

Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia (KCA) Conference 2026

Sofitel Hotel, Brisbane Australia

Last updated 14 September 2026. Timings may change depending on availability of participants.

Tuesday, 13 October 2026, Pre-conference

Time (AEST)	Session Details *Location*	
8.00am -	**Registration** *Bastille Lobby, Sofitel Hotel*	
8.30am - 5.30pm	**RTTP Accredited Workshop: Commercialisation Deal-Making: Structuring, Negotiating and Defending Commercialisation Transactions** This mid-to-advanced professional development programme equips commercialisation professionals with the skills to evaluate, structure, negotiate and defend commercialisation transactions. Participants explore the full commercialisation journey from opportunity assessment and pathway selection through to licensing, spinouts, risk allocation, negotiation and supporting commercialisation agreements. Using a progressive case study, practical workshops and peer-to-peer activities, participants develop the commercial judgement required to balance value creation, stakeholder interests, risk and implementation considerations. The programme culminates in a capstone exercise where participants curate and defend a complete commercialisation strategy for a research-derived innovation. *Lyon 1, Sofitel Hotel*	**Rob McInnes (RTTP)** Principal IP Advisory Pty Ltd **Katharine Ku (RTTP)** Chief Licensing Advisor at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati - Boston. **Dr Peter Kambouris** Nonexecutive Director, Founder
17:30 - 18:30	**Director's Reception** (invitation only)	
17:30 - 18:30	Early and mid-career networking event (for KYPN members only) *Cuvee Bar, Sofitel Hotel*	
18:30pm 20:30pm	**Welcome Reception** *Le Ciel, Sofitel Hotel*	**MC Kate Taylor,** Chair KCA

Wednesday, 14 October 2026, Day One of Core Conference Program

Master of Ceremonies: Peter Vaughan, Senior Manager, Commercialisation, AgriFutures Australia

Time	Session	Presenters
8:00am – 9:00am	**Conference Registration** *Registration Lobby, Sofitel Hotel*	
7:30 – 8:45	RTTP breakfast (invitation only)	n/a
9:00 – 9:20	**Welcome and Opening Address** *Le Grand Ballroom 1 and 2*	**Tribal Experiences** Welcome to Country **Kate Taylor RTTP** Chair, KCA
9:20 – 10:20	**Conference Plenary** **From transactions to value creation: lessons from both sides of technology transfer** Drawing on her experience as former Executive Director of Stanford University's Office of Technology Licensing and her current work advising companies seeking to access and commercialise university innovation, Katharine Ku reflects on what creates value in technology transfer. Through personal reflections, practical lessons and insights gained from both sides of the table, she challenges conventional thinking about commercialisation and explores what knowledge exchange professionals should prioritise in an increasingly complex innovation landscape.	**Katharine Ku** Chief Licensing Advisor at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati - Boston. **The Honourable Andrew Powell**, Minister for Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation
10:20 – 10:55	**Morning Tea and Networking**	
10:55 – 11:00	**Introduce the day one program**	**Master of Ceremonies: Peter Vaughan,** Senior Manager, Commercialisation, AgriFutures Australia
11:00 – 11:30	**2025 Survey of Commercialisation Outcomes from Public Research (SCOPR)** Celebrating nine years of SCOPR and presenting the most recent 12-month commercialisation outcomes of publicly funded research across New Zealand and Australia.	**Dr Erin Rayment** Chief Commercialisation and Development Officer, QUT **John Grace AO RTTP** Independent Director, KCA Board
11.30 – 12.20	**Achieving the ambition of research commercialisation in an evolving policy and funding landscape (A&NZ panel** Research impact and realisation of benefits have never been more important, yet the environment supporting it is becoming increasingly complex. Across Australia and New Zealand, governments are calling for stronger translation, greater productivity, increased sovereign capability and more visible impact from public research. At the same time, funding programs are changing, institutional pressures are intensifying and investment capital is becoming more selective. This leadership discussion will provide a candid, behind-the-scenes perspective on the policy and funding shifts shaping	**Facilitator: Siobhan Curran** Director, Advocacy Acting Director, Knowledge Exchange & Entrepreneurship, The University of Newcastle **Dr Alastair Hick**, Chief Executive Officer, Uniseed **Michelle Gallaher** Non-Executive Director and Chairman PRAXIS

