orders of magnitudes greater capacity than a radio transmitter.

Fibre infrastructure mimics many of the economic fundamentals of other core infrastructure. It has a generational benefit with a useable life exceeding 25 years and requires significant capital investment.

Forethought, planning and collaboration is key. As with all infrastructure, retrofitting or expanding existing infrastructure can be logistically and financially prohibitive. All too often, roadsides are being dug up to lay fibre, which is 40 – 50 times the cost that, with some forward planning, could have been installed before the asphalt (or pipe or pole) had been laid.

For the future of Queensland, when the discussion turns to developing our underlying fundamental infrastructure, *digital infrastructure* must have a seat at the big table.

Perhaps it is time for an Office of Digital Infrastructure? So that our grandchildren and their children in regional Queensland, will enjoy the same data services as their peers in the major cities.





Ray Merlano

General Manager, Queensland,
Data#3

Mark Watt

Senior Partner, Business Aspect,
Data#3

The next 10 years of economic, social and environmental outcomes for Queensland will be dominated by the 2032 Olympics, energy supply, health care, housing and climate change. Dealing with the challenges and opportunities influencing these outcomes will define Queensland's future.

It is now twelve months since Brisbane won the hosting rights to the 2032 Olympics. The government set a bold agenda of not only hosting a successful green Olympics, but also leaving the state better for having hosted it. A key enabler of this success will be our local industry capabilities to innovate, develop and apply digital technologies that will drive productivity, create jobs and showcase Queensland as the most liveable state.

Last year we talked about a need to rethink how we do entrepreneurship in the state, and how the state government can be more effective in enabling new business growth. We would suggest the five areas of focus for industry development are:

- Reliable, affordable energy and the development of Queensland as a green power innovator
- Tele-health and virtual health care (hospital in the home) technologies and services
- Intelligent transportation and green commuter traffic systems
- Digital engineering and affordable smart (green) buildings
- Defence and national security capabilities and support for advanced technology innovation

Rather than focus on competitive grants and events, investment should be directed to the human capability to facilitate partnering and supply chain clusters. Into these clusters, opportunities for nimble innovators can be created, producing new products and viable businesses.

The COVID19 pandemic has changed the way we live and work, and reminded us how vital public health care is. In regional areas with good broadband services, we are seeing a migration trend of white collar workers exercising better lifestyle choices. This has the real potential to create viable communities creating demand for improved physical and telecommunication infrastructure and community based energy supply solutions, as well as upgraded services, particularly health care.

All of this requires more technologists in our workforce and tech-literate leadership. New models of work-integrated learning and cadetships are needed. Today, there are less digital engineers and computer scientists in Queensland engaged in tech R&D, than a quarter of a century ago. Unfortunately, we are not going to be able to import all the labour we need to be a Smart State.

We need to encourage a new generation of workers and entrepreneurs to capitalise on the challenges and opportunities presented by the emerging digital economy.



Tom Metcalfe
Chief Executive Officer,
CleanCo Queensland

Leading Queensland Towards a Net Zero Future

The transformation of the global energy sector to net zero presents extraordinary opportunities across the globe, nowhere more so than here in Queensland with our world-class renewable energy resources.

The [Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan](#) is an ambitious roadmap for the decade ahead. It will unlock incredible opportunities for Queensland as we drive towards 70% renewable energy by 2032.

Established by the Queensland Government to support the energy transformation, CleanCo's singular focus is to support the decarbonisation of Queensland industry by developing and supporting new renewable energy generation.

As a dedicated clean energy generator, retailer and developer, we are uniquely positioned to lead the delivery of the 22GW of renewable energy required to enable the transition.

Building on our portfolio of low-emission and renewable generation, we are pursuing opportunities for new energy generation and storage. We will build our first battery at the Swanbank Power Station Precinct which itself, presents a unique opportunity to become a flagship renewable energy hub.

The pipeline of projects required to meet our renewable energy targets will require unprecedented uplift in our skilled workforce. Meaningful engagement with employers, our unions and educators will ensure we have the right skills in the right places at the right time. We know that part of

the solution is to ensure we have better participation of female employees in our sector. [The Queensland Energy Workers' Charter](#) will be our guide to collaboration across the sector.

