



United Nations Association of Australia WA Division



UN Matters

May 2024 – August 2024



Dr Sandy Chong with Director-General of WHO Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in Geneva



UNAAWA Members at Digital Rights for Human Rights Event



UNAAWA Members at the International Student Festival

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Chief Editor: Amorith Tan

From the President

The UNAANA is into exciting times!

The programs of each Committee are running, with each having events that have made significant contributions towards our mission of raising awareness of the UN's goals and promoting its agenda for the betterment of all.

14 May 2024 saw our SDG Business and the Human Rights Committee cooperate to run the event "*Beyond Extraction: Leading Governance & Human Rights for SDGs*". The topic focused on the leadership qualities needed to navigate complex governance and human rights standards within the mining sector.

24 June 2024 saw the Human Rights Committee ran its event on the very current topic of "*Digital Rights as Human Rights*". Ciana Martinus emceed and moderated the event with a panel of well-regarded speakers, namely Lisa Harris, Andra Cimpean and Dr Ian Martinus. The event raised awareness of a cutting-edge topic of how human rights are affected by access and utilisation of digital rights, and of the issues this raises.

On 1 August 2024, the SDG Business Forum held a first-of-its-kind event in Australia, on "*First Nations Peoples and the 2030 Agenda*". Dr Sandy Chong emceed and moderated the event, with the panel of speakers being Andrew Beck, Dr Kate George, Professor Christopher Lawrence, Sharyn Egan and Clinton Walker. Meredith Hammat MLA presented the keynote speech. The event drew attention to the previously unacknowledged role First Nations peoples play in maintaining the land and sea resources with their deep traditional knowledge, and highlighted the immense amount others can learn from them.

These events spread awareness of cutting-edge topics and brought to attention new information. All these events were well-received, with many attendees reporting the information presented was entirely new to them.

Our Vice-President for Strategy, Dr Siddier Chambers, organised meetings and gave a presentation to the WA

Local Government Authority (WALGA), to explore how the UNAA may work together with them to raise awareness of its events and programs, and how each Local Government Authority may consider informing its residents, and letting the UNAANA know of events they organise that would reflect our agenda as well. The discussions continue, and we are looking forward to its progress.

Beyond organising professional events, Dr Siddier Chambers organised a social get-together for members and volunteers on 29 June 2024 at Zone Bowling. Our members, volunteers and their families came together for a game of bowling, with the men's, women's and the children's team doing their best. It was good fun to meet each other's families, enjoy good food and strengthen the bonds amongst ourselves.

It is always heartening to see and meet new people, who come in with enthusiasm and dedication to serve for the benefit of our society, which serves to remind all of us just how important and relevant our mandate is.

On the theme of recognition of service to one's society, I represented the UNAANA to give our condolences to the Consulate of Vietnam in Perth. A key leader in Vietnam, the General-Secretary Mr Nguyen Phu Trong had passed away, and the Consulate in Perth marked the event. I met with and spoke with Consul General of Vietnam in Perth, Nguyen Thanh Ha, and signed the condolence book. The UNAANA recognises that service to one's country and society is a great force for good, and we always acknowledge such service.

This theme of service is one we follow ourselves in all we do, to raise awareness of how much we share together, and that we are all served by working together to build a better society for all. There will be much to look forward to.

Randhir Amoganathan
President of the UNAANA

SDG Forum – Beyond Extraction: Leading Governance & Human Rights for SDGs

Following up from an industry roundtable session last August chaired by Dr Sandy Chong, with some of the major extractive corporations and six universities in Australia on mainstreaming human rights knowledge across all business functions in the mining sector, the UN Association of Western Australia (UNAAWA) convened a pivotal public forum at KPMG on 14th May 2024, titled "Beyond Extraction, Leading Governance and Human Rights for SDGs." The event brought together leaders from government, academia, and the private sector to address critical issues at the intersection of governance, human rights, and sustainable development within the extractive industry.



