

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



Artwork: Sally Tran, 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

ACOLA staff live and work on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and waters across Australia. As we help to inform national policy and develop innovative solutions to complex global problems and emerging national needs, we remain mindful of the 60,000 years of research, science and innovation represented by the world's oldest continuing cultures.

We seek always to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, both from history and today, and to respect the deep knowledge embodied in their ancient and sustainable cultures and knowledge. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and pay respects to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Traditional Knowledge, and the deep history of science and innovation it embodies.

CONTENTS

Chair's report	4
Chief Executive Officer's Message	5
Who we are	6
ACOLA members	7
How we work	8
Year in review	10
Bridging research and policy for national impact	15
Engagement	16
Organisational excellence	18
Key people	19
Expert panel members	20
ACOLA team	21

Australian Council of Learned Academies Annual Report 2024 – 25.

This document is a true and accurate account of the activities of the Australian Council of Learned Academies for the financial year 2024 – 25, in accordance with the reporting requirements of its Constitution, [ER1] the ACNC, and for the conditions of grants made by the Australian Government under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth).

ACOLA is an established and approved Australian Research Institute by the Australian Government; is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC); and holds Deductible Gift Recipient status



CHAIR'S REPORT

It is a privilege to present ACOLA's Annual Report for 2024-25 – a year defined by collaboration, and national impact. This year marked the beginning of a new chapter under the leadership of our CEO, Prerana Mehta, whose fresh perspective and energy have reinvigorated how ACOLA engages with the Learned Academies and our partners across government, industry, and the research community. Together, we are strengthening ACOLA's role through the Academies, as a catalyst for collaboration and a national voice for evidence-based policy and innovation.



Amid global uncertainty, misinformation, and fiscal restraint, ACOLA's convening role has never been more critical. The volatility of the international research environment — particularly shifts in United States and regional policy settings — has reinforced the need for strategic prioritisation and efficiency in how ACOLA delivers its mission. The Board initiated a Strategic Review to ensure ACOLA remains sustainable, agile, and positioned for long-term impact. The Review reaffirmed ACOLA's purpose as a trusted intermediary between research and policy, while identifying new pathways to:

- Strengthen collaboration across the Academies and with government
- Diversify and stabilise revenue streams
- Maximise the visibility and influence of ACOLA's interdisciplinary expertise

The Board received the Review findings in June 2025 and has endorsed a roadmap for implementation over the coming years. This will guide ACOLA's evolution as a more connected, responsive, and future-focused organisation — one that continues to deliver rigorous, timely advice that benefits all Academies and serves the national interest.

Highlights from 2024–25 include:

Deepening engagement across government, including with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the Office of the Chief Scientist, the Department of Education, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). These partnerships have reinforced ACOLA's reputation as a trusted provider of evidence-based, interdisciplinary advice.

Strengthening regional partnerships through our role as an Australia's delivery partner for the DFAT-funded KONEKSI program in Indonesia. This work has strengthened Australia's understanding of regional research ecosystems and informed strategies for shared innovation and capability building.

A key output this year was ACOLA's report *Mapping Australia's Indonesia Research Capability*, produced for the KONEKSI Program in collaboration with the Australian Academy of the Humanities. The study provided the first comprehensive analysis of Australia's Indonesia-related research strengths and barriers to collaboration, offering a roadmap to deepen bilateral research ties and amplify joint impact.

Together with the CEO and leadership team, the Board looks forward to building on this year's achievements, advancing ACOLA's Strategic Review priorities, and continuing to shape a more innovative, inclusive, and sustainable future for Australia.

PROFESSOR LOUISE BAUR AM FAHMS

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED ACADEMIES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

This year has been one of renewal and momentum for ACOLA. Building on our strong foundations, we have continued to deliver independent, interdisciplinary advice that informs national policy and strengthens Australia's research and innovation ecosystem.

Through our programs on Australia's energy transition research plan, international collaboration, and social inclusion, ACOLA has brought together Australia's leading minds to address the complex challenges shaping our future. Our work with government and partners continues to highlight the value of research in driving productivity, resilience, and equity across society.