Our projects leverage local talent and we are committed to strengthening local manufacturing and supply chain opportunities.

Regional Queensland is the engine room for our generating fleet. It's paramount we support communities to be ready to join the energy transformation journey and enable them to realise the full potential of jobs and growth opportunities. We must engage meaningfully and listen to all voices including the Traditional Custodians of the lands where these projects will be built.

Delivering on these commitments is a heavy lift we cannot do on our own. We value the relationships we have with our development partners and look forward to working with them and building new partnerships to deliver world-class clean energy solutions.

Decarbonisation will not slow economies, it will grow economies. The benefits of the energy transformation will be far-reaching and long-lasting. We have a responsibility to ensure our regional economies, host communities and customers reap the benefits. CleanCo is proud to lead Queensland towards a net zero future.



Philip Noble

Chief Executive,
Queensland Treasury Corporation

Queensland is poised at the start of its next transformational chapter with the charge towards being a world leader in renewable energy, following the announcement of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, and our run to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Both will bring a tremendous amount of economic activity and legacy infrastructure for our State that will create a long-lasting impact on Queensland for generations. Investment will come from all levels of government and the private sector.

We know that Government borrowings will be required, and the State's balance sheet is in a strong position to enable headroom for future borrowings, however the nature and appeal of the opportunities available will also bring private sector capital into play.

As the central financing authority for the Queensland Government, Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) is a highly regarded sub-sovereign issuer—with an established funding program and facilities in a variety of markets and currencies underpinned by Queensland's AA+/Aa1/AA+ credit rating¹.

The team at QTC is committed to attracting a broad investor base through a diverse range of financial securities. Key to these investor discussions are the critical levers that underpin the strength across the State's balance sheet, including:

- The Queensland Government's strong health and economic response to COVID-19 has minimised the impact on public finances in comparison to other jurisdictions and we continue to demonstrate our strong institutional framework and financial management.

- Queensland drives almost 20 percent of Australia's economic activity and has a track record of strong growth, with a diverse economy worth more than \$360 billion—where no single sector makes up more than 10 per cent of the State's output.
- Queensland is the only State to fully fund its pension obligations and maintains a high-level of financial assets (including government ownership of all critical infrastructure and significant property and land holdings).
- Queensland has abundant natural capital, including ample renewable energy sources and reserves of new economy minerals that will be vital for the global energy transformation.
- Queensland continues to demonstrate world-class innovation and is recognised by the World Bank as a Global Innovation Hotspot through its leading R&D facilities, university hubs, and knowledge precincts.

Queensland's investment prospects are incredibly compelling, and the focus will shift to harnessing private capital investment and leveraging the vast opportunities that Queensland can present to many industries. Collaboration with the private sector can come in many forms and the challenge ahead is to find the balance that enables the best long-term economic outcomes for Queensland and our future industries.

¹ QTC is rated AA+/A-1+/Stable, Aa1/P-1/Stable and AA+/F1+/Stable by Standard & Poor's, Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings respectively.



Garry Page

Director, Queensland,
Australian Red Cross

Are we ready for the human impacts of climate change?

In a world of increasing disasters and uncertainty, changing climate and the impact of this change is one of the largest and most complex challenges humankind faces. The impacts are already devastating lives and livelihoods.

Every day at the Australian Red Cross, we witness the human impacts of climate change. We see the detrimental health and social impacts brought on by more frequent and intense disasters and crises. In Australia, we have faced some of the most significant disasters in our history, including the devastating 2019/20 bushfires and most recently, the Queensland, New South Wales, and Victorian floods. By 2050, the total economic cost of natural disasters in Australia is expected to be around \$33 billion.

We need to lead and influence the conversation on the human impacts of an increase in both the numbers and severity of climate events. It is critical long-term sustainable funding is available before a disaster strikes to enable communities to better prepare.

The infrastructure losses after every disaster are immense and highly visible. What is far more unseen, but equally devastating in magnitude are the psychological and social impacts. A disaster can lead to the disruption of people's lives for years. We need to keep strengthening our psychological and social well-being support so people and communities can better recover. There is a shared responsibility between government, individuals, non-profit organisations, private enterprise and communities to be actively prepared to respond and recover from natural disasters.

