



MEDIA RELEASE

Three of Australia's most promising public service leaders win Wolfensohn scholarships to Harvard

The Harvard Club of Australia (HCA) is delighted to announce the winners of the Sir James Wolfensohn Public Service Scholarships for 2026 to attend executive education at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government:

- Tessa Piper, Deputy Director-General, Justice Policy and Reform, Queensland Government
- David Sinclair, Acting Director-General of the Department of Customer Service, Open Data, Small and Family Business, Queensland Government
- Richard Windeyer, Deputy Secretary, Budget Group, in the Department of Finance.

The 2026 Wolfensohn scholarship winners have chosen courses in Executive Leadership and Government and Leadership for the 21st Century.

With the support of the former chairman of the World Bank and Harvard alumni, the late Sir James Wolfensohn, HCA established the Wolfensohn Scholarship in 2012 to promote the development and delivery of good public policy. The scholarship is now funded solely through the fund raising efforts of the HCA. Each of the candidates was chosen based on their potential to contribute to the benefit of Australian society through the design and implementation of public policy.

The three recipients were chosen from a wide field of candidates, all nominated by a Commonwealth, State or Territory department or agency head. A shortlist of candidates was interviewed by a panel of Harvard alumni comprising the Honourable Gabrielle Upton, Elizabeth Carr AM, Dr Ian Watt AC, and Scholarship Chair, Mat Franklin.

HCA is especially grateful to the Secretaries and agency heads from the winners' home departments and agencies for personally nominating and supporting their candidates. This cohort of winners attending Harvard would not be possible without an engaged group of public service leaders.

By funding executive education at the world's leading school of public policy, the Wolfensohn Scholarship supports the design and delivery of good public policy in Australia. It also rewards outstanding individuals for their achievements in Government and motivates recipients in their successful public sector careers.

Further information:

Mat Franklin

Chair, Wolfensohn Scholarship

mat.franklin@fujitsu.com

0400 868 766

Tessa Piper



Tessa Piper is the Deputy Director-General, Justice Policy and Reform, in the Queensland Government. Before joining the Queensland Public Service, Tessa spent more than a decade in the Victorian Government, holding executive and senior leadership roles across justice, social policy, and digital government and service delivery portfolios. Across each stage of her career, she has maintained a strong commitment to public value, integrity, and improving outcomes for communities through more equitable, accessible and trusted public institutions.

Throughout her career, Tessa has led significant legislative, regulatory and whole-of- government reform, including contributing to several Royal Commissions in executive leadership roles. Most recently, she has led major child safety reform initiatives and overseen a range of digital and regulatory reforms that make it easier for people and businesses to engage with government. Prior to joining government, Tessa worked across public health, clinical allied health and university settings.

Tessa holds a Bachelor of Science, a Master of Public Health, and a Master of Health Leadership. In 2023, Tessa was recognised as one of the Top 50 Public Sector Women by the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) Victoria. In 2022, she won the national SBS Emerging Writers' competition.

David Sinclair



David has held senior roles in the Queensland public sector, commercial banking and finance, the Scottish Executive, and economic consultancy. His expertise spans a wide range of areas, including economic impact and financial viability assessments, economic development strategies, large-scale infrastructure delivery, and policy development and evaluation. He has worked extensively across all Australian states and territories and much of regional Queensland.

Since 2014, David has served in leadership roles within Queensland Treasury, Queensland Health, and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. In April 2026, he was appointed Acting Director-General of the Department of Customer Service, Open Data, Small and Family Business. In this capacity, David leads efforts to modernise government customer service delivery, enhance the use of data to address complex challenges, and support the growth and success of small and family businesses.

Richard Windeyer



Richard Windeyer is the Deputy Secretary, Budget Group, in the Department of Finance. He has worked in the Australian public service for 25 years in various roles, including working as Chief of Staff for two Australian Ministers for Communications.

The Budget Group provides policy and financial advice on government expenditure and non taxation revenue matters to the Minister for Finance, other senior ministers, and a number of Cabinet committees, including the Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) of Cabinet. The Budget Group supports the Government to prepare, deliver, and manage the Budget. The Group assists Commonwealth agencies to meet their financial management and reporting obligations. Budget

Group aims to ensure the analysis, policy advice, and costing information provided to government supports informed decision-making, and that all economic updates meet legislative requirements and timeframes.

Prior to his current role, Richard was Deputy Secretary, Commercial Group and Co-head of the Procurement Profession. Commercial Group provides advice on and oversight of Government Investments including investments in the Australian Government's Business Enterprises, manages the domestic non-Defence property policy and property portfolio. It also develops and maintains the Australian Government's procurement policy framework, and managed the Australian government's special claims, insurance and risk management operations.

Before the Department of Finance, in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, Richard was responsible for broadband and telecommunications industry policy, media and broadcasting policy, radio-communications policy and online safety, as well as oversight of the Government's interests in Australia Post and the National Broadband Network.