In 2024–25, we also undertook a Strategic Review to ensure ACOLA remains fit for purpose and future-focused. This process has strengthened our governance, operations, and culture, positioning us to build on our unique role as a trusted convener on interdisciplinary issues drawing on the expertise of member Learned Academies and their Fellowship as well as the broader research community.

I am deeply proud of the commitment and energy that the small, but mighty and culturally diverse ACOLA team bring to achieving outcomes. I would like to thank the ACOLA Board - in particular Dr Katherine Woodthorpe AO FTSE FAICD and Professor Louise Baur AM FAHMS for their strategic direction over the last 12 months, and the Academy executive and policy teams who have been incredibly generous with their time and insight. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the dedicated Fellows whose expertise I rely on to deliver interdisciplinary research policy advice that is a critical for Australia's innovation and economic progress.

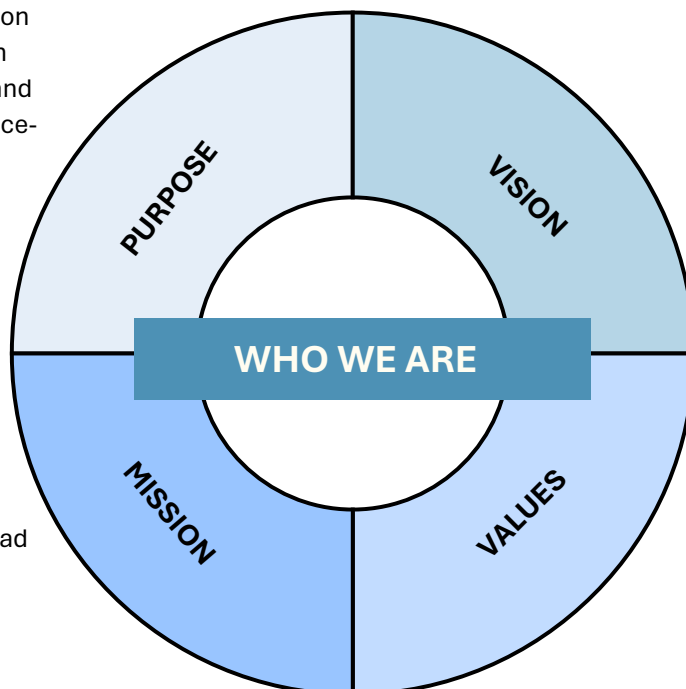
PRERANA MEHTA

ACOLA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Advising Australia –
advancing discussions on
complex issues through
trusted, independent, and
interdisciplinary evidence-
based advice.

ACOLA aims to be a key
source of high-quality,
robust, and independent
interdisciplinary advice for
Australia’s decision-makers
and the public on complex
challenges and issues.



To provide a forum that
brings great minds, broad
perspectives, and
knowledge together to
help solve complex
societal issues for the
benefit of Australia.

Integrity, rigor,
transparency,
inclusiveness, creativity,
collaboration and
interdisciplinarity.

OBJECTIVES

POLICY

- to deliver evidence-informed interdisciplinary advice to support and guide policy decision-making processes,
- to engage and contribute interdisciplinary perspectives to public debate and awareness-raising on emerging national and regional issues,
- to promote an appreciation within the community and among decision-makers of the value that interdisciplinary research and scholarship provides as an evidence-base for public policy.

RESEARCH

- engaging disciplinary experts to advance research and scholarship,
- promoting the application of interdisciplinary expert knowledge,
- declaring and disseminating interdisciplinary expert knowledge,
- advocating standards of research and scholarship to encourage excellence.

DEVELOPMENT

- to collaborate with the Learned Academies, professional institutes, other Learned societies and educational institutions in matters of mutual interests,
- to establish and maintain cooperative relations between the Company and overseas bodies having similar objectives in the disciplines represented by the Company’s members.

ACOLA MEMBERS

Bridging the disciplines for informed public policy

Australia's five Learned Academies are members of ACOLA. Each Academy holds this formal recognition through identification under the Australian Government's Higher Education Support Act (HESA).

