



YHA LTD BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017/18



YHA Ltd Board of Directors, 2017-18: Pictured, left to right: Bronwyn Dallow, Robyn Antill, Tracey Powell, Ross McDougall, Euan Prentice, Rob McGuirk (Chair), Julian Ledger (CEO), Leonie Thijssen, Matthew McNeil.

At the time of their election, each Director was invited to write a statement of not more than 125 words. The words below have been edited from those statements.

ROB MCGUIRK (Chair)

I benefited greatly from experiences with YHA and the people I met while travelling overseas after completing my law degree. I believe in making such experiences available to as many people as possible. I first joined the Board of YHA Victoria and served for many years as a Director and Chair. My experience in law, commercial property, financial services, corporate governance and IT enable me to contribute substantially to the strategic direction of YHA. I also served on the Hostelling International Board, including two terms as Vice President (2004-6 and 2010-12) and as Chair of Asia Regional committees. Understanding Asia is critical for our future it being our main source of new business.

EUAN PRENTICE (Vice-Chair)

I have had the privilege of being on the YHA Board for the last three years and am the current Vice Chair as well as sitting on the Audit & Risk and Nominations committee. I also sit on the YHA Australia Board. I have a diverse business background having worked for airlines as well as managing internet, marketing and research businesses. These experiences will allow me to continue to contribute to YHA as it navigates rapid changes in technology and the needs and expectations of younger generations. In my view, a core part of travelling is meeting and engaging with people, and hostels facilitate this more than any other form of accommodation.

ROBYN ANTILL

I am passionate about travel and cultural exchange, and an advocate for safe, affordable accommodation for independent travellers. I am eager to give back to YHA for the unique experiences it has afforded me. Using hostels wherever possible, I have travelled to over 100 countries, and worked in six. I truly value my YHA life membership. My travel adventures began at 16 with a Lions Youth Exchange, followed by a Fulbright Travel Scholarship, and led to an international career in project management. I am a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and a Board member for the Project Management Institute Queensland. With strong leadership, YHA is well-placed to remain relevant in today's world. It is an honour to serve on the Board.



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BRONWYN DALLOW

I first joined YHA at twenty-one, to travel independently and safely around the world, and meet other young people. Re-joining YHA in 2012 has re-ignited my passion. I offer extensive experience in hospitality/tourism, membership organisations, Not-for-Profit and commercial services in senior executive roles, with AICD governance training and a Master of International Management. I believe I can make a significant contribution to addressing the challenges of a membership-based organisation staying relevant to young people in a fast changing, technology connected global market. The impacts of: new disruptive forms of competitive service offerings; government policy; market access for growth and new business; and YHA's strategies for providing the unique traveller experience Australia can offer excites me to contribute to YHA for its current and future members.

ROSS MCDUGALL

I'm an immigration and refugee lawyer with my own practice in Adelaide. I was motivated to work with refugees following my extensive backpacking experiences, particularly in developing countries. My love of travel also led me to work for YHA some years ago. As Operations Manager in Victoria I was responsible for the concept, planning and delivery of two of YHA's popular environmental hostels - Apollo Bay and the Grampians. I'm also a Registered Building Practitioner and a Certified Building Biologist with a strong interest in the design, construction and maintenance of sustainable, attractive, environmental buildings. I advocate for YHA to maintain a focus on environmentalism in its operations and new hostel developments – for the benefit of YHA members and the environment.

MATTHEW MCNEIL

Having experienced much of the world (including Australia) as a budget traveller for the last 24 years and still loving the experience of hostelling and travel, I feel I have the skills, experience and ideas to assist in the development and future of YHA. I am a registered Senior Architect, and Associate of a medium sized Sydney based architectural firm, specialising in Student Housing, Hospitality, Adaptive Reuse and Project Management. Although Sydney born, I have also previously lived and worked overseas. I am specifically interested in YHA's strategies for providing a great product, all which will encourage travel, social interaction, and the experience of new cultures throughout the world.

TRACEY POWELL

I first joined YHA as a backpacker in 1994, and my passion for travel and the YHA ethos continues to this day. With a strong corporate background, qualifications in business, marketing and HR, and education, tourism and hospitality knowledge, I also have extensive board and senior executive experience. I served as Chair of YHA SA from 2011, and was elected to the Board of YHA Australia in 2013 including being elected Vice Chair in 2014 and 2015. I have been on the YHA Ltd Board since Jan 2014 and I chair the Nominations and Remuneration Committee. I am committed to ensuring YHA has the financial health and strategic vision to successfully navigate the changing tourism landscape and benefit future generations of YHA customers

LEONIE THIJSEN

I joined YHA to travel Europe, and grew to love the interesting variety of hostels, locations and people in our network, and to appreciate the culture of safety and sustainability. In my current role as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, I take my duties and obligations as a director very seriously. With my accounting qualifications and experience, corporate governance qualifications and commercial outlook, I am committed to helping all directors to understand YHA's financial health, managing the risks of the organisation and embracing opportunities for the benefit of both present and future members.