

## Unique local government excellence program commences

Forty-four local government leaders will participate in the *Excellence in Local Government Leadership Program (ELGLP)* for a week commencing Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March. The program is joint initiative of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG), based at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

The Program will be held in Canberra with participants representing regional, rural and city-based councils from all Australian states, the Northern Territory and New Zealand.

This year's program, *Leading the Local State*, will challenge local leaders to set the agenda for reform locally by emphasising enhanced capacity in strategic leadership; collaborative governance (with other governments, citizens and stakeholders); and innovative service delivery.

The ELGLP is a unique program specifically designed for elected and appointed senior leaders in local government.

Federal Local Government Minister Simon Crean has said of the program that it is "... creating the next generation of local government leaders and providing the opportunity to take newfound capacity to areas that may not have previously benefitted from these skills."


ACELG Chairperson Margaret Reynolds said she was pleased with the take-up from local government: "The number of councils supporting staff and elected officials to attend this year is immensely encouraging, as is the support from a number of jurisdictions in the provision of scholarships. This demonstrates that local government nationally recognises the importance of its leaders having access to the very best thinking to enhance their communities and organisations."

ANZSOG Dean and CEO, Professor Gary Banks, also commented: "Local government can be an engine room of economic growth and public value creation. At ANZSOG we have created a program that provides leaders with a dynamic forum for building networks and a shared commitment to delivering world class local governance."

The makeup of this year's cohort reflects the diversity of local leaders, with attendees ranging from elected (mayors) and appointed staff from CEO and executive leadership roles. Most participants are looking for insights on financial sustainability, strategic management, infrastructure, community engagement, planning systems and workforce planning and capability development – all hot button issues currently facing local government.

Course convenor, Professor Mark Evans said, "This program provides local community leaders with the opportunity to solve some of their most difficult problems with the support of leading international and national experts in the field. Course participants will bring their problems to the program and will benefit from the best international and national advice available".

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Session leaders will include Professor Gerry Stoker, senior advisor to the Blair government on local government reform in the UK, Paul Porteous (Kennedy School at Harvard), Jude Munro, former CEO from Brisbane City Council, Glenys Beauchamp (Secretary, Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government) , among others.

The program will focus on the ‘real issues’ faced by local government leaders and will be taught in a dynamic, interactive learning environment with a problem-solving focus. This approach, along with a set of carefully selected resources, will give these leaders the tools and renewed confidence to deliver public value for citizens and address the key challenges facing contemporary local government.

**Further information:**

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