Through a Memorandum of Understanding, ACOLA values its partnership with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), to ensure the considerations of Australia's first peoples are incorporated in the design, discussion and analysis of the findings from our activities.

ACOLA also partners with other appropriate organisations for specific projects and activities.

Australia's Learned Academies

ACOLA convenes and is powered by its members, Australia's five learned academies



HOW WE WORK

ACOLA plays a critical role in fostering evidence-based, interdisciplinary research to address complex societal challenges. By facilitating collaboration across diverse academic fields, ACOLA is uniquely positioned to generate research that has tangible, broad-reaching impact and provide insights to Government to shape and determine policy that benefit Australia.

Our activities span:



Professor Ariadne Vromen FASSA speaking with Dr James Weinberg on trust in politics and politicians at ACOLA's Parliamentary Library Seminar, 2024.

We maintain a robust framework to ensure our analysis and support enables new and timely policy insights. Our activities seek to; expose, synthesise and translate what is known and not known; present an evidence-informed vision of future states and directions; and, present analysis on the various variables, considerations and trade-offs for policy options. We rarely provide specific recommendations, as our goal is to lift policymakers' quality, capability and capacity to bring research and robust evidence to the centre of their thinking and decisions - not to advocate a position or drive for specific policy settings.



1

Identify issues

In close partnership with funders, we identify and scope requirements, including workshops with Fellows and other experts.

2

Convene experts

An Expert Working Group (EWG) is convened, comprising Academy Fellows and other experts, to ensure a broad interdisciplinary focus on technological, social, cultural and economic aspects. The EWG is critical to identifying specific areas for analysis and balancing disparate opinions and evidence from across stakeholders.

3

Consult, data collection, analyse

Core to any project is the collection, collation and evaluation of all the evidence including literature, expert insights and other inputs. This includes assessing the breadth, depth and potentially contradictory information. A focus and priority is placed on robust peer-reviewed and authoritative research evidence.

4

Peer Review

To ensure findings are evidence-based, balanced, comprehensive and independent, a peer-review process is undertaken. Reviewers are Academy Fellows and appropriate industry and government experts.

5

Finalise reports

ACOLA works with the EWG to consider and incorporate feedback from peer reviewers and project sponsors before finalising the report. Once approved, the report proceeds through final copy-editing, professional design, proofreading, and publication — including both digital and print formats — ahead of public release and dissemination.

6

Sponsor briefings

Before release, ACOLA works with project sponsors to provide briefings to key Ministers, senior departmental executives, decision-makers and other key stakeholders on the report, as appropriate.

7

Release and post-report activities

A key value proposition for project sponsors is post-release activities. As reports are undertaken in partnership, ACOLA works with sponsors to explore appropriate opportunities to promulgate reports with key stakeholders and the wider public, e.g. through briefings, social and traditional media and panel sessions.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Enhancing ACOLA's value as collaborative platform

Under the new direction of CEO Prerana Mehta, ACOLA has embraced the opportunity to refresh, rethink and rescope the ways in which it supports the five Learned Academies (Academies) to best serve all organisations involved. During this past financial year ACOLA undertook a formal, independent strategic review of the organisation's value, purpose, and governance arrangements, identifying both challenges and opportunities in servicing the Academies, and working to better align ACOLA and the Academies to achieve future goals.

The review commenced in November 2024 and sought to clarify ACOLA's purpose by identifying a set of research priorities to ensure that ACOLA's programs focus on issues requiring multidisciplinary perspectives and deliver mutual benefit to the Academies without duplicating their efforts. The review examined how best ACOLA can support the Academies moving forward and reaffirming ACOLA's unique role as a collaborative platform for the Academies.

The Board appointed a Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) in January 2025, comprising Fellows from each of the Academies, that provided specialist and independent advice to the CEO and the Board to support the review. Strong governance arrangements were in place to support the SAC and review process. ThinkPlace, a local Canberra based firm were selected as the independent consultant for the review.

