



Media release

Thursday 13 May 2021

Meet the latest vintage of Future Leaders

Fifteen dynamic and skilled members of the Australian wine community have today joined the roll call of the grape and wine sector's professional and personal development program, Future Leaders.

Wine Australia Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Future Leaders 2021 selection panel Andreas Clark said the applications this year were outstanding.

'Almost 100 applications were received for this year's program and it was a highly competitive field. It was exciting to hear more about the incredible skills and diverse experiences of people within our community – and it was difficult to select just 15 people,' Mr Clark said.

'The 15 Future Leaders selected will experience some changes to the program compared to previous years. Over the past 18 months our sector has experienced significant disruption and we recognise that the skills that we need to develop have evolved. I look forward to meeting with the Future Leaders group to discuss how we can work towards making lasting differences and support our grape and wine community through ongoing uncertainty.'

Comprising members from across the breadth the sector – including viticulturists, winemakers, consultants, scientists, communicators and executives – the Future Leaders 2021 are:

Aaron Mercer	Mercer Wines (Hunter Valley, NSW)
Amanda Whiteland	Margaret River Wine Association (Margaret River, WA)
Briony Hoare	Beach Road Wines (McLaren Vale, SA)
Daniel McDonald	The Cutting & Pernod Ricard Winemakers (Barossa Valley, SA)
Emily Hay	Barossa Grape & Wine Association (Barossa Valley, SA)
Ewan Proctor	Extended Play Consulting (Yarra Valley, VIC)
Jean Macintyre	Pernod Ricard Winemakers (Adelaide, SA)
Josh Hixson	Australian Wine Research Institute (Adelaide, SA)
Kate Sturgess	Brokenwood Wines (Hunter Valley, NSW)
Katherine Herd	Domaine Chandon (Yarra Valley, VIC)
Lauren Hansen	Penley Estate (Coonawarra, SA)
Mavis Zhang	Wine Network Consulting (Melbourne, VIC)
Richard Burch	Howard Park Wines (Perth, WA)
Steven Faulkner	Oakridge Wines (Yarra Valley, VIC)
Victoria Soffer	Coles Liquor (Melbourne, VIC)

**Wine
Australia**



On learning of her selection in this year's program, Kate Sturgess, winemaker at Brokenwood Wines said, 'Gaining a place in the Future Leaders program for me means building a pathway towards being able to enact real change within the Australian wine industry to make sure it is wholly inclusive and sustainable for future generations. It also allows me to build a new network of people within the industry to gain insight across all aspects and to be able to better represent everyone involved.'

Steven Faulkner, Senior Viticulturist at Oakridge Wines said he was humbled to be joining Future Leaders, 'Being chosen from amongst my peers, gives me confidence in myself and the direction I have chosen in the wine industry. I look forward to gaining leadership skills that I need to impact the wine industry in a positive professional way. I love my career in the vineyard, and I want to share it with others and encourage other people to enter into viticulture.'

CEO of Margaret River Wine Association Amanda Whiteland said she was honoured to be accepted, 'Gaining a place in the Future Leaders program is not only a real honour and privilege for me personally, but I also believe it is great news for the Margaret River community and the Western Australia wine industry. What I most look forward to is sharing the learnings and value that this program provides in our regions.'

Future Leaders 2021 is funded by Wine Australia, supported by Australian Grape & Wine and delivered with Pragmatic Thinking. The program – which is run every two years – has identified and developed leaders of the Australian grape and wine community since 2006, with more than 100 graduates of the respected program.

[Ends]



High resolution image is attached.

Image caption: Future Leaders from top left to right: Aaron Mercer, Amanda Whiteland, Briony Hoare, Daniel McDonald, Emily Hay, Ewan Proctor, Jean Macintyre, Josh Hixson, Kate Sturgess, Katherine Herd, Lauren Hansen, Mavis Zhang, Richard Burch, Steven Faulkner, and Victoria Soffer.

For further information please contact:

Hannah Bentley
Communications Manager – Wine Australia
Phone: +61 428 930 865
Email: hannah.bentley@wineaustralia.com

Twitter: [@Wine_Australia](https://twitter.com/Wine_Australia)
Instagram: [@WineAustralia](https://www.instagram.com/WineAustralia)
Facebook: [WineAustralia](https://www.facebook.com/WineAustralia)
Website: www.wineaustralia.com

About Future Leaders

Future Leaders is a professional and personal development program that encourages innovative, collaborative and change-making behaviours in the Australian wine sector. It encourages those who have demonstrated leadership potential to dare to ask 'Why' and 'What if...?'

Future Leaders creates a network of confident, committed individuals who will 'be next' to contribute to the future success of the Australian grape and wine community.

Future Leaders is funded by Wine Australia, supported by Australia's major wine sector body Australian Grape & Wine and delivered with Pragmatic Thinking. Wine Australia gratefully acknowledges the support of Longview Vineyard for hosting The Art of Leadership session in regional South Australia. Visit www.winefutureleaders.com.

About Wine Australia

Wine Australia supports a competitive wine sector by investing in research, development and adoption (RD&A), growing domestic and international markets, protecting the reputation of Australian wine and administering the Export and Regional Wine Support Package (ERWSP).

Wine Australia is an Australian Commonwealth Government statutory authority, established under the *Wine Australia Act 2013*, and funded by grape growers and winemakers through levies and user-pays charges and the Australian Government, which provides matching funding for RD&A investments and funds the ERWSP.