



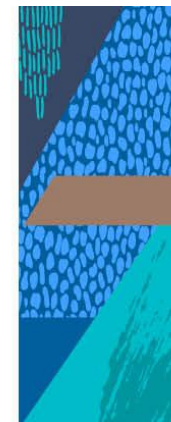
# NMC2025

The Peace Equation: Crafting & Connecting

21-24 September 2025

Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park on Country Dharug Ngurra (Sydney)

[nmc2025.com.au](http://nmc2025.com.au)



## National Mediation Conference 2025 Program

SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2025		"Cultural Day"
TBC	<b>Cultural Walking Tour</b>  Sydney and the surrounding areas are abundant in Aboriginal rock art and relics, and home to one of the world's largest and oldest art galleries. By showcasing some of the Aboriginal sites this walking tour will help educate about the importance of the ongoing protection of our culture.  <i>More details to come.</i>	
2.30 – 4.30pm	<b>Kintsugi Workshop</b>  <b>Kintsugi</b> is the traditional Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with lacquer and gold, embracing flaws as part of an object's history. In this beginner-friendly workshop, you'll learn its basic techniques, philosophy, and history using modern materials to restore broken pieces—making them even more beautiful.  For more information visit <a href="https://kintsugi-australia.com.au/">https://kintsugi-australia.com.au/</a> <i>Limited places available.</i> <i>Cost: \$120 per person</i> <i>Register as part of the conference or email <a href="mailto:nmc@conlog.com.au">nmc@conlog.com.au</a></i>	<b>Kintsugi Sydney CBD studio</b> Level 1, Suite 107 147 King St Sydney
3.00 – 7.00pm	<b>Registration opens</b>	<i>Sheraton Grand</i>
5.00 – 7.00pm	<b>WELCOME RECEPTION</b> <i>Drinks and canapes amongst the exhibition</i>	<i>Conference foyer</i>

## NMC2025 Program

MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2025 <i>"The Peace Equation"</i>					
7.30am	Registration and exhibition opens				Conference foyer
8.30 – 9.15	<b>PLENARY 1</b> <b>Welcome to Country Dharug Ngurra and Conference Opening</b>  <i>Melissa Stubbings, Senior Dharug Woman</i>				Grand Ballroom
9.15 – 10.00	KEYNOTE  <i>Dr Monique Williams, CEO Cure Violence Global, Chicago USA</i>				
10.00 – 10.30	MORNING TEA				Conference foyer
10.30 – 12.30	<b>1.1 Skills</b>	<b>1.2 Restorative Approaches</b>	<b>1.3 Family Dispute Resolution – Coordination</b>	<b>1.4 Commercial &amp; Business</b>	<b>1.5 Practice &amp; Ethics</b>
10.30 – 11.00	Mediation myth busting <i>Bianca Keys, Bianca Keys Dispute Resolution Consulting</i>	Healing and reconciliation through redress: the power of personal acknowledgement, <i>Sonia Boersig, National Indigenous Australians Agency</i>	Supporting families to manage separation safely whilst navigating the Family Law Sector, <i>Lea-anne Meehan, Relationships Australia QLD;</i> <i>Jeremy Culshaw</i>	<i>The Hon. Kevin Lindgren AM KC, Federal Court Judge (rtd)</i>	Enhancing workplace harmony through restorative practices in mediation, <i>Natascha Boehm, The Workplace Collective</i>
11.00 – 11.30	When to do fro and to [shuttle mediations and open sessions], <i>Joelene Nel, McLaughlins Lawyers;</i> <i>Dr Laurence Boule, Independent Mediation Services</i>	Mapping and credentialing restorative practice pathways in New Zealand, <i>Jon Everest, Resolution Institute</i>	<b>PANEL:</b> <b>COORDINATION IN FDR</b>  The Case for Coordination: case management within family relationship centres <i>Janette Mulherin, Centacare Family and Relationship Services Brisbane</i>  Guiding families through the storm -Role of parenting coordination in family law <i>Anne-Marie Cade, Divorce Right</i>	Commercial/Construction Mediation <i>Dr Nav Sedaghati, Mediator, Arbitration, Lawyer</i>	<b>PANEL:</b> <b>SELF-CARE AND CLIENT-CARE</b>  Remaining connected, present, focused and engaged in dispute resolution <i>Athena Harris Ingall, Legal Member, Mental Health Review Tribunal (NSW);</i> <i>Raymond Brazil, Dispute resolution consultant</i>  Care of other begins with care of one's self: Ethical considerations <i>Dr Mark Seton, University of Sydney</i>
11.30 – 12.00	Mediating conflicts that are impossible to resolve™, <i>Ruth Sirman, CanMediate International</i>	<b>PANEL:</b> <b>RESTORATIVE APPROACHES IN FDR</b>	<b>PANEL:</b> <b>CHILD INCLUSIVE PRACTICE</b>	<b>PANEL:</b> <b>SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONERS</b>	Multi-faceted reflective tools for deepening our learning from practice