Dr Chong, our Founding Chair of the SDG Business Forum, emphasised the industry's global significance and the urgent need for leadership in addressing governance and human rights challenges, stressing the need for industry-wide awareness and collaboration. Claire Murray, State Director of DFAT, iterated Australia's commitment to promoting

responsible resource governance and supporting partner countries in strengthening transparency and accountability.

Ciana Martinus, our Convener of the Human Rights Committee who is also the Cyber Security Consultant at KPMG, showcased the private sector's dedication to aligning with international laws on human rights and SDGs through holistic assessments.

Panel discussions addressed issues such as labour exploitation, indigenous engagement, and modern slavery. Participants explored strategies for promoting responsible practices, fostering collaboration, and addressing challenges such as resource constraints and regulatory gaps. Shaeron Yapp of Rio Tinto highlighted the company's commitment to sustainable development and engagement with stakeholders, underscoring the importance of partnerships in promoting human rights within the industry. Emphasised by Serena Grant from Walk Free of Minderoo Foundation, the interconnectedness between climate change and human rights issues, she stressed the importance of decarbonisation and ethical supply chains. Professor Anthony Langlois of Curtin University, highlighted the need for education and indigenous engagement, addressing modern slavery, and transparency as key human rights issues facing the extractive industry. Amanda Murphy of BHP Billiton discussed the transformative potential of AI and data analysis in promoting transparency and accountability.

The event concluded with remarks from Hon. Minister John Quigley MLA, shared his experiences on

safeguarding human rights in legislation and societal progress, emphasising the need for proactive measures to protect the vulnerable populations and most fundamentally, human dignity. Dr Chong, in her closing remarks, highlighted the imperative for ethical practices throughout the extractive industry supply chain, urging stakeholders to prioritise human rights and sustainability in their operations.

A huge thanks to all our speakers, our amazing sponsors and volunteers especially the Human Rights and Young Professionals committees for their invaluable contributions in making this event a resounding success. Together, by pushing beyond extraction and leading with human responsibility, we believe that both public and private sectors can pave

the way towards a more equitable and greener future for all.



Lisha Liang
Secretary of the UNAAWA SDG Forum

Human Rights Committee – Digital Rights as Human Rights

In June, the Human Rights committee held an event named ‘digital rights as human rights’ the event was held at KPMG and sponsored by the Australian Information Security Association (AISA) and the KPMG.



The event spoke to the crucial intersection of digital rights and human rights in an era where technology permeates every aspect of our lives.

The panel speakers included a human rights lawyer from FMG, commercial director from CSCRC and NFP moderated by Ciana Martinus working as a cyber security senior consultant at KPMG.

Ciana Martinus
Human Rights Committee Convenor



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United Nations Launch of the Global Coalition for Social Justice



I had the privilege of attending the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva recently, where the Global Coalition for Social Justice was launched at the United Nations. This initiative transcends policy-making—it touches the heart of our livelihood and dignity.

Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Gilbert F. Houngbo, shared a compelling vision for the coalition, focusing on sustainable development and the need for a global movement that brings tangible improvements to people’s lives. It’s not just about securing jobs; it’s

about ensuring that work provides fulfillment and meaning.

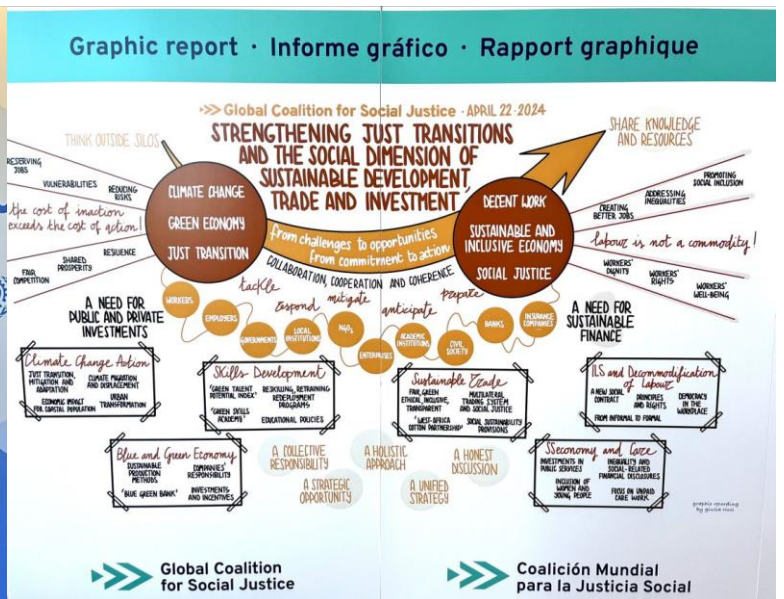
Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted the critical connection between health and social justice at the launch and emphasised how health is essential to building resilient communities.

