

Media Release

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Boosting the careers of next generation wine communicators

After the tremendous success of the 2019 Wine Industry Mentor Program, Wine Communicators of Australia (WCA) and the Adelaide Business School at The University of Adelaide are pleased to announce over 20 industry leaders are set to take up the mantle as a mentor in 2020.

This national wine industry mentor program aims to boost the career trajectory of the next generation of wine communicators. The program will benefit people who will take a leading role promoting Australia's wine industry in their public relations, marketing and communications careers.

The wine industry mentor program pairs ambitious wine industry professionals with respected industry leaders for a period of six months. One-on-one sessions will give mentees the opportunity to tap into experiences and insights from the best experts in their fields.

The program aims to boost both the personal and professional development of early career wine communicators by giving them access to a wealth of knowledge from respected wine sector leaders; greater career clarity, direction and satisfaction; networking opportunities with like-minded, ambitious young wine communicators and advice with career progression.

The inaugural six-month program, launched in August 2019, has attracted notable names to act as mentors from across the country setting a high standard for the program. Mentors (to date) for the 2020 program include:

- [Max Allen](#), Independent Wine Writer
- [Gary Baldwin](#), Principal Consultant & Director, Wine Network Consulting Pty Ltd
- [Jing Cao](#), Managing Director, CLCA
- [Marni Cook](#), WCA Interim Chair of Board, McLaren Vale Grape and Wine Association Chair of Board
- [Armando Maria Corsi](#), Associate Professor, University of South Australia - Business School
- [Shirley Fraser](#), Independent Consultant, Wine Collaborators
- [Alex Gibbs](#), CEO, Smile Marketing and WCA Board Member
- [Gill Gordon-Smith](#), Co-ordinator Wine & Spirit School TAFE SA, Winemaker/Owner Fall from Grace
- [Rob Hirst](#), Chairman, House of Fine Wines, Tucker Seabrook and WCA Board Member
- [Geoff Krieger](#), General Manager, Brokenwood Wines
- [Ali Lockwood](#), Manager Stakeholder Engagement, Wine Australia and WCA Board Member
- [Tony Love](#), Freelance wine writer, presenter, consultant
- [David Lowe](#), Managing Director, Lowe Family Wine Co
- [Annabel Mugford](#), Food & Beverage Export Hub Manager – Food South Australia and Strategic Projects Adviser – Barossa Grape & Wine Association
- [Nick Ryan](#), Wine Writer, Speaker, Wine Judge, Nick Ryan Wines
- [Judy Sarris](#), Editor, Gourmet Traveller WINE
- Robin Shaw, Founder and Lead Consultant, Wine Tourism Australia
- [Katie Spain](#), Journalist, Wine Writer and Author
- [Michael van Der Sommen](#), Direct Sales and Brand Manager, Torbreck
- [Richard van Ruth](#), Business Development Manager, Wine Direct
- [Catherine Wansink](#), Commercial Business Advisor, NZ Trade & Enterprise
- [Milton Wordley](#), Photographer

Now in its second year, this program plays a very important role in supporting the growth of future wine communications leaders and strengthening the Australian wine sector, a cause of strategic importance to WCA and the Adelaide Business School.

In a survey conducted mid way through the 2019 Wine Industry Mentor Program, Mentor feedback included:

Jeni Port, Independent Wine Writer says about the program: "The Wine Communicators' of Australia Mentor Program can change lives for the better. Being a mentor has opened my eyes to the wealth of unaddressed talent just waiting to be recognized and helped early in their careers."

Alex Gibbs, CEO, Smile Marketing comments: "I'm really enjoying sharing my experience with my mentee. I will most definitely do this again."

Tony Love, Freelance Wine Writer, Presenter, Consultant expressed: "I value the importance of the personal / face to face experience and that they are valuable for me as the mentor and well as the mentoree."

2019 Mentee comments included:

"It's been amazing to have the opportunity to tap into an experienced mind."

My mentors "insights have both boosted my confidence and provided clarity on where I want my future in wine communications to lie."

"This program has really changed the way I think about my future. It's allowed me to ask myself some hard questions and find out exactly what it is I want in my career."

"It has been a good experience so far. This is the first mentor-ship program I have participated in and it has been a great initiative to be a part of. It has really let me develop as a young professional and learn skills and knowledge that I know will help me well into the future."

Applications are now open for mentees in the 2020 [Wine Industry Mentor Program](#). Applicants are expected to be Australian residents and to have gained a minimum of two years' experience in their careers in the wine industry. Eligibility criteria are available on the WCA website (<https://winecommunicators.com.au/education/wine-industry-mentor-program-2/>).

The successful 2020 program participants will be invited to attend a 'meet and greet' in Sydney, 6 May, post the WCA China-Australia Wine Marketing Summit, where they will be able to meet each other in person for the first time.

The partnership with Wine Communicators Australia is another example of how the University of Adelaide is addressing its industry engagement priority in Agri-food and wine.

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About WCA

Wine Communicators of Australia aims to be Australia's pre-eminent organisation connecting business professionals working with wine and currently has more than 500 members. WCA's annual program includes networking events, webinars and its prestigious lunches in association with three major capital city wine shows – Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. It also runs the annual Wine Communicator Awards and Legend of the Vine Awards. For more information visit www.winecommunicators.com.au

About the Adelaide Business School

The University of Adelaide is a world-class research and teaching institution. We are centred on discovering new knowledge, pursuing innovation and preparing the educated leaders of tomorrow. For over 140 years the University of Adelaide has pushed the boundaries in business education, delivering innovative and transformative courses, and producing a network of alumni that have gone on to make a real-world impact in the world of business. With a unique emphasis on both the production and sales aspects of wine, the University's [Wine Business programs](#) are tailored for career in the industry.