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		Restorative practices in Family Dispute Resolution processes/mediation processes <b>Jodie Grant, Shifting Sands</b>	Children's voices and the rise of child inclusive practice in FDR <b>Valerie Norton, The Mediation Collective;</b> <b>Bianca Roche-Bolger, The Mediation Collective</b>	The business of small business <b>Stuart Clues, Office of the Coordinator-General, Tasmania</b>  <b>Dominique Lamb, Commissioner, Queensland Small Business Commission</b>	<b>Jenny Devlin, Relationships Australia</b>  Client care - preparation is a form of client care <b>Richard Denning, ACT Restorative Justice Unit</b>
12.00 – 12.30	Restoring, reviving and restructuring relationships through mediation, <b>Linda Kochanski AM, College of Law; Mieke Brandon AM RIF, Resolution Institute (retd)</b>	Child Inclusive Practice: The voice of the child and restorative approaches <b>Terrie Toner, Relationships Australia;</b> <b>Belinda Taranto, Relationships Australia</b>  Family Talk: Restorative approaches reset relationships in complex family conflicts, <b>Freia Carlton, Victoria Legal Aid;</b> <b>Mary-Jo Anagnos, Victoria Legal Aid</b>	YOUth Speak: Empowering young people's voices in family dispute resolution <b>Nikki Venter, Relationships Australia SA</b>	<b>Lynda McAlary-Smith, Commissioner, Victorian Small Business Commission</b>	Pioneering Mediation: Resolution Institute's Journey and Future Vision for Growing Mediation <b>Amber Williams, Resolution Institute</b> <b>Fiona Hollier, Hollier and Hart</b>
12.30 – 1.30	LUNCH				
1.30 – 2.00	PLENARY 2 AMDRAS  <b>Stephen Dickson, AMDRAS Chair and Board Member</b>				
2.00 – 3.30	1.6 Complex Dispute Resolution	1.7 Workplace	1.8 Family Dispute Resolution: Child Inclusive Practice	1.9 Public Sector and the Courts	1.10 Yarning, Crafting & Connecting
2.00 – 2.30	Working together collaborative communication skills engaging EQ for best outcomes to conflict, <b>Paula Bruce, Resolution Services Group</b>	WORKSHOP:  Healing Toxic Workplaces – How ADR and Systems Thinking Can Help! <b>Ruth Sirman, CanMediate International</b>	2.00 - 2.45 WORKSHOP:  Small voices that change parents' minds: Meeting with children in Family Law, <b>Jon Graham, International Centre for Children and Family Law;</b> <b>Dr Lorri Yassenik, International Centre for Children and Family Law</b>	Building Trust in Institutions through Conciliation Practice <b>Joseph Hongoh, PaCSIA</b>	WEAVING WORKSHOP  <b>Sarah Merritt</b>  Led by people with DR wisdom and cultural knowledge, this workshop will engage participants in a collective dialogue of deep listening and learning. Working alongside artists and healers, participants will explore create together Dispute Resolution (DR) stories deeply woven into lore, culture, and traditional practices.
2.30 – 3.00	How trauma informed practice helps DR practitioners, improve practice and benefits clients <b>Jodie Grant, Shifting Sands</b>		2.45 - 3.07 Does Child-Inclusive Mediation satisfy requirements to hear the voice of the child? <b>Dianne Loveday, Bayside Mediation</b>	The relationship between employment mediation and the Employment Relations Authority in Aotearoa New Zealand <b>Dr Grant Morris, Victoria University of Wellington NZ</b>	