With rapid changes in energy and digital technologies, it’s estimated that up to 50% of jobs could be significantly impacted. This underscores the urgency for corporations and governments to guide people through these transitions.

I am inspired by the coalition’s vision and the collective commitment to fostering a just and equitable world.

For more insights on the Coalition, visit: <https://lnkd.in/gHZVRSxP>

Dr Sandy Chong
Chair of the SDG Forum



International Students Festival

Last month, the United Nations Association of Australia WA Division (UNAAWA) had the honour of participating in the International Students Festival organized by the Cultural Ambassadors of the City of Canning and generously sponsored by the City itself. This event was a testament to our commitment to promoting cultural diversity and supporting the well-being of international students in Western Australia.

The evening was filled with a tapestry of cultural performances, enlightening speeches, and the presence of numerous community groups, all united in their support for international students. It provided a platform to discuss and advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly focusing on Good Health and Well-being, as well as Education. It was heartening to witness the meaningful interactions between students of diverse backgrounds and community leaders, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration.

As we look forward to the future, I am excited to introduce myself as the incoming Vice President for Membership at UNAAWA. My goal is to engage our

community more deeply, attracting new members while effectively representing our organization's commitment to the SDGs. Our mission to advocate for these global goals is more important than ever, and I am eager to work together with all of you to make a meaningful impact.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our shared goals of promoting peace, justice, and sustainable development.

Melanye Wawrik
UNAAWA Vice President



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SDG Forum – First Nations Peoples & the 2030 Agenda

The SDG Forum on First Nations People and the 2030 Agenda, held on August 1st, 2024, at West Coast Eagles' Mineral Resources Park, emphasised the vital contributions of Indigenous peoples to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event gathered experts and advocates to integrate First Nations perspectives across sectors.



West Coast Eagles opened the forum and highlighted the club's societal impact through 110,000 youth engagements in 2023. The potential of sports organisations to drive positive change, aligning with key SDGs, were emphasised. This year also marks the fourth collaboration the UNAAWA has with the Clun. Dr. Sandy Chong, Founding Chair of the SDGs Forum, acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land and emphasised the critical role of Indigenous people, who constitute 5.2% of the global population yet manage 50% of the planet's land and water. She outlined the invaluable contributions of our First Nations peoples to environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and economic growth.

Ms Meredith Hammat MLA, Representative of Minister Tony Buti expressed gratitude for the opportunity to enjoy Western Australia's natural beauty, thanks to our First Nation people's care.

Shereaffirmed the WA Government's commitment to the national agreement on Closing the Gap and expressed anticipation for the evening's discussions, aiming to inspire continued support for Aboriginal contributions to the SDGs.



Key discussions of the panel session include:

Politics & International Trade: Dr. Kate George discussed the challenges Aboriginal leaders face in securing a voice in international trade policies. Despite progress, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, there is still significant work to be done. She emphasised that international standards have been crucial in holding countries accountable and providing a framework for Indigenous rights.

Education: Andrew Beck emphasised the need to integrate First Nations knowledge into educational curricula. Drawing on his experience with WA independent schools, he highlighted the importance of training teachers to incorporate local knowledge systems, enabling students to learn on their land. Beck encouraged embracing the challenge of aligning traditional and modern educational approaches to better serve First Nations students.