SAC Committee Members:

- Andrew Clarke AO PSM FTSE, Chair
- Emeritus Professor Fred D'Agostino FAHA
- Professor Lyn Beazley AO FAA FTSE
- Professor Stephen Duckett AM FASSA FAHMS
- Professor Brian Schmidt AC FTSE FRS FAA
- Professor Louise Baur AM FAHMS
- Kate Pounder

Recommendations to enhance the impact of ACOLA for the benefit of all Academies were tabled for consideration by the Board in June 2025. ACOLA anticipates implementing the including finalisation of research priorities in FY25-26.

To ensure ACOLA upheld its core business while the strategic review was underway, the organisation continued to focus on: building awareness of the Academies and ACOLA, convening and thought leadership, and advancing interdisciplinary research to inform evidence-based policy.

Supporting the KONEKSI program

KONEKSI is a DFAT-funded Australia-Indonesia Knowledge Partnership program (2023-27), for which ACOLA is a supporting delivery partner. Now in its second year, KONEKSI has continued to strengthen collaborative research partnerships to increase mutual understanding between countries.

During 2024-25, following changes to the Government of Indonesia and a new bilateral Australian agenda, ACOLA aligned its support of KONEKSI to the program's evolving needs - shifting focus from research grants to a more strategic advisory role. ACOLA coordinated Academy participation and knowledge in new ways including facilitating deep engagement with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Government of Indonesia ministries including BRIN (National Agency for Research and Innovation), Bappenas (Ministry of National Development Planning), and MoHEST (Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology). Efforts included:

- production of monthly sector scans for KONEKSI, summarising key developments from across Australian policy, innovation, research and Academy landscape,
- three 'Deep Dive' insight papers on research, innovation and policy practices, involving roundtable participation and insights from 18 Fellows of the Learned Academies and industry/research knowledge experts,
- delivery and presentation of *Mapping of Innovation Hubs in Australia* report, developed in collaboration with Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) and presented to Indonesian counterparts including BRIN, Bappenas, MoHEST,
- an Australia-Indonesia innovation roundtable held in December 2024, led by ACOLA and attended by Academy Fellows, senior representatives from Australian government (DFAT and DISR), leaders from research institutes including National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council, CSIRO, industry experts Cooperative Research Australia, innovation and commercialisation leaders.

The success of these activities has paved the way for a proposed 2026 country visit program, through which representatives from the Government of Indonesia and Indonesian Universities will visit Australia's regional, rural, and metropolitan innovation and technology hubs to learn from Australian models, build new partnerships, and strengthen collaboration. These efforts have enabled deeper Academy connections with international policymakers and helped to further positive research and innovation relationships with Indonesia.



ACOLA CEO with Dr. Agus Haryono, Deputy Chairman for Research and Innovation Facilitation at Indonesia's National Research & Innovation Agency (BRIN), alongside key stakeholders from Australia's research, science, and innovation ecosystem.

Spotlighting the Australia-Indonesia Research Relationship

ACOLA was commissioned by KONEKSI to map the knowledge landscape focusing on Australia's capability to engage with Indonesia through research. The work was undertaken in collaboration with the Australian Academy of the Humanities and sought to identify past and current organisations active in facilitating research with or about Indonesia, as well as examine Australia's publication outputs and disciplinary knowledge in this space.

The report was developed in the context of the Australian Government's strategic efforts to understand and strengthen relationships with Southeast Asia, highlighted through Nicholas Moore AO's 2023 report, *Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040*. It sought to understand how Australia collaborates with and Indonesia on research, focusing on society and culture research, health and medical research, and energy transition research.

The findings illustrate the complexity of building bilateral international research collaboration and point to opportunities and challenges to support greater knowledge sharing and partnership between Australia and Indonesia. Improved understanding of research collaboration status can help guide decision making processes, and point to how Australia could encourage mutually beneficial, enduring and sustainable bilateral research partnerships with Indonesia into the future. The report was published on 2 December 2024 and is available [here](#).





Tracing the human dimensions of Australia's Energy Transition

ACOLA has continued support for Australia's energy transition research agenda through its ongoing [Australian Energy Transition Research Plan \(AETRP\)](#), supported by a Steering Committee of Fellows from the Learned Academies. ACOLA commenced the development of two pivotal reports examining the social dimensions of Australia's energy transition. These reports, to be released in FY2026, will reinforce Australia's commitment to a just, inclusive, and evidence-based pathway to net zero.