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3.00 – 3.30	Trauma-informed conciliation: from principles to practice <b>Justin Toohey</b> , <i>Applied Dispute Resolution</i>	Workplace Conflict - from the inside out <b>Rachael Brady</b> , <i>Rachael Brady- Workplace Coach and Consultant</i>	<b>3.07 - 3.30</b> Minors in mediation: Can they participate effectively? <b>Dr Esther Erlings</b> , <i>Macquarie Law School</i>		
3.30 – 4.00	AFTERNOON TEA				<i>Conference foyer</i>
4.00 – 4.45	<b>PLENARY 3</b> Community Mediation in Australia: where to?  Facilitated discussion between: <b>Robyn Bailey</b> , <i>Mediator and Director, Exploresolutions</i> <b>John Steele</b> , <i>Mediator, Uniting Communities Mediation Service</i> <b>Lynn Davie</b> , <i>Mediator and Trainer</i>				<i>Grand Ballroom</i>
4.45	DAY ONE CLOSE				
4.45 – 6.00	HOSTED DRINKS				<i>Conference foyer</i>

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TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2025 “Crafting”					
8.00am	Registration, coffee cart and exhibition opens				Conference foyer
9.15 – 10.00	<b>PLENARY 4</b> KEYNOTE  Developing a mediation response unit to meet a community need <b>Cherise Hairston</b> , Dayton Mediation Centre, Ohio USA <b>Michelle Zaremba</b> , Dayton Mediation Centre, Ohio USA <b>Dr Jeanne Felicity Zimmer</b> , Dayton Mediation Centre, Ohio USA				Grand Ballroom
10.00 – 10.30	MORNING TEA				Conference foyer
10.30 – 12.30	<b>2.1 ADR: Credibility, Data &amp; Learning</b>	<b>2.2 Community Mediation – International Context</b>	<b>2.3 Family Dispute Resolution – Data &amp; Practice</b>	<b>2.4 Mastering capability and practice</b>	
10.30 – 11.00	Myth and reality: The 'day in court' experience in dispute resolution processes, <b>Anne Sutherland</b> , Sutherland Kelly Mediation	Nation building through mediation: The Mongolia experience, <b>Katherine Johnson</b> , Unilegal Consulting	Tails of divorce, best practice for pet custody <b>Karis Nafte</b> , <i>Who Keeps The Dog</i> , Pet Custody Mediation	<b>PANEL:</b>  Court-ordered, lawyer-assisted property conciliation: which factors predict success? <b>Dr Genevieve Heard</b> , Relationships Australia VIC; <b>Dr Andrew Bickerdike</b> , Relationships Australia <b>Mark Hebblewhite</b> , Victorian Legal Aid Family Dispute Resolution Service	
11.00 – 11.30	The establishment, implementation and promotion of a judicial alternative dispute resolution program, <b>Judge Sharon Burchell</b> , County Court of Victoria		Roles and activities of FDRPs: ADRAC's empirical study of FDR practice, <b>Susan Hamilton-Green</b> , ADRAC;		
11.30 – 12.00	Designing and implementing a Family Dispute Resolution teaching clinic, <b>Prof Rachael Field</b> , Bond University Law Faculty	Time to unmut: A tale of forced marriage in Hong Kong, <b>Sala Sihombing</b> , Conflict Change Consulting	What do flat pack instructions, recipes and parenting plans have in common? <b>Mandy Drommer</b> , WA Family Mediation Services	Design and implementation of conflict management capability in Queensland state schools, <b>Peter Johnstone</b> , Education Queensland	
12.00 – 12.30	A tick-box exercise? Benefits of mandatory FDR for ambivalent clients, <b>Dr Genevieve Heard</b> , Relationships Australia VIC; <b>Dr Jemima Petch</b> , Relationships Australia QLD	Harnessing technology for unity: Community mediation and conflict resolution through data analytics <b>Norwahidah Zinalibdin</b> , Department of National Unity & Integration Malaysia	Demonstrating the value and impact of Family Dispute Resolution: A cost benefit analysis, <b>Sandra Opoku</b> , Relationships Australia Victoria; <b>Dr Andrew Bickerdike</b> , Relationships Australia Victoria	No one wants a complaint ... but maybe it's good for your practice <b>Linda Kochanski AM</b> , College of Law	
12.30 – 1.15	LUNCH AND POSTER SESSION				Conference foyer