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Science & Technology: Professor Christopher Lawrence underscored the innovative contributions of Indigenous knowledge to science and technology. He shared initiatives like sending Indigenous students to NASA and establishing the National Indigenous Space Academy. Lawrence emphasized the importance of integrating traditional knowledge with modern science and technology to help achieve the SDGs, leveraging Indigenous expertise to address global challenges.

Art & Culture: Sharyn Egan highlighted the significance of promoting and preserving Aboriginal art and culture, particularly through education. She discussed the role of art in advocacy, raising awareness of the SDGs, and fostering global collaboration through cultural exchanges. Egan emphasized art's power in bridging cultural divides and promoting sustainability.

Entrepreneurship: Clinton Walker addressed the unique challenges faced by First Nations entrepreneurs, including the lack of generational

wealth and cultural responsibilities. He emphasized the importance of adaptability, leveraging cultural knowledge, and building strong community networks to navigate these challenges and seize new opportunities.

The forum concluded with a call from the Chair, Dr Sandy Chong, for recognition and deeper collaboration of Indigenous contributions to global sustainability, underscoring their critical role in shaping a sustainable future.



Celebrating Diversity and Diplomacy: WA Pride

Last week, I had the pleasure of attending an event hosted by the U.S. Consulate Perth, aptly named "Ice Cream Diplomacy." This unique gathering provided an excellent opportunity to connect with friends and colleagues from the WA Pride network, fostering meaningful and enlightening conversations over delicious Baskin Robbins ice cream.

One of the most interesting aspects of the afternoon was learning about the distinct timing of Pride celebrations in Western Australia. Unlike the U.S., where Pride is celebrated in June, Western Australia holds its Pride festivities in November. This cultural nuance sparked fascinating discussions and offered valuable insights into the diverse ways Pride is honored across Australia.

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As the Secretary and incoming Vice President for Membership of the United Nations Association of Australia Western Australia (UNAAWA), I was thrilled to represent our organization at this event. It was a fantastic opportunity to explore potential partnerships and collaborations aimed at further celebrating LGBTIQ+ issues and projects in the Perth region.



The U.S. Consulate Perth's initiative in hosting such an event highlights the importance of diplomatic conversations around LGBTIQ+ topics. These discussions are not only vital for advancing human rights but also align with the Gender Equality Sustainable Development Goal, emphasizing the need for continued efforts towards equality and inclusion.



I extend my heartfelt thanks to the U.S. Consulate Perth for organizing this wonderful afternoon. The event was a reminder of the power of community and the importance of celebrating diversity through both cultural exchange and meaningful dialogue. I look forward to the positive outcomes and collaborations that will stem from these diplomatic discussions.

Upcoming Events and Collaborations

We are excited to announce that UNAAWA will be engaging in several upcoming initiatives to promote LGBTIQ+ rights and awareness in the Perth region. Stay tuned for more details on these projects, and how you can get involved in supporting these vital efforts.

Join the Conversation

Your support and participation are crucial as we continue to advocate for equality and inclusion. We encourage you to join the conversation, share your experiences, and contribute to the ongoing dialogue on LGBTIQ+ issues. Together, we can make a difference and create a more inclusive world.

Melanye Wawrik
UNAAWA Vice President

UNAAWA Chair of SDG Forum delivered Keynote on “World in Transformation” at United Nations, Geneva



The UNAAWA SDG Forum Chair, Dr Sandy Chong, delivered a keynote on “World in Transformation” at the United Nations in Geneva for the Women’s International Networking (WIN) Conference. The event highlighted the transformative impact of women in leadership, emphasising unity and collaboration in a polarised world, and unlocking opportunities in times of change.

Alongside esteemed panelists such as the Ambassador of Chile to the WTO Sofia Boza, and Human Rights defender Karen Tse, Dr Chong shared perspectives on the role of

female leaders in driving international trade, global innovation and achieving sustainability. In particular, how women in Asia-Pacific are contributing to environmental stewardship, economic resilience, and digital inclusion.



The energy, passion, and collective wisdom shared by attendees and speakers were a testament to the strength and leadership of women worldwide. Dr Chong is inspired by the event and 'looks forward to working with these leaders in strengthening our efforts towards a more sustainable and prosperous future'.