The companion reports — *Vulnerability and Australia's Energy Transition* by Professor Sara Bice and Dr Richard Parsons and *Examining JUST Energy Metrics: Exploring Australian Research Opportunities* by Associate Professor Madeline Taylor — deliver vital insights into how the benefits and burdens of the energy transition are distributed across communities, and how justice can be measured and embedded in policy and practice.

Together, the reports provide a blueprint for embedding social equity into Australia's clean energy transformation, positioning the nation as a global leader in inclusive climate action. They demonstrate ACOLA's continued commitment to mobilising interdisciplinary expertise to inform evidence-based policy, strengthen public trust, and ensure that no community is left behind in the journey to a sustainable future.



Strengthening Disability Responsiveness Across Australia's Workforces

In 2024-25, ACOLA worked closely with the Department of Social Services to develop and submit a proposal for a major national initiative aimed at strengthening disability responsiveness across Australia's healthcare, education, and justice sectors.

Over the next 3 years, ACOLA will lead the co-design and development of disability responsive education and training Toolkits as well as a 3-5 year National Roadmap for Disability Responsiveness. To develop and deliver the toolkits, ACOLA will convene Fellows from across the Learned Academies and will work collaboratively with people with disability, government partners, professional associations, training organisations and peak bodies.

Building on ACOLA's award winning 2022 report *Ensuring Occupations are Responsive to People with Disability*, the initiative will equip professionals and organisations with the practical tools, resources, and guidance needed to embed inclusive, rights-based practices across critical services.

ACOLA looks forward to building relationships across these sectors and linking project partners with Academies as the work becomes more defined.

BRIDGING RESEARCH AND POLICY FOR NATIONAL IMPACT

In 2024-25, ACOLA has continued to provide a platform for the Academies to present a single voice on national issues.

Research infrastructure: ACOLA coordinated proposals from across the Learned Academies for several Request for Quotes, responding to the National Science and Technology Council and the Office of the Chief Scientist.

Strategic Examination of Research and Development Review: ACOLA coordinated two submissions to the Strategic Examination of Research and Development (SERD) review — one developed in collaboration with the Academies, synthesising their key messages and focusing on a holistic and inclusive approach to Australia's R&D system, and the other developed through the Australian Energy Transition Research Plan Steering Committee focusing on the lagging research expenditure in Australia in comparison to global efforts.

Interdisciplinary research: ACOLA prepared a submission to the Australian Research Council in response to the National Competitive Grants Program consultations, supporting the Academies submissions and highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary research in addressing Australia's future challenges.

Welcoming the new government: ACOLA has coordinated targeted messaging to government on behalf of the Academies to open communication pathways and present a unified voice.

International research, education and policy environments: Recognising the impact that foreign policies can have on Australian research ecosystems and relationships, ACOLA worked to uphold values of the Academies in fostering sustainable research environments. ACOLA coordinated a joint letter to the Secretaries of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the Department of Education calling for a coordinated national response to the disruptive US research, education and policy environment. ACOLA also released a statement expressing concerns over the New Zealand Government's decision to cease funding humanities and social sciences research through the Marsden Fund.



Submission

ACOLA's response to the Policy Review of the National Competitive Grants Program



Submission

ACOLA AETRP response to Strategic Examination of R&D Review



Submission

Strategic Examination of R&D Review Discussion Paper

ENGAGEMENT

In its engagement efforts, ACOLA focused on strengthening relationships with a broader range of stakeholders to reinforce its value as an entry point into the Academies and their Fellows. This included:

- securing positive connections with external stakeholders across academia, industry and government, including senior decision-makers,
- expanding and maintaining relationships with research sector organisations, and cultivating engagement with sectors aligned to project work,
- continuing to scope the research-advice needs of Commonwealth, state and territory-based agencies.

