

Annual Review **2025**



**LEADERS
INSTITUTE**
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



A Message from the Chair and CEO

For more than 25 years, the Leaders Institute of South Australia has developed leaders who shape the future of our State - and through them, contributed to the strength of our communities, organisations and institutions.

In 2025, we delivered our 26th Governor's Leadership Foundation program and continued to grow a network of more than 900 GLF graduates across business, government and the for-purpose sector. Alongside the GLF, we delivered the Youth GLF, Amplify, governance and leadership masterclasses, and tailored programs, supporting leaders at different stages of their journey to strengthen their confidence, capability and capacity to lead in complex environments.

Across each program, participants step back from the day-to-day to reflect on the kind of leaders they want to be. They explore the difference between technical and adaptive challenges, test their thinking and build trusted relationships across sectors. The broader impact we see - through Community Action Projects, workplace initiatives, improved business outcomes, board service, volunteering and cross-sector collaboration - flows from that investment in people.

From the Chairperson

This year marks my final year as Chairperson of the Leaders Institute of South Australia, after five years. It has been a privilege to serve alongside a committed Board, talented staff, facilitators and partners who believe strongly in the value of leadership development and its contribution to our State.

I am particularly proud of the way each cohort of the Governor's Leadership Foundation demonstrates openness, generosity and a willingness to contribute beyond their immediate roles. I step away with gratitude and confidence in the organisation's future, in the safe hands of incoming Chairperson Julianne Parkinson.

Todd Roberts – Board Chair



From the CEO

2025 was my first year as Chief Executive Officer, and it has been a year of listening, learning and building. I have been encouraged by the strength of our alumni community, the commitment of participants and the trust placed in the Institute by our partners.

Looking to 2026, we will launch Expertship in collaboration with the Expertship Institute, expanding our portfolio to better support senior technical and subject matter experts stepping into broader leadership influence. Our new strategic plan will guide the Institute's continued evolution - strengthening program quality, broadening accessibility and deepening our contribution to South Australia.

To our participants, alumni, partners and supporters - thank you. Your engagement ensures that leadership capability continues to grow across South Australia and that its benefits are felt across our community.

Sarah Cutbush – Chief Executive Officer



Patron's Message

As Patron, I am pleased to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Leaders Institute of South Australia during the past year.

Leadership plays a vital role in strengthening communities and supporting progress across our State.

In a period marked by ongoing social, economic and organisational change - and indeed challenge - the need for thoughtful, inclusive and capable leadership arguably is more important than ever.

The Leaders Institute of South Australia continues to foster leaders who are reflective, collaborative and engaged with the communities they serve.

Throughout the year, the Institute has supported leadership development across a wide range of sectors and career stages.

Its programs encourage participants to deepen their self-awareness, broaden their understanding of complex issues, and consider the wider impact of their decisions and actions.

This emphasis on connection between individuals, organisations and the broader community is a consistent and valuable feature of the Institute's work.

The Governor's Leadership Foundation Program remains central to the Institute's activities.

By bringing together a diverse cohort of established leaders, the program provides opportunities for reflection, learning and engagement with the challenges facing South Australia.



Participants are supported to develop new perspectives and approaches that strengthen their leadership capability and sense of responsibility.

The Institute's commitment to inclusive leadership is further reflected in programs such as The Youth Governor's Leadership Foundation, Amplify, and the Empowered Leaders Program, supporting young and emerging leaders, and regional communities.

In addition, the Institute's masterclasses in areas such as governance, trauma-informed leadership and imposter syndrome address contemporary leadership challenges with practical insight.

I thank the Leaders Institute of South Australia's board, staff and partners for their stewardship and dedication throughout the year.

I commend the Institute for its continued contribution to developing capable leadership that supports the wellbeing and future of South Australia.