Dea Effendi
SDG Forum Comms Coordinator



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Samplers and Stories weaves tales of artistry and heritage

The City of Melville's Wireless Hill Museum will come to life with colour as it showcases a collection of exquisite artworks designed and constructed by members of the Embroiderers' Guild of WA as they celebrate 55 years of creativity and tradition.

Samplers and Stories: A Contemporary Showcase will open at 3.00pm on Saturday, 1 June 2024 at Wireless Hill Museum and be on display until Sunday, 21 July 2024.

For the duration of the exhibition, the Guild in partnership with the City will also deliver a full program of workshops, including opportunities for participants to stitch their own masterpiece.

The Embroiderers' Guild of WA and the City invite you to delve into a world where needle and thread weave tales of artistry and heritage.

The exhibition promises to turn the notion of the traditional embroidery sampler on its head, instead of embroidered alphabets and prayers, expect to see installations that illustrate the values, issues and tastes of 21st century Australians.

For more information and booking details, visit <https://www.melvillecity.com.au/samplers>

Comments attributed to City of Melville Mayor Katy Mair:

City of Melville Mayor Katy Mair said the City was proud to partner with the Embroiderers' Guild of WA for the Samplers and Stories: A Contemporary Showcase.

"It's a milestone year for the Embroiderers' Guild of WA as they mark 55 years of creativity and tradition, and this exhibition is the perfect opportunity to celebrate their history," said Mayor Mair.

"I encourage the community to head along to Wireless Hill Museum to visit these amazing works and also get involved in the public program where they can get involved in embroidery."

Aaron Corlett
Media Contact
City of Melville
9364 0198



Human Right to Privacy in the Digital Era

In today's digital age, the concept of privacy has taken on new dimensions. As someone deeply involved in the tech and media sectors, I have witnessed firsthand the rapid evolution of data collection practices. Our privacy is constantly under threat. As we navigate online spaces, tech companies collect vast amounts of data about us. This situation compels us to question: Do these companies genuinely need this data, or is our privacy being exploited?

Consent should be straightforward, but in relation to digital privacy it's often anything but. Companies use confusing tactics like pre-ticked boxes, which suggest we agree to share our data by default. Long, complicated terms of service make it difficult to understand what we are agreeing to, bundled permissions force us to accept all conditions, and complicated procedures to opt out. These methods make true consent nearly impossible, blurring our understanding of what we're signing up for. While users can theoretically adjust privacy settings, the reality is that our online data remains far from private.

Almost every online interaction we engage in is tracked and collected, forming profiles that are integrated into artificial intelligence tools and utilised to manipulate our opinions. Studies have shown that these manipulations can be both persuasive and highly sophisticated. For instance, the Oxford Internet Institute reports that social media manipulation by political actors has become an industrial-scale problem. Governments and political parties spend millions on private sector 'cyber troops' to sway opinions, drown out dissenting voices, and manipulate public sentiment. This manipulation includes using bots, fake accounts, and paid influencers to create the illusion of widespread support for certain ideologies or

policies and our data is used to systematically target those messages and illicit emotional triggers.

A study published on Cognitive Research Journal found that those who rely on emotional responses rather than rational analysis are more susceptible to believe what they're exposed to when triggered emotionally. This emotional manipulation exploits our cognitive biases. As a result, the data we share online, initially intended to enhance our digital experience, is being used to undermine our autonomy and manipulate our perceptions, highlighting a critical need for stronger privacy protections and regulatory oversight.

The right to privacy is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and further supported by treaties like the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These documents advocate for our privacy but need stronger enforcement to be effective in the digital age. While lawsuits against tech companies have made headlines, serving as a temporary deterrent, they often fail to address the root of the privacy breaches. Legal actions tend to result in financial penalties that large corporations are easily absorbing, rather than substantive changes in their data handling practices. This highlights the need for not just legal responses, but also for regulatory frameworks that enforce continuous compliance and real accountability in data privacy.