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1.15 – 2.00	PLENARY 5					Grand Ballroom
	Holistic and playful innovations for solvers and resolvers of conflict: Vulnero-empowero-resolio strategies  <i>Dr Laurence Boulle, Independent Mediation Services</i> <i>Dr Mark Seton, University of Sydney</i> <i>Joelene Nel, McLaughlins Lawyers</i>					
2.00 – 3.30	2.5 Workplace	2.6 Mediation & Neurodivergency	2.7 Family Dispute Resolution	2.8 Sustainable Practice	2.9 Yarning, Crafting & Connecting	
2.00 – 2.30	Responding to complaints of Sexual Harassment in 2025 <i>Paula Bruce, Resolution Services Group</i>	Improving access to justice for autistic parties in mediation [research repport], <i>Dr Özlem Süssler, La Trobe University</i>	PANEL:  Working with lawyers at family law mediation. <i>Matthew Shepherd, Ramsdens Family Law;</i> <i>Annabel Murray, Ramsdens Family Law</i>  Community Based FDR: A Supportive, Educational, Accessible Approach for Families Experiencing Conflict <i>Erica Nicholls, Uniting Communities Noarlunga Family Relationship Centre</i>	2.00 - 2.45 WORKSHOP:  Mediation as Improv: Creative tools for navigating conflict, <i>Sala Sihombing, Conflict Change Consulting;</i> <i>Prof Joel Lee, National University of Singapore;</i> <i>Melvin Loh, School of Law, Singapore University of Social Sciences</i>	WEAVING WORKSHOP  <i>Sarah Merritt</i>  Led by people with DR wisdom and cultural knowledge, this workshop will engage participants in a collective dialogue of deep listening and learning. Working alongside artists and healers, participants will explore create together Dispute Resolution (DR) stories deeply woven into lore, culture, and traditional practices.	
2.30 – 3.00	Giving peace a chance in workplace conflict <i>Rachael Brady, Rachael Brady-Workplace Coach and Consultant;</i> <i>Nina Harding, Nina Harding Mediation Services</i>	CONVERSATION:  Mediation for all: Understanding neurodiversity and how to ensure inclusive practice, <i>Danielle Hutchinson, Resolution Resources;</i> <i>Dr Samantha Hardy, Conflict Management Academy + NMC Board</i>	PANEL:  From the inside out - enhancing capacity in Child Inclusive Practice, <i>Matthew Horsfall, Centacare Brisbane</i>  Expanding CIP to ensure children of all ages are heard in FDR <i>Elke Pitkethley, Uniting</i>	2.45 - 3.30 WORKSHOP  Supervision in Mediation: Empowering Practitioners, Elevating Practice. <i>Joanne Law, Mediation Institute</i>		
3.00 – 3.30	Workplace Bullying: Debunking the myths, facilitated by narrative mediation, <i>Debbie Dunn, The Narrative Centre</i>					
3.30 – 4.00	AFTERNOON TEA					Conference foyer