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia

Sponsors and stakeholders

Professor David Lloyd

Vice-Chancellor
and President –
UniSA



In 2025, the University of South Australia has been proud to have continued its longstanding partnership with the Leaders Institute of South Australia, with which it shares a commitment to shaping a brighter future for our State.

Equipping the leaders of tomorrow with the skills and knowledge they need to address society's most complex challenges has always been central to UniSA's mission. In support of this goal, we have championed the Governor's Leadership Foundation program since its inception in 2000 and enjoyed a formal partnership with the Leaders Institute since 2016. This collaboration has advanced our Business School's mission to develop leadership capability across all sectors of the economy, supporting individual career progression while strengthening the organisations and industries that underpin the state's long-term prosperity.

As UniSA joins with the University of Adelaide to form Adelaide University, I am pleased to confirm that this important relationship will continue in 2026, ensuring sustained investment in the development of innovative, future-focussed leaders for our State.

Jeremy Schultz

Partner –
Finlaysons Lawyers



Finlaysons Lawyers has been a proud supporter of the Leaders Institute of South Australia since its inception, reflecting our long-standing commitment to fostering leadership and capability across the State. We have greatly valued the opportunity to support the Institute's initiatives over the years, including participation in governance, program development, and ongoing corporate sponsorship. This engagement has allowed the firm to contribute to the growth and development of South Australia's future leaders, equipping them with the skills, confidence, and perspective needed to navigate an increasingly complex social and economic landscape.

We congratulate the Leaders Institute Board, management, and alumni for their dedication and impact, and we look forward to continuing to support their important work in shaping the next generation of South Australian leaders.

Grant Martinella

Partner –
William Buck



As the largest locally owned and operated accounting and advisory firm in South Australia, William Buck works closely with established and emerging leaders right across the state. This includes providing tailored advice and support to owners, operators and management to help grow their business - whether it be in its early stage of operation or an established large company expanding overseas.

The calibre of our leaders across the private, public and community sectors is crucial to how South Australia navigates the significant opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The Leaders Institute of South Australia has a vital role in developing the leaders our State needs.

As a proud partner, William Buck congratulates the team at the Leaders Institute on its achievements over the past 25 years and its vision for the future.

Greg Knagge

Founder and CEO –
Nation



As part of the marketing and communication services industry, I'm fortunate to have an inside view into a diverse range of industries and organisations. Whether it's private enterprise, government or the community sector, the need to apply the principles of adaptive leadership remains an imperative in an ever-changing world.

It's gratifying to see the Leaders Institute continuing to empower individuals to make a difference in South Australia.

As a member of the GLF alumni, I believe that we have a responsibility to apply our knowledge gained through the Governor's Leadership Foundation program to create positive change. Congratulations to the 2025 GLF graduates!

Stephen Handrick

Community
Development
Manager –
Beyond Bank



Beyond Bank is one of Australia's largest customer-owned banks, with approximately 300,000 customers and more than 50 branches across the country. For more than 65 years, we've been changing the lives of their members and communities through financial wellbeing.

Beyond Bank is proud to be the Leaders Institute of South Australia's Banking Partner, providing Governance Masterclass Scholarships to help develop not-for-profit leaders to gain the confidence they need to help a board become more impactful and efficient. Beyond Bank also supports the Institute through the Community Reward Program. By saving in a Community Reward Account, members help raise funds at no cost to them. The more they save, the more Beyond Bank donates. Through this, Beyond Bank donated over \$686,000 to 436 community organisations across Australia in 2024/25.

Shane Farley

CEO – Community
Business Bureau (CBB)



Since 2005, CBB has supported the Leaders Institute and the Governor's Leadership Foundation through the Keith Fulton Memorial Scholarship. We do this because we believe deeply in the difference strong, community minded leaders make in the not-for-profit sector. To date, we have provided 30+ leaders with the opportunity to grow their leadership capability, broaden their perspectives, and strengthen their confidence. That impact matters. Every participant takes what they learn back into their organisations, their teams, and the communities they serve, creating a ripple effect of better decisions, stronger cultures, and more innovative approaches to social challenges.