Addressing this imbalance requires a multifaceted approach. Firstly, enhancing public awareness about privacy rights can mobilise support for stronger regulations, empowering informed individuals to exert collective pressure on policymakers to properly mandate protocols. Secondly, mandate increased transparency in governmental proceedings and

lobbying activities directed at online privacy, ensuring that the public can hold both their government representatives and influencing corporations accountable. Enhanced transparency would involve publishing detailed reports of lobbying activities, government meetings, and policy-making processes related to online privacy. This would allow the public to see who is influencing privacy policies and how. Finally, international co-operation needs to be strengthened, with countries working together to create and enforce privacy standards, minimising the opportunities for companies to exploit weaker regulatory environments.

Privacy is a fundamental human right ratified by nearly every one of the 193 UN member states, and we must not become complacent in the face of powerful lobbyists seeking to breach it. By fortifying these areas, we can narrow the gap between individual capabilities and corporate influence, leading to more equitable and effective privacy protections. Balancing technology and privacy is one of the modern world's greatest challenges. It is essential to keep privacy at the forefront of technological advancement, ensuring it remains a protected and respected human right.

Matthew Knight
UNAAWA Member



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Eleanor Cork

My name is Eleanor Cork, and I am a Science Communicator for a not-for-profit organisation, focused on encouraging the next generation to get involved in STEM careers. In my role I have had the opportunity to travel around WA, delivering programs to schools in remote communities and towns. My job has given me the opportunity to work with WITWA (Women in Technology in Western Australia) on their mission to empower young women to enter male dominated industries, a cause close to my heart.

I have always been passionate about politics, leadership, and advocating for underrepresented groups. I understand the barriers that young women

are facing in these areas, and while I can't remove those barriers, I can help equip them with the skills they'll need to overcome

them. Hopefully in this new role of programs coordinator I will be able to help continue to promote the need for gender equality.



Vilma Crisafulli – UNAAWA Office Manager

Vilma is a Brazilian lawyer with more than 20 years of experience, she graduated in 2001, and specialised in Public Law, Social Security Law/Labour Law, Tax Law, and Civil and Consumer Law. She also studied the European Union data protection regulation. She was recognized while an intern of the Public Ministry in her State in Brazil and working as a lawyer in her practice in Brazil she was able to honorably continue to serve the community as an instrument of justice. Vilma is a passionate advocate of human rights and sustainability, she believes in the power of collective action to create positive change. Now in Australia, she has the opportunity to learn and apply her knowledge to contribute to the community. Her passions are nature and arts, she loves to go to museums and engage in outdoor activities with her family.



UN Observances

September

5: International Day of Charity
7: International Day of Police Cooperation
7: World Duchenne Awareness Day
7: International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies
8: International Literacy Day
9: International Day to Protect Education from Attack
12: United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation
15: International Day of Democracy
16: International Day of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South
16: International Day for Interventional Cardiology
16: International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
17: World Patient Safety Day
18: International Equal Pay Day
20: World Cleanup Day
21: International Day of Peace
23: International Day of Sign Languages
26: World Maritime Day
26: International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
27: World Tourism Day
28: International Day for Universal Access to Information
29: International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste
30: International Translation Day

October

1: International Day of Older Persons
2: International Day of Non-Violence
4-10: World Space Week
5: World Teachers' Day
7: World Habitat Day
7: World Cotton Day
9: World Post Day
10: World Mental Health Day
11: International Day of the Girl Child
12: World Migratory Bird Day
13: International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
15: International Day of Rural Women
16: World Food Day
17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
24: World Development Information Day
24: United Nations Day
24-30: Disarmament Week
24-31: Global Media and Information Literacy Week
27: World Day for Audiovisual Heritage
29: International Day of Care and Support
31: World Cities Day



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Upcoming Events



United Nations
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79TH UN DAY *anniversary*

Come and join us for
an evening of celebration!

Registration opens 1st August

Book Now



**18TH
OCT 2024**

6.00-9.30PM

**DUXTON HOTEL
PERTH**



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