	the future of research commercialisation, while exploring practical strategies to strengthen commercial pathways.	
12:20 – 13:20	**LUNCH**	
13:20 – 14:05	**Terms you regret** Building on the candid and well-attended AUTM "Deals I Regret", we'll unpack the terms we still see too often and would approach differently with the benefit of hindsight. This session draws on real examples of regrettable or less-than-ideal terms from licences and research agreements across Australia and New Zealand. Our panel of leading IP lawyers and deal makers will work through selected examples, outlining and the term was, how it found its way into the deal, unpacking the downstream consequences, and sharing practical strategies to limit or eliminate their acceptance. The aim is to consider the mix of legal, commercial and circumstantial pressures that allow these terms to make their way into agreements in the first place and to discuss preferred alternatives.	**Kate Taylor** Chair, Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia and Director Industry Engagement (Health and Social Sciences) QUT **Anna Feros** Chair SOUL (Society of University Lawyers) and **Mark Cleaver** CEO, Massey Ventures Ltd **Dean Moss** CEO, UniQuest
14:05 –15:05	**AI on Trial: Is Your IP Actually at Risk?** Researchers use generative AI tools every day, and people in our sector disagree about what that means for unfiled inventions and confidential information. The moderator presents four short case studies, each a realistic dilemma, and the panel says what the university should do in each. The audience votes before and after on whether universities are too cautious, about right, or not cautious enough, and we see which way the hour moved them.	**Facilitator**: Shane Kilcullen **Helen McFadzean** Principal (AI/robotics/electronics) Phillips Ormonde Fitzpatrick **Nathan Madsen** IP Australia **Will Swain** Terracypher **Peter Simpson Young** University of Sydney
15:05 – 15:40	**Afternoon tea**	
15:40 – 16:20	**Spinout Best Practice – A collective perspective** This session deep dives into an ecosystem wide project to remove the friction and streamline the process of spinouts from research institutions. The Australasian Spinout Guide is intended to be a living document that documents the perspectives from universities, research institutions, investors and founders and the key commercial terms that the participants have aligned on as a path towards streamlining the spinout process. Spinouts have become a well-worn path for research translation, but what have we learnt over the last decade and what is likely to change in the future?	**Facilitator: Quin Chang** CEO and Company Secretary Care Economy CRC **Elaine Stead** Principal Main Sequence Ventures **Leong Mar** Head of Commercialisation, University of Sydney
16:20 - 16:40	**The opportunity that changed my career** The secondment opportunity Massey supported, the experience gained, how those learnings have since flowed back into the organisation and the broader KCA community and launching this year's KCA career defining opportunity for early career professionals.	**Ella Moffatt** KCA Young Professionals Network Chair **Kate Taylor** Chair KCA
16:40 – 16:45	**Day one wrap up and intro to day two**	**Master of Ceremonies, Peter Vaughan,** Senior Manager

		Commercialisation, AgriFutures Australia
17:00 – 17:20	**KCA Annual General Meeting** KCA Members only	
18:30pm – 22:30pm	**KCA Australasian Research and Commercialisation Awards** *River Shed & Deck, Howard Smith Wharves, 5 Boundary St Brisbane* - Best Industry Collaboration - Best Licensing Deal - Best Spinout - Best Knowledge Exchange Initiative - Research Commercialisation Professional of the Year	**MC Peter Kambouris** Nonexecutive Director, Founder **Natalie Chapman** Founder and Managing Director, gemaker **Dr Ben O'Brien** Founder Stretchsense, Auckland