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4.00 – 5.00	2.10 Online Processes & Technology	2.11 Best Practice	2.12 Family Dispute Resolution	2.13 Intercultural Competence	
4.00 – 4.30	Culture and the use of technology in dispute resolution, <b>Prof Lola Akin Ojelabi</b> , RMIT University	Quality control of Legal Aid NSW Family Dispute Resolution informing best practice, <b>Gabriela Nitsolas-Pirc</b> , Legal Aid NSW; <b>Eloise Riches</b> , Legal Aid NSW <b>Glenys Rikard-Bell</b> , Legal Aid NSW	Crafting Clarity: Navigating complex property and financial settlements with confidence, <b>Marney Bowden</b> , 60I Mediation; <b>Carmel Cumberbatch</b> , 60I Mediation	Bridging traditional and contemporary mediation: Addressing immediate disputes underpinned by historical grievance <b>Amiel Nubaha</b> , Comprehensive Mediation Services; <b>Dr Judith Rafferty</b> , Conflict Management Academy	
4.30 – 5.00	Telephone dispute resolution service: Managing high volume, virtual Family Dispute Resolution Service, <b>Tim Guest</b> , Relationships Australia QLD	Mapping hybrid dispute resolution in Aotearoa New Zealand, <b>Dr Grant Morris</b> , Victoria University of Wellington NZ	Mediation and parenting coordination: Exploring new Family Law dispute resolution directions, <b>Dr Anne Purcell</b> , Resolution Partners; <b>Shelby Timmins</b> , Divorce Done Differently	Informed, involved, inclusive: A new model in intercultural competence <b>Rory Gowers</b> , Gowers Facilitating; <b>Milan Nitopi</b> , Sussex Partners	
5.00	<b>DAY TWO CLOSE</b>				
6.30 – 10.00pm	<b>CONFERENCE DINNER</b> <i>"Threads of Connection: Honey, Craft &amp; Conversation"</i>				Grand Ballroom

