



# YHA LTD BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019/20



YHA Ltd Board of Directors, 2019-20: Pictured, left to right: Brigita Bezjak, Rob McGuirk, Tracey Powell (Vice-Chair), Simon Spicer, Bronwyn Dallow, Euan Prentice (Chair), Matthew McNeil, Tammy Marshall, Ross McDougall, Julian Ledger (CEO).

**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.**

## **EUAN PRENTICE (Chair)**

I have had the privilege of being on the YHA Board for the last seven years and am the current Chair as well as sitting on the Nominations & Remuneration Committee. 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.

## **TRACEY POWELL (Vice-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, and am currently the Vice Chair. 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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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!

## **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.

## **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 (APPOINTED UNTIL 2020 AGM)**

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.