Thursday, 15 October 2026, Day Two of Core Conference Program

Master of Ceremonies: Denise Hodge, Founder and CEO, JourneyTech Pty Ltd

Time	Session	Presenters
8:30 -	**Registration and Welcome Coffee 8:30 – 9:15** *Registration Lobby, Sofitel Hotel*	
9:00 – 10:25	**Counting What Counts** *Ballroom Le Grand 1* HASS Special Interest Group Deep Dive What if SCOPR could act not just as an indicator of research commercialisation, but as a lever, encouraging greater visibility, viability and resourcing for human and social science impact? This session invites participants to build their own SCOPR, designing practical, comparable metrics that better capture (and catalyse) HASS innovation across the sector.	**Facilitator: Margie Mahon,** Director Social and Behavioural Sciences, UniQuest
9:00 – 10:25	**Plant Variety Commercialisation – Successful navigation of the complexities of plant variety protection and commercialisation through the journey of past, present, and future** *Ballroom Le Grand 2* Agriculture Special Interest Group Deep Dive - Plant variety commercialisation using the Australian and New Zealand plant breeders' rights systems - The commercialisation menu options for plant variety commercialisation	**Facilitator: Deon Goosen** Lead Agriculture and Food Special Interest Group **Jane Banovac** Chief Commercialisation Officer, Agriculture Victoria Services **Josie Dawber**, Plant Varieties IP Manager, Bioeconomy Sciences Institute New Zealand **Muhammad Javid**, Sebnior PBR Examniner IP Australia
10:25 – 11:05	**MORNING TEA**	

11:05 12:30	**Title: AI State of the Nation** *Ballroom Le Grand 1* AI Special Interest Group Deep Dive 12 months ago, the sector was flying blind. What's changed? And how can commercialisation practitioners maximise the benefits of AI in the year ahead? The findings were stark: 80% were experimenting with AI, but only 3% had a strategy. 63% had no governance. 78% lacked prompt engineering basics. This session traces what's happened since – how technology has shifted, how the sector has responded, and what we've learned trying to make AI work inside our own institutions. Through practical exercises, participants will map where their organisation sits on the curve: scoping in 2025, applying in 2026, and maximising in 2027.	**Peter Simpson-Young** Co-Lead KCA GenAI Special Interest Group Research Translation Strategy Manager, University of Sydney **Shane Kilcullen** Co-Lead KCA GenAI Special Interest Group Ssoc Director Commercialisation – Innovative Planet Swinburne University
11:05 – 12:30	**Title: Inside the deal room** *Ballroom Le Grand 2* KCA Young Professionals Network Deep Dive Format: Interactive case studies. Hear from leaders in the tech transfer profession as they unpack two real, high-stakes deals and the decisions they faced along the way. In this interactive case study session, you'll be placed in the decision-maker's seat, choosing what you would do at each critical junction with the limited information available. As if it were happening in real time. Discover what actually happened inside the deal room, and how each decision played out. Will you make the right calls to seal the deal?	*Panelists*: **Mark Cleaver** CEO Massey Ventures Ltd **Dr Goslik Schepers** CEO Eco-Markets Australia *Facilitators:* **Dr Dan Carlisle** Commercialisation and IP Director, Massey University **Ella Moffat** Lead KCA Young Professionals Network
12:30 – 13:25	**LUNCH**	
13:25 – 13:30	Introduce the afternoon. *Ballroom Le Grand 1 and 2*	**Master of Ceremonies: Denise Hodge**, Founder and CEO, JourneyTech Pty Ltd
13:30 – 13:50	**International directions for Tech Transfer** Hear from the Chairs of Knowledge Exchange UK and AUTM – key highlights from the Ecosystem, looking forward and inviting you to 2027. Plus, Horizon insights.	**Art Bos** Head of BD & Knowledge Transfer at Erasmus University Rotterdam
13:50 – 14:35	**Title – Behind the Vicebio Sanofi Deal** Format: Case study of Australian award-winning technology/deal – Behind the Vicebio Sanofi deal. Presentations from deal making team followed by QandA. Synopsis: Inside the Landmark Sanofi-Vicebio Acquisition; Insights and lessons from UniQuest's commercialisation team on the largest deal in the history of Australian university commercialisation	**Dr Craig Belcher, Dr Tamsin Terry, and Nicole Cowan and John Swinson** UniQuest
14:35 – 15:20	**Ready for Who? Building Investor-Ready Ventures Together** **Preparing Founders and Researchers for Investor Conversations**	**Dr Carmel (Carrie) Hillyard AM FTSE FAICD,** Investor **Steve Meller,** Founder CH4 Global