## NMC2025 Program

WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2025 “Connecting”					
8.00am	Registration, coffee cart and exhibition opens				Conference foyer
9.00 – 9.15	<b>PLENARY 6</b>				Grand Ballroom
	Welcome				
9.15 – 10.00	<b>First Nations Yarning Circle</b> facilitated by <b>Melissa Stubbings</b> , Senior Dharug Woman <b>Jackie Stewart</b> , Director of Youth Led Services				
10.00 – 10.45	KEYNOTE  <i>To be confirmed: Prof Megan Davis, Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser Chair in Australian Studies, Harvard University, USA; Director of the Indigenous Law Centre, University of NSW</i>				
10.45 – 11.15	MORNING TEA				Conference foyer
11.15 – 1.15	<b>3.1 Crafting Dispute Resolution</b>	<b>3.2 First Nations Practice</b>	<b>3.3 Family Violence</b>	<b>3.4 Data Driven Professional Skills</b>	<b>3.5 First Nations Experience</b>
11.15 – 11.45	<b>11.15 - 12.00 CONVERSATION</b>  From Contention to Connection: Restorative Pathways to Conflict Resolution in Faith-Inspired Contexts <b>Ruth Levy</b> , Ruth Levy Consulting; <b>Bishop Dr Mark Vainikka</b> , Australian Lutheran Church, QLD District	<b>WORKSHOP:</b>  Mediation through Gurrutu - further learnings <b>Noelene Marika</b> , ARDS Aboriginal Corporation; <b>Helen Nyomba Gandaŋu</b> , ARDS Aboriginal Corporation; <b>Ted Gondarra</b> , ARDS Aboriginal Corporation; <b>Lulu Guyula</b> , ARDS Aboriginal Corporation	Navigating complexity: mastering nuanced risk assessment in high-risk family violence contexts, <b>Marney Bowden</b> , Relationship Matters	<b>WORKSHOP:</b>  Conflict coaching techniques and skills for convenors: Preparing parties for RJ conferences, <b>Dr Judith Rafferty</b> , Conflict Management Academy; <b>Richard Denning</b> , ACT Restorative Justice Unit	<b>WORKSHOP:</b>  Home is where the heart is: community mediation to sustain peaceful relationships <b>Dr Serge Loode</b> , Pacsia; <b>Dennis Kuiai</b> , Autonomous Bougainville Government
11.45 – 12.15			Adjusting more than percentages: mediating property after the 2025 Family Violence Amendment, <b>Michele Brooks</b> , Victorian Bar		
12.15 – 12.45	<b>12.00 - 12.45 CONVERSATION:</b>  Mediation Makeover: Transforming how you think and talk about what you do <b>Sarah Blake</b> , Sarah M Blake	<b>WORKSHOP:</b>  Yarning about First Nations Family Dispute Resolution, <b>Kathy Cullen</b> , Victoria Legal Aid; <b>Zack Smith</b> , Victoria Legal Aid <b>Bianca Evans</b> , Victoria legal Aid	Mediating in the age of rage, <b>Miriam Ziegler</b> , Miram Ziegler Mediation; <b>Danielle Jaku-Greenfield</b> , Jaku Mediation	Legal Aid NSW Family Dispute Resolution (LANSWFDR) ADR: the road less taken <b>Gabriela Nitsolas-Pirc</b> , Legal Aid NSW; <b>Eloise Riches</b> , Legal Aid NSW; <b>Corrina Faulkner</b> , Legal Aid NSW	
12.45 – 1.15	Empowering parties to seek accommodations, support, and accountability when facing practitioner misconduct <b>Dan Berstein</b> , MH Mediate		“We’ve separated, so why are we still living under the same roof?” <b>Tara Houseman</b> , Relationships Australia; <b>Naomi Doyle</b> , Relationships Australia	AI and tech-enabled abuse in family mediation: recognising, responding, and resolving <b>Fiona Kirkman</b> , CORTO; <b>Pip Raedio</b> , Kirkman Family Law Australia	



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1.15 – 2.15	LUNCH	Conference foyer
2.15 – 2.45	<b>PLENARY 7</b> Ethics  <i>Mary Walker OAM, IMI Ethics Committee</i> <i>Dorcas Quek, IMI Ethics Committee</i> <i>Lola Akin Ojelabi, IMI Ethics Committee</i>	Grand Ballroom
2.45 – 3.30	<b>PANEL:</b>  Local to Global <i>Cherise Hairston, Dayton Mediation Centre, Ohio USA</i> <i>Dr Monique Williams, CEO Cure Violence Global, Chicago USA</i>	
3.30 – 4.00	<b>Wrap up of NMC2025</b> <b>NMC2027 – destination announcement</b>  <b>NATIONAL MEDIATION CONFERENCE 2025 CLOSE</b>	
4.00 – 5.30	<b>CLOSING DRINKS</b>	Conference foyer

THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2025 “Connect & reflect” walking tour		
9.00am – 3.00pm	<p><b>“Connect &amp; reflect in nature” walking tour</b>  <b>A guided walk for reflection, connection and creation</b>  <i>Franca Petrone, Dispute Management Services; Anne Sutherland, Sutherland Kelly Mediation; and Nicole Arendsen, Cullaborate</i></p> <p>How often do you pull out your notes following a conference?</p> <p>This guided walk is designed to create the space for you to relax, restore and integrate your conference learning whilst walking in nature; connecting with others; sharing reflections on sessions you attended and hearing about sessions you didn’t.  Meet at 9 am at Circular Quay, catching a ferry together to a north shore coastal walk and returning to Circular Quay around 3pm</p> <p><i>Limited places available.</i>  <i>Cost is \$50 per person</i>  <i>Register as part of the conference or email <a href="mailto:nmc@conlog.com.au">nmc@conlog.com.au</a></i></p>	