

EU and Australian Research & Innovation

Monday 13 May: 11:30am for 12pm-2pm AEST

RMIT University, Council Chamber, 124 La Trobe Street, Melbourne 3000 (+ live-streamed)

Panel discussion and Q&A, followed by lunch and networking

Australia and the EU have a long history of productive research collaboration. The EU has maintained a delegation in Australia since 1981, with the first-ever treaty-level and technology agreement signed between the EU and an industrialised country being with Australia in 1994.

This agreement focused on cooperation in fields such as biotechnology, materials science, and new energy technologies, paving the way for future collaborative efforts.



Today, the EU is Australia's third largest trading partner and second largest source of foreign investment.

To celebrate **Europe Day** (9 May), we invite you to attend a panel discussion focusing on the *Horizon Europe* strategic plan 2025-2027 for research and innovation; and case studies to highlight the EU's global leadership in inclusive public-funded research and innovation, followed by networking opportunities over lunch. Our panellists will include:

- **HE Mr Gabriele Visentin**, EU Ambassador to Australia
- **Nishant Shandilya**, Regional Coordinator - Australia and New Zealand, EURAXESS Worldwide. *Horizon Europe (EU's Framework Programme for Research & Innovation)*
- **Kate Finger** – Research and Extension Officer at Birchip Cropping Group (BCG). *Topic TBC.*
- **Prof. Anne-Laure Mention** – Director of the Global Business Innovation Enabling Capability Platform, RMIT University. *Topic TBC.*
- **Prof. Bruce Wilson** - European Union Centre of Excellence at RMIT University. *Moderator.*



HE Mr Gabriele Visentin has been the European Union Ambassador to Australia since September 2022, and was appointed EU Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific in September 2021. Prior to his arrival in Australia, Mr. Visentin served as Head of the Parliamentary Affairs Division in the European External Action Service for several years. Earlier in his career, Mr. Visentin was an official of the European Commission and served in the Directorate General for External Relations. Mr. Visentin was also Head of Cabinet to the last President of the ECSC (European Community for Steel and Coal) and Advisor on European affairs to the Italian Minister of Industry, Energy and International Trade. He holds a degree in law and is specialised in International and Community law.

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Nishant Shandilya is the Regional Coordinator for Australia & New Zealand at EURAXESS Worldwide, an initiative of the European Commission that addresses barriers to the mobility of researchers and seeks to enhance scientific collaboration between Europe and the rest of the world. He is also the Regional Manager for the Pacific for Centralised Support to the Network of Erasmus+ National Focal Points. (Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth, and sport in Europe). He has prominently led strategy, innovation, and international research projects – including European Commission funded grants (FP7 & Horizon) and tenders, specifically in the fields of ICT, Internationalisation and Social Innovation. He has also led-wrote evaluation studies and impact assessment reports for several EC DGs, in addition to helping run a few

'Centres of Excellence' in different parts of the world.



Kate Finger joined BCG in May 2019. She is a Research and Extension Officer within the Business Development and Innovation team. She manages BCG's weather station and soil probe network, coordinates communications for the managing climate variability project and ForeWarned is ForeArmed CoP and works on contract services trials. Kate believes that the work she is a part of is helping to improve the profitability and sustainability of Australian agriculture. Kate holds a Bachelor of Science – Majoring in Agricultural Science and a Masters of Agricultural Sciences specialising in Crop Production from the University of Melbourne. Kate loves horse riding, gardening and exploring the outdoors.



Prof. Anne-Laure Mention is the Director of the Global Business Innovation Enabling Capability Platform at RMIT University. She is the academic lead of the OpenInnoTrain, Research and Innovation Staff Exchange and EINST4INE European Training Network projects, a regular keynote speaker at academic and industry conferences, and co-founding editor of the Open Access Journal of Innovation Management. She has several visiting positions in Europe and Asia, and for seven years led a team of 20+ researchers in innovation economics and management in Europe. At RMIT, Professor Mention has built one of the largest multidisciplinary research teams focusing on open innovation across Asia-Pacific, with research projects at the intersection of technology, strategy and people, spanning across levels of analysis (individuals, teams, organisations, ecosystems, nations). She also sits on the scientific or advisory board of several international organisations in the field of technology and innovation management. She has been awarded the prestigious IBM Faculty Award twice for her research on innovation. Professor Mention's research interests include: open and collaborative innovation, innovation economics, technology management, business venturing, fintech.

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*Moderator: **Professor Bruce Wilson** is Director of the European Union Centre of Excellence at RMIT. He leads research and debate on EU-Australian relations, place-based innovation systems and regional development, and shares advice on building partnerships between Australian organisations and their European counterparts. He has published extensively and presented at EU forums on Smart Specialisation, place-based innovation and sustainability, and is co-editor of the Australasian Journal of Regional Studies. Prof. Wilson was also a founding Co-Director of Pascal (Place, Social Capital and Learning) International Observatory and a member of the Advisory Board and Committee of the Hume Global Learning Village. He has extensive experience in working with all levels of government on organisational and social change, and is committed to linking researchers and policy makers with city and regional governments on social and economic policy, innovation, lifelong learning and environmental policy.*

This event is hosted by the [EU Delegation to Australia](#), RMIT University [EU Centre](#), the European Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand ([ESAANZ](#)) and the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) Victoria.

PROGRAM:

- 11:30am: Registrations open for in-person guests; coffee and tea on arrival.
- 12:00pm: Livestream commences. Opening remarks by HE Mr Gabriele Visentin, EU Ambassador to Australia, and Prof. Bruce Wilson. Followed by Panel discussion.
- 12:45pm: Audience Q&A.
- 1:00pm: Livestream concludes.
- 1:00pm: Buffet lunch and networking.
- 2.00pm: Event concludes.

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