Since November 2024, ACOLA has undertaken a concerted communications effort to better integrate and amplify the work of the Learned Academies. This, combined with a clearer and stronger public voice on the value of interdisciplinary research, has significantly increased ACOLA's visibility and engagement.

Social media: 44 LinkedIn posts; 19,198 impressions (117.1% increase year-on-year); 521 reactions, 16 reposts, 182 new followers; 14 Academy reshares.

Website: 10,000 active new users, with top five countries: Australia, United States of America, China, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and an overall website traffic increase of 6%.



Collaboration between ACOLA and Australia Parliament House Library: During FY24-25, ACOLA continued its strong relationship with the Australian Parliamentary Library through its standing arrangement to co-host the ACOLA-Parliamentary Library Briefing Series. This program promotes awareness of the importance of research to a government audience, by curating expert Fellows to speak on topics of national significance. Originally launched during the COVID-19 pandemic as an online initiative, the series has now delivered more than 30 hybrid seminars, including four sessions during FY24-25 that attracted over 200 registrations. The program was paused in May 2025 due to the federal election and strategic revision of the Parliament House Library. ACOLA has proposed a refreshed service model for this series to compliment the library's strategic uplift and continue providing timely, multidisciplinary, evidence-based insights to support policy development.

Celebrating research careers: ACOLA has been involved in SAGE (Science in Australia Gender Equality) assessments, supporting their awards assessment process as an external participant. Within the Academy landscape, ACOLA has also participated on the assessment panel for the ATSE Elevate program, aimed at boosting diversity in STEM. These efforts highlight ACOLA's value for promoting diverse careers from the grass roots and taking time to reward and recognise strong researchers early in their careers.

Formalised partnerships: ACOLA provides a common point of access to the Academies for formalised partnerships including:

- AIATSIS: reinvigorating an existing Memorandum of Understanding with AIATSIS to explore opportunities such as observer participation in the ACOLA Research Committee and participation in ACOLA working groups, fostering greater cross-cutting engagement,
- Royal Society Te Apārangi: ACOLA's ongoing engagement and dialogue with the Royal Society of Te Apārangi and similar international bodies. In June ACOLA hosted a meeting with the Academies and the Royal Society, to discuss joint young researcher initiatives, multidisciplinary research translation into policy, and Indigenous knowledge sharing.

Through the year, ACOLA also worked to build awareness of its work through delivery of presentations to external stakeholders across the research, policy and industry landscape. Overall, this sought to foster a collaborative, multi-sectoral environment as a central access point for strategic discussions with leading experts from the Academies.



ACOLA attended the Universities Australia's Solutions Summit 2025.

KNOWLEDGE EXPERTISE

Fellows are integral to ACOLA's work and impact.

Their deep disciplinary expertise, commitment to independent advice, and willingness to collaborate across fields, form the foundation of ACOLA's contributions to national policy and public debate. Through their leadership on project committees, participation in roundtables and assessments, and generous engagement in co-design processes, Fellows help ensure that ACOLA's work is rigorous, multidisciplinary, and forward-looking. Their insights not only strengthen the quality of ACOLA's research outputs but also embody the collective strength of Australia's Learned Academies—demonstrating the vital role expert knowledge plays in shaping a more innovative, equitable, and resilient future for Australia.

We sincerely thank the following Fellows and their network of experts for their time and invaluable contributions throughout the year.

Australian Energy Transition Research Plan

Expert Steering Committee

Emeritus Professor Ken Baldwin FTSE (Chair)
Professor Fran Baum AO FAHMS FASSA
Emeritus Professor Sue Richardson AM FASSA
Professor Lesley Head FASSA FAHA
Professor Thomas Maschmeyer FAA FTSE
Ms Merryn York FTSE

Mapping Australia's Indonesia Research

Expert Working Group

Emeritus Professor Louise Edwards FAHA FASSA FHKAH (Chair)
Professor Peta Ashworth OAM
Professor Edward Aspinall FAHA
Emeritus Professor Ken Baldwin FTSE
Professor Vedi Hadiz AM FASSA
Professor Joe Lo Bianco AM FAHA
Professor Budiman Minasny FAA
Professor Anushka Patel FAHMS
Emeritus Professor Kathryn Robinson FASSA

