



# YHA LTD BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020/21



YHA Ltd Board of Directors, 2020-21:

Top Left-Right: Tracey Powell (Chair), Bronwyn Dallow (Vice-Chair), Brigita Bezjak, Alison McDonagh  
Bottom Left-Right: Tammy Marshall, Rob McGuirk, Matthew McNeil, Simon Spicer

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

## **TRACEY POWELL (Chair)**

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, was formerly Chair of the Nominations & Remuneration Committee, and Election 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.

## **BRONWYN DALLOW (Vice-Chair)**

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. YHA's strategies for providing the unique traveller experience Australia can offer excites me to contribute to YHA for its current and future members.

## **BRIGITA BEZJAK**

I am a life member of YHA because of many wonderful travel experiences, including staying at YHAs. As a Director, I am excited to be part of initiatives where YHA will lead the market for budget accommodation, so that more young people can access its streamlined affordable membership. I believe this is important for YHA's purpose. I am a health professional with high-level communication skills, diverse governance skills, and extensive experience on youth-related boards. I offer skills from a creative and risk/integrity lens, which I can use to progress the YHA Strategic Plan and the YHA Sustainability Action Plan (which is a particular interest for me). I hold an Applied Science Degree (Speech Pathology) and Diploma of Business (Governance), and live in regional NSW.

## **ALISON MCDONAGH**

I first joined YHA in 1993 upon completing a Commerce, Hospitality and Marketing degree and travelled all over Australia. A few years later I became YHA NSW's Operations Manager. I worked for YHA for over 10 years in that role and Development Manager. I was responsible for the development of many YHAs including Railway Square, Coffs Harbour and Sydney Harbour YHA. I have a graduate diploma in planning and am passionate about creating great projects that are unique, sustainable and appropriate for the location. I love that all YHAs have their own personalities as this enriches the travelling experience. My skills in operations, hospitality, marketing and property development will help YHA to continue to thrive as it faces the current challenges within its competitive environment.

## **TAMMY MARSHALL**

I'm an experienced non-executive director who currently serves on YHA Australia, Yankee Leisure Group and sits on the Larette University Advisory Board. I've built a career in travel and tourism across a diverse number of sectors including group travel, hospitality, tour operations, transport and cruising. I also have a strong connection with the start-up community, acting as advisor to start-ups and the Australian ambassador for World Innovation Forum. My skills and capabilities include strategy, innovation, transformation, commercial, and brand marketing, specialising in enabling global companies to pivot, transform and capitalise on rapid growth opportunities. I founded The B Hive - a business consultancy specialising in Travel and Tourism that helps businesses transform, grow and innovate their way to ongoing success. Personally, I love everything about the outdoors-the beach, hiking, yoga. Travel is my favourite hobby!

## **ROB MCGUIRK**

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 (HI) Board, including two terms as Vice President (2004-6 and 2010-12) and as Chair of Asia Regional committees, and was elected as HI's President for a two-year term from October 2018. Understanding Asia is critical for our future it being our main source of new business.

## **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 University tutor, with experience 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.

## **SIMON SPICER**

My first experience of YHA was when I stayed in a YHA hostel at Byron Bay while doing a dive course at the end of my Economics degree. Since then I have been fortunate to have travelled around Australia, Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific.

I am a chartered accountant, a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and have worked in senior executive roles in three continents across a range of businesses and industries over the last 35 years. In addition to my broad, commercial, financial and strategic experience, I also have specific expertise in property, business and digital transformation and governance, including for not-for-profit, member-based organisations.

I embrace YHA's mission and continue to be amazed at the incredible people you meet everywhere.