	As capital becomes more selective, founders have fewer opportunities to make a strong first impression. Success depends on more than strong technology. It requires founders, researchers, TTOs and investors to align on what it takes to build a venture capable of attracting capital and creating value. Bringing together experienced founders and active investors, this session explores the realities of investor engagement from both sides of the table. What attracts attention? What creates confidence? What are the common mistakes that derail otherwise promising opportunities? The discussion is not about securing more funding. It is about helping TTOs better prepare founders and researchers for the realities of investor engagement	**Nick McNaughton,** Angel Investor **Facilitator Peter Laurie** Director Inductive
15:20 – 15:50	**Afternoon tea**	
15:50 – 16:20	**You can't ask that!** Panelists answer anonymous questions crowd sourced from YOU, the audience.	**Katharine Ku** **Ben O'Brien** **David Christensen** CEO OTAGO INNOVATION LTD More panelists to follow....
16:20 – 16:30	**Closing remarks** - Summary - Announce host city and dates 2027	**Melissa Nugent** Conference Chair

Friday, 16 October 2026, Post-conference Workshops

Time	Session	Presenters
From 8:30 –	Registration desk open and Welcome Coffee *Bastille Lobby, Sofitel Hotel*	
9:00 – 14:00	**RTTP Accredited workshop: Investor Ready: Navigating the funding landscape.** *Lyon 1, Sofitel Hotel* This early to mid-career professional development program will take you through real-world case studies, hands-on activities and expert discussion, to explore investor types, funding pathways, due diligence requirements, investor engagement strategies, and the elements of a compelling investor pitch. The workshop bridges the gap between research excellence and commercial readiness, providing practical tools that can be immediately applied to university spinouts, startup formation and industry-facing commercialisation activities. Whether you are supporting academic founders, managing venture formation, preparing investment opportunities or seeking to strengthen your investor network, this workshop will help you better understand what investors are looking for and how to build confidence in research-led ventures.	**AProf Simon Wilkins** Managing Director Kalipa Pty Ltd **Dr Ruth Park-Jones** Director Monash Innovation and Commercialisation
9:00 – 10:45	**Conference satellite event** **IP Strategy: Learning, tips and Stories** Format: Panel discussion followed by Q&A, and networking morning tea.	**Karen Sinclair (Host)** Practice Group Leader, Chemical & Life Sciences, Griffith Hack **Brendan Cheong**

	Synopsis: Join intellectual property experts and business leaders for a practical discussion on building value through effective IP strategy. Explore real-world success and failure stories, strategic considerations for researchers and commercialisation professionals, and how intellectual property can support long-term commercial outcomes. *Satellite professional development event brought to you by the KCA Queensland Network, sponsored by Griffith Hack – Register via the link on the KCA events calendar https://www.techtransfer.org.au/events/events-calendar/ Lyon 2, Sofitel Hotel*	Head of Intellectual Property, Nutromics **Mike Junger** Director Innovation Strategy **Denise Hodge** Founder and CEO, JourneyTech
11:00 – 14:00	**Conference satellite event** **Patent Search & Analytics Workshop** Format: interactive workshop followed by networking lunch Synopsis: Bring your laptop for this hands-on workshop with Griffith Hack experts. Learn practical patent search and analytics techniques to assess novelty, identify competitors, track technology trends and uncover commercial opportunities. Designed for non-specialists, the session provides skills that support innovation, partnering, funding and commercialisation decisions. *Satellite professional development event brought to you by the KCA Queensland Network, sponsored by Griffith Hack – Register via the link on the KCA events calendar https://www.techtransfer.org.au/events/events-calendar/ Lyon 2, Sofitel Hotel*	**Noam Amitay** IP Intelligence Manager, Griffith Hack **Karen Sinclair** Practice Group Leader, Chemical & Life Sciences, Griffith Hack

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KCA Award Sponsors

Best Industry-Research Collaboration - **Griffith Hack**

Best Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Initiative of the Year - **Bright Yellow**

Best Licensing Deal - **CSL**

Best Spin-Out - **IP Group Australia**

Research Commercialisation Professional of the Year - **CSIRO ON Innovation Program**

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