Examining JUST Energy Metrics: Exploring Australian research opportunities

Expert Peer Reviewers

Adjunct Professor Trevor Danos AM FTSE
Emeritus Professor Janet McCalman AC FAHA FASSA
Professor David Schlosberg FASSA
Professor Russell Smyth FASSA

**Vulnerability and
Australia's Energy
Transition**

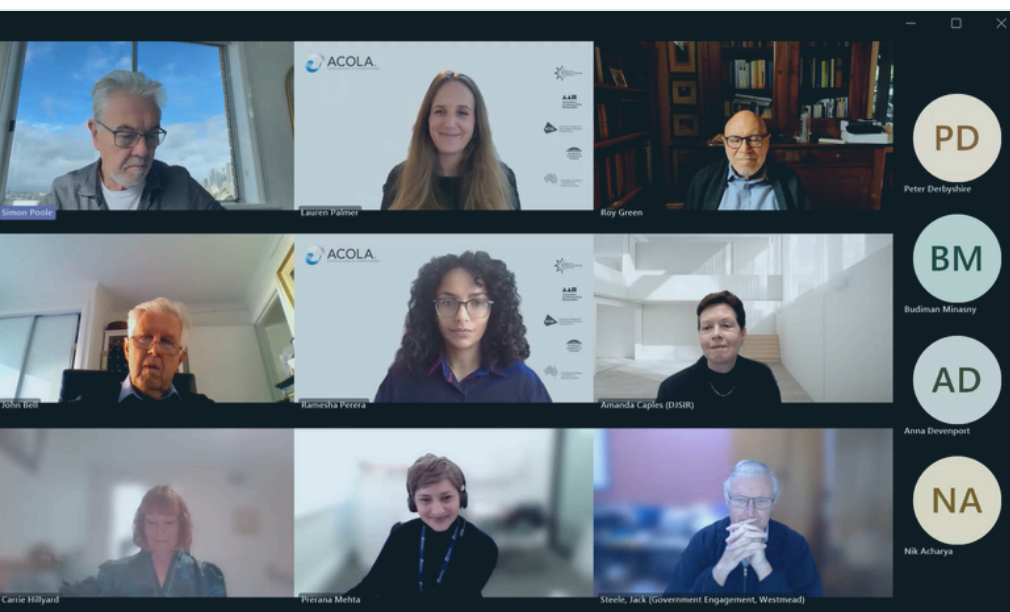
Expert Peer Reviewers

Emeritus Professor Linda Connor FASSA
Dr Therese Flapper FTSE
Professor Rob Raven ASSA
Professor Catherine Rigby FAHA

**KONEKSI Deep Dive
Roundtables**

Expert Panel

Dr Angeline Acharya FTSE
Dr Clare Morgan
Ms Heather Nicoll
Professor Veena Sahajwalla AO FAA FTSE
Laurence Street
Professor Beth Webster FASSA
Dr Simon Wilkins
Dr Amanda Caples
Dr Jack Steele FTSE
Emeritus Professor Roy Green AM
Dr John Bell FTSE
Dr Carrie Hillyard FTSE
Professor Budiman Minasny FAA
Dr Simon Poole FAA FTSE
Professor Lisa M. Given FASSA FASIS
Emeritus Professor Kathryn Robinson FASSA
Professor Karin Verspoor FTSE
Emeritus Professor Ken Baldwin FTSE



ACOLA facilitating an online roundtable discussion with Academy Fellows on the value of research to economic growth in Australia, 2025.

ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

At ACOLA, we are committed to embedding excellence, integrity, and collaboration across all aspects of our work. Guided by values of independence, inclusion, transparency, sustainability, and professional pride, we strive to deliver trusted, interdisciplinary advice that informs national policy and advances Australia's research and innovation system.

Our continued focus on organisational excellence ensures ACOLA remains a trusted and independent voice driving positive change across research, industry, and society.