Beyond Australia, Asia-Pacific nations also face immense challenges with climate crisis and displacement. Climate change has significant implications for Pacific Island populations, many of whom reside in coastal areas and rely on natural resources for their livelihoods and well-being. Pacific Island people – such as in Tonga, Tuvalu, Nauru, and Kiribati – are already dealing with the threat of climate-induced migration. In the Pacific, at least 50,000 Islanders are at risk of being displaced by the impact of disasters and climate change each year.

Though every effort should be made to ensure that people can stay where they live, it is also important to recognize that migration can also be a way for people to cope with environmental changes. Efforts made to protect the rights of migrants can ensure migration provides substantial benefits to both origin and destination locations, as well as to the migrants themselves. Climate-induced migration has only recently received policy consideration and the development of responsible migration policies, practices and laws will be critical.

A strategic focus for all levels of government must be long-term sustainable funding and planning for disaster preparation.



Rebecca Pickering

Inland Rail Interim Chief Executive,
Australian Rail Track Corporation

The tides of opportunity have combined to present Queensland with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fast-track transport infrastructure and position the state for a better future.

With a deadline in the form of the 2032 Olympics, there is a window of opportunity for industry and government to work collaboratively, and get the work started, to ensure the state can improve the daily lives of Queenslanders.

The 2032 Olympic games gives a clear finish line to deliver for South East Queensland. And while 10 years may sound like a long time, the starter's gun has been fired, and it is now a sprint to the line to finish a multitude of infrastructure projects.

Brisbane is forging a reputation of being a major sport and events destination in its own right; having moved quickly during the pandemic to stage several Covid-impacted events such as the NRL Grand Final.

It is also starting to assemble an impressive calendar of events, which will only accelerate and provide extra economic activity for the city as international interest in Brisbane increases ahead of the Games.

In the meantime, South East Queensland's population is projected to grow by more than one million over the next two decades, and alongside increased migration from interstate and abroad, our freight task is expected to grow significantly.

We are now in a race to fast-track and reshape our freight transport network ahead of the Olympics, so it is more resilient, sustainable, climate-independent and cost effective.

To help keep Queenslanders 'stocked' with the goods they need for everyday living, Inland Rail will increase Queensland's resilience to natural disasters by providing another route to move goods to and from the state.

Inland Rail in Queensland is currently being advanced through the State Government approvals process ahead of the start of construction and the Australian Rail Track Corporation is ensuring that we will be ready to hit the ground running when the green light is given.

And even though Inland Rail was already in the pipeline ahead of the Olympic announcement its completion will begin a legacy that will serve the state for decades to come.

Inland Rail will mean billions of dollars in stimulus, jobs and long-term economic growth for Queensland – through construction, Inland Rail is expected to support more than 11,800 jobs and deliver a \$7.8 billion boost to the state's economy.

These numbers alone are worthy of an Olympic-sized celebration.



Kylie Rampa

Chief Executive Officer,
Queensland Investment Corporation

Transitioning to a new economy.

Historically, the drivers of the Queensland economy have been agriculture, mining, and construction; with increasing contributions from tourism and educational services. These sectors will continue to play an important role, but international preferences are evolving, and Queensland is in a fortunate position that it too can modify its economic structure to take advantage of these global changes.

Climate change and shifting demographics have added two significant new global investment themes: namely, renewable energy generation and distribution and health care.

Queensland is unique in that it is the only State economy that has sizeable representations, or potential representations, in all of Australia's traditional and emerging industries of international comparative advantage.

But it is the urgency with which we need to shift into the emerging industries that is paramount.

To fast track their development, we need to create conditions that encourage capital and skilled labour into these new growth sectors. Targeted training and skilled immigration programs are part of the answer to these sectors' labour needs.

Queensland has a proud tradition of being among the fastest growing states (second only to WA), both in terms of the economy and the population, over the last two decades.. But we shouldn't become blinded by a growth-for-growth's sake mentality.

