

## Media Release

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### Wine Industry Mentor Program breaks new ground

The Wine Industry Mentor Program, which pairs early career wine sector professionals with respected wine sector leaders, is expanding into all areas of the wine industry. This year the program includes wine business, wine marketing, media, photography, wine education, winemaking, viticulture and oenology, while keeping a strong connection with wine communications.

The program was established by Wine Communicators of Australia (WCA) and the University of Adelaide.

“Much of the success of the Australian wine industry is owed to its collegiate nature and the willingness of members to assist others to grow and develop. This is a perfect example of that, not only evidenced by the enthusiasm of the participants but also by the cooperation of the four organisations that are partnering to offer a world-class program,” said Andrew Stark, Executive Officer at Wine Communicators of Australia.

The expansion of the program in 2021 has been made possible due to the exciting partnership between WCA, the University of Adelaide, Wine Australia and the Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology (ASVO).

“The program provides early career professionals from the wine industry with the chance to refine their skills and boost their career opportunities by tapping into the experiences and insights from the best in their field,” said the University of Adelaide’s Dr Armando Maria Corsi who is Associate Professor of Wine Business at the Adelaide Business School.

“Training doesn’t end when people graduate: life-long learning is an essential part of students’ and professionals’ careers.”

Chris Waters, Executive Officer at the Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology said the ASVO is delighted to be able to offer a mentor program to members.

“Like membership in a professional society, it is often the intangible aspects of a mentor program that offer the greatest value. The richness of the relationship and the engagement that you can have, both as a mentor or mentee, build aspiration and skills to prepare for the next stage of your career,” he said.

“Importantly, a national mentor program of this nature fills a gap in people development support offered to the sector”, said Jo Hargreaves, Senior Program Manager Wine Australia. “The benefit of a co-ordinated approach between the four partners is already evident in the quality of mentors secured”.

Over 40 industry leaders are set to take up the mantle as a mentor in 2021. They include Peter Leske of Revenir Winemaking, Brett McClen from Brown Family Wines, Kerry Wilkinson from the University of Adelaide and Trish Barry from Mastermind Consulting to name just a few.

The program, which will run over a period of six months from June to November 2021, consists of monthly one-on-one sessions with a mentor and access to a range of resources through the program’s online mentoring platform. It is especially attractive to people who want to follow in the footsteps of their mentors.

Now in its third year, the program’s past participants have reflected on their experience:

“The program was a great opportunity to learn from wine industry leaders. I felt like I gained something special both professionally and personally which was truly a gift in a challenging year,” said Leigh Woodrow, Sales Manager at Langmeil Wines.

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“The program gives you far more back than you put in. We have both challenged each other and from that comes growth and inspiration,” said Gill Gordon-Smith, lecturer TAFESA.

“I was fortunate enough to work with and learn from a mentor who knows more about the wine industry than most will ever be able to remember. My mentor provided a very calm and balanced sounding board for me and allowed me to be reassured there is a future in the industry for me,” said Andrew Schwilk, Co-founder and Director of Cellar Cru.

### **Applications are now open for the 2021 Wine Industry Mentor Program:**

<https://winecommunicators.com.au/education/wine-industry-mentor-program-2021/>

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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](http://www.winecommunicators.com.au)

#### **About the University of Adelaide**

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 wine education, delivering innovative and transformative courses in viticulture, oenology and wine business, and producing a network of alumni that have gone on to make a real-world impact in the world of wine. With a unique emphasis on both the production and sales aspects of wine, the University's [Viticulture and Oenology](#) and [Wine Business programs](#) are tailored for a career in the industry.

#### **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. 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.

#### **About Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology**

The Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology was founded in 1980 as a non-political organisation to serve the interests of practicing winemakers and viticulturists by encouraging the exchange of technical information. The Society has held over 40 one-day seminars since it was established and, in conjunction with The Australian Wine Research Institute, organises the Australian Wine Industry Technical Conference every three years. The Society has awarded over 20 scholarships for research and international study visits. Membership now exceeds 700 individuals and affiliated companies.