For CBB, this partnership reflects our commitment to helping shape a sector that is skilled, resilient, and able to meet the complex needs of the people it supports.

Anthony Kittel

CEO – REDARC



As CEO of REDARC Electronics, I am proud to continue supporting the GLF program, and the Leaders Institute of South Australia that delivers it. The Institute plays a vital role in developing principled, outward-looking leaders who understand the importance of collaboration, service, and community impact across South Australia.

Through the GLF, the Institute creates meaningful connections between participants, organisations, and the broader state, equipping leaders to think beyond their immediate roles and contribute to long-term social and economic outcomes.

REDARC's ongoing sponsorship of the Dr. Paul Collier Scholarship reflects our shared commitment to inclusion and opportunity. Paul a 2009 GLFer and founder of Dignity for Disability, exemplified resilience and advocacy. Supporting this scholarship honours his legacy and aligns strongly with our core values and unwavering support of inclusive, values-driven leadership.

Kerry deLorme

ED – James and Diana Ramsay Foundation



The James and Diana Ramsay Foundation supports the Leaders Institute because their work aligns strongly with our belief that capable, values-driven leadership is essential to a thriving not-for-profit sector.

Evidence from our granting strategy areas consistently demonstrates that organisations with strong, well-supported leadership are better able to navigate complexity, respond to changing needs, and deliver sustained impact.

Our experience shows that when leaders are equipped with the right skills, networks, and cross-sector perspectives, programs are more effective and organisations are more resilient. We therefore invest in leadership development, trusting those closest to the challenge and supporting them to lead with confidence and impact.

Tori Dixon-Whittle

CEO – Food South Australia



Food South Australia is proud to support the work of the Leaders Institute of South Australia in strengthening leadership capability across our state. South Australia's prosperity depends not only on strong industries, but on thoughtful, courageous and community-minded leaders. Through its programs, the Leaders Institute cultivates self-awareness, accountability and collaboration – qualities essential to navigating complexity and driving sustainable progress.

As CEO of South Australia's peak food and beverage body, I see daily how leadership shapes culture, performance and impact. Investing in leadership development is foundational to long-term success. We value our partnership with the Institute and the shared commitment to building leaders who serve with purpose.

Andrew Reed

GM – Hender Consulting



Leadership matters. For over 25 years, the Leaders Institute has been developing impactful leaders. Very early in that time, we at Hender started noticing the benefits of the Institute's work. GLFers were different. Candidates who had been through the program were more self-aware, committed to considering the bigger picture and leading with integrity.

Hender specifically designs interview questions to explore authenticity, humility, integrity, empathy, collaboration, courage, vision, diversity, and many other important contemporary leadership qualities. We love seeing the GLF on any executive's CV, as the Institute genuinely develops these traits.

Freddie Brincat

Founder & ED – Community Bridging Services (CBS) Inc.

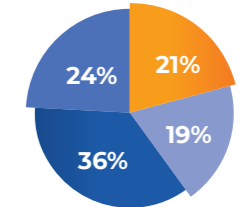


CBS Inc. is a not-for-profit organisation supporting more than 2,800 people living with a disability across South Australia. CBS Inc. is a leader in open employment, NDIS supports, school to work programs and social enterprise. We are proud to sponsor other like-minded SA organisations, like the Leaders Institute and its services including the GLF and the Youth GLF to create the next generation of holistic leaders. The Institute has genuine positive impact and benefits to us, with two of our Executive Managers completing the GLF program in 2019, and staff completing their regional leadership development program in 2023.

We continue sponsoring the Institute, providing a scholarship for emerging leaders with a disability or working in the disability sector and presenting to GLF participants, on the importance and benefits of resilience, diversity and inclusion in workplaces and our community.

2025 Impact Snapshot

Governor's Leadership Foundation (GLF