The past two decades have been dominated by a construction boom fuelled by the development of our mining and housing sectors. Construction is relatively labour intensive, which added to population demands and driven a high economic growth rate, but with productivity growth that is around the Australian average.

Our new industries: renewables, rare minerals, bio-manufacturing, health care are industries that require a skilled and highly productive workforce. If we attract capital and skilled workers into these industries, we can lift both our standard of living and the pace of economic growth.





Steven Sorbello
Office Managing Partner,
BDO, Brisbane

Let's make some hard decisions in relation to energy and water.

The health of our economy, a successful Olympic Games and the prosperity of business and consumers more generally depends on reliable energy and water supply, and flood protected cities.

On the energy front, Queensland's energy markets are experiencing challenges brought on by coal and gas prices and the balancing of system availability and security to accommodate decarbonisation policies, amongst other things. Driven by pressures to move away from fossil fuels and the political desire to balance competing agendas, we are now seeing a rise in costs for both households and businesses.

If these challenges are left unaddressed, they will threaten Queensland's energy security, continue to increase costs to consumers and business, and impact on Australia's ability to meet its emissions reduction targets. In this country, many argue that the energy equation should be relatively easy, but leadership is required from all levels of Government to restore confidence.

In relation to water, we have watched large amounts of water being released from Wivenhoe Dam to ensure temporary additional flood mitigation storage for summer. This suggests that our systems are struggling to cater to our current water supply and flood mitigation requirements and that, particularly considering recent flood events, the time is right for definitive action to ensure we can meet future needs.

To gather relevant information to assist with our decision making we must also look further afield and learn. Europe is experiencing what may be its worst drought in 500 years. The drought has arrived amid an energy crisis, and the lack of water threatens to make the energy shortage worse. The invasion of Ukraine demonstrates Europe's dependence on Russian gas and showed that energy supply chain diversification is crucial. Europe must now double down on efforts to become self-sufficient in energy while balancing a reduction in emissions.

To address the energy crisis in Australia, all levels of government must play to provide much needed objective guidance and design a solution that will protect the energy market and water supply, facilitate fuel switches, and place our businesses and consumers in the best possible position to prosper. Self-sufficiency and diversification of energy and water supply, as seen in Europe, must be a focus of any solution.

Queensland is on show. The Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games should give us the incentive and sense of urgency to get this much-needed energy and water reform right.



Professor Margaret Sheil AO

Vice-Chancellor and President,
Queensland University of Technology

As we emerge from a period of unprecedented social, health and financial disruption, and head into further uncertain times on the international security and economic stage, Queensland must grasp the opportunities this new world offers.

While we weathered the pandemic storm better than most, Australia and Queensland still have sectors such as tourism and international education, which have suffered severe and negative impacts since 2020.

However, QUT and the higher education sector now has an enormous opportunity to develop the solutions needed for the challenges, the serious questions, which we now face.

Climate change, struggling health systems, supply chain and export market stress and the questions of sustainable growth are all areas being tackled by the researchers at QUT.

Health, affordability and aspiration are the foundations of this new era.

Now more than ever, we need to be brave, to take the steps to ensure we maintain and grow the enviable lifestyle advantages which have become so abundantly clear over the last couple of years.

The problems in Queensland, however, are different. When it comes to clean energy, education and health, for example, we face the huge geographical challenges of a diverse population. Equity of vital service provision regardless of where you live is essential to a just Queensland society of the future.

Replacing traditional forms of energy with clean and sustainable alternatives, without turning off the lights, is now centre stage in our national political discussion. This is a massive opportunity for Queensland which has carried a disproportionate

share of energy provision for Australia over the last few decades, and will probably continue to do so, but must now achieve these results using new and often untested technologies.

In health we face similar, pressing challenges. It is no accident that many regional and rural Queenslanders travel to their emergency medical procedures by helicopter rather than ambulance due to the enormous distances over which our State must provide quality emergency specialist care. We must find solutions for primary care in small, often isolated, communities.

Given the demands on doctors, mental health, allied health and aged care professionals across the health spectrum and outside the major metropolitan areas, it is essential that we equip all our health professionals with better and more creative technology-enabled solutions to provide enhanced outcomes which defeat the tyrannies of cost and distance.