Compliance and Governance

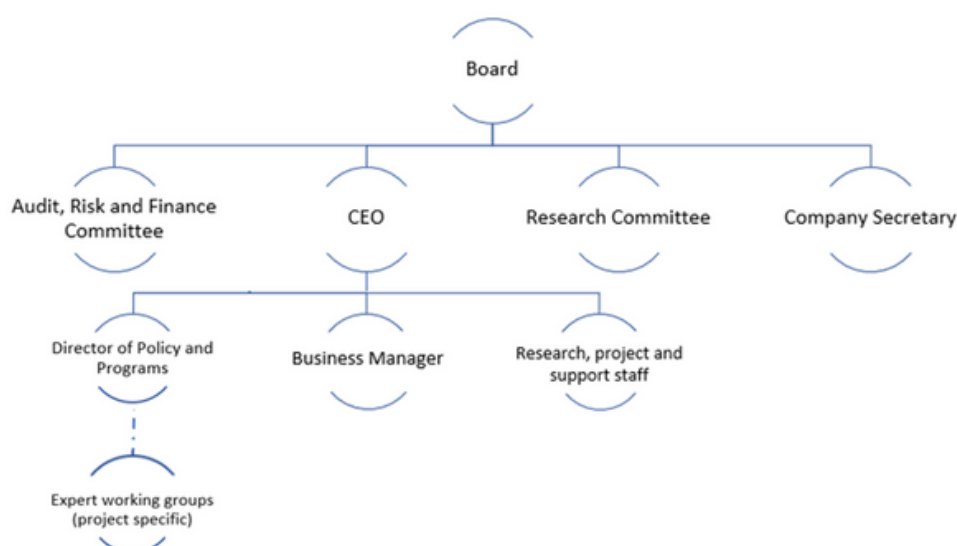
During the reporting period, ACOLA remained fully compliant with all relevant Federal and State legislation, including corporate and taxation requirements. The organisation met all of its regulatory obligations with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

ACOLA also maintained full compliance with its commercial and contractual commitments, ensuring timely delivery and accountability across all agreements and partnerships.

The Australian Academy of Science continued to provide ACOLA with financial, human resources, and information technology services throughout 2024–25. This included the preparation and lodgement of ACOLA’s Business Activity Statements, under a formal service level agreement with ACOLA, as well as completion of agreed monthly finance processes, including reconciliations and management reporting.

KEY PEOPLE

Governance Structure



Board of Directors

Professor Louise Baur AM FAHMS (2025 Chair of the ACOLA Board)
 Dr Katherine Woodthorpe AO FTSE FAICD (2024 Chair of the ACOLA Board)
 Professor Kate Darian-Smith FASSA
 Professor Stephen Garton AM FAHA FRAHS FASSA FRSN
 Professor Chennupati Jagadish AC PresAA FTSE
 Prerana Mehta

Research Committee

Dr Katherine Woodthorpe AO FTSE FAICD (Chair)
 Professor Louise Baur AM FAHMS
 Professor Chennupati Jagadish AC PresAA FTSE
 Professor Kate Darian-Smith FASSA
 Professor Stephen Garton AM FAHA FRAHS FASSA FRSN

Audit, Risk and Finance Committee

Professor Chennupati Jagadish AC PresAA FTSE (Chair)
 Ms Kylie Walker
 Ms Anna-Maria Arabia OAM
 Dr Chris Hatherly
 Ms Catherine Luckin
 Ms Prerana Mehta

ACOLA TEAM

Chief Executive Officer	Dr Christina Parolin (Interim April – August 2024) Ms Prerana Mehta (August 2024 – Current)
Company Secretary	Ms Diana Melham
Director, Policy and Projects	Dr Lauren Palmer
Program Manager	Ms Ros Kewley
Engagement Manager	Miss Ramesha Perera
Senior Policy Manager	Dr Ella Relf

ACOLA is the forum whereby Australia's Learned Academies come together to contribute evidence-based advice to inform national policy; and to develop innovative solutions to complex global problems and emerging national needs.

This collaboration brings together over 3,500 of the nation's leading experts to provide trusted, interdisciplinary advice to government, industry and community.

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