And in education we need to create the engineers to build that future while also continuing to provide the social scientists to ensure it remains an ethical, inclusive and tolerant society.

While we continue to live in interesting times, I remain optimistic and excited by the opportunities it provides for organisations like QUT and states like Queensland to lead the way into the future.



Paul Spiro

Chairman,
Brisbane Economic Development Agency
& Queensland Chairman, Gadens

There's a lot of talk about 2032. The year when the world will converge on our city as we host the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

But we mustn't be distracted by a distant date. The opportunity to supercharge Brisbane's economy is already upon us, and we must think beyond the finish line to build the best legacy for Brisbane.

It's time now to engage local businesses and make sure they have every chance to grow and excel against a backdrop of rapid change.

It's time now to nurture the growth of key industries which will be major economic drivers for jobs and Brisbane's future prosperity.

It's time now to create exciting, vibrant spaces to attract visitors from around the globe and enhance the lifestyle of our fast-growing population.

Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA) is wasting no time laying the groundwork for the city's economic future.

This year it launched the Brisbane Brief – a tool for local industry leaders to promote the city to new businesses and investors.

More than 150 businesses contributed to the Brisbane Brief, which is already being used around the world to amplify the Brisbane story and the economic opportunities that exist within our city.

Brisbane is home to the brightest minds, and world-class innovation, placing the city in the driver's seat to solve global human and business challenges.

We need to make sure the next generation of entrepreneurs can compete globally.

Targeted work is also underway to boost key industries like health and advanced manufacturing through initiatives to attract international investment.

BEDA's new MedTech Accelerator will support 11 local businesses to connect with global investment partners that could help fast-track products onto the market.

Similarly, BEDA's Future Food and PropTech programs have already generated a combined \$78 million in economic activity - collectively supporting 31 businesses from the Brisbane region to grow, scale, or secure investment.

This kind of glove in hand support will be crucial to ensure long-term growth.

More investment means more jobs for Brisbane's booming population. The city's future is bright with 245,000 new jobs predicted by 2031.

When the Brisbane business community unites, it is a serious force for good. We needn't wait until 2032 to show the world we're the best city to do business, visit and put on some of the world's biggest events.

It's time now to accelerate growth and create city-defining change.



Professor Deborah Terry AO

Vice-Chancellor and President,
The University of Queensland

Ten years out, preparations for Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games are already underway.

We have an Organising Committee, a Venue Master Plan, and a staggering number of large-scale infrastructure and transport projects underway across the South-East.

However, Brisbane 2032 is much more than an opportunity to host a global sporting event.

It's also an opportunity to accelerate the delivery of the long-term plans needed to sustain lasting growth across Queensland and deliver socio-economic benefits for all Queenslanders.

There is a global race for talent going on, and Brisbane 2032 is a golden opportunity to showcase Queensland's appeal and attract the skilled workers we need to help boost our state's economy over the next decade and beyond.

We need to encourage as many students, researchers, entrepreneurs, and qualified young professionals as we can, to bring their skills, their enthusiasm, their ingenuity, and their passions – to Brisbane and Queensland – from all over the world, to help build new industries, in knowledge-based sectors of the economy.

And to do this, we need to ask ourselves: what is important to young people?

Besides the obvious climate and lifestyle advantages that Queensland offers, which already make our state very appealing, it's fundamental that Brisbane develops in a way that young people can find work, afford a place to live, and enjoy a city that is connected and alive with culture.

We – government, industry, and all major Queensland institutions - need to be thinking about what more we can do to foster creativity and innovation.

At the same time, we need to ensure that the cost of living and the cost of housing are affordable for the young people we hope to attract.

And we need to prepare for the broader opportunities the Games present.

We must make sure that the transport and other infrastructure we build works to serve our region post-Games.

We must continue to cultivate our innovation ecosystem, educate for the jobs of the future, and invest in developing the cultural fabric of our city.

And we must ultimately work to ensure that Brisbane 2032 is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform our city and deliver benefits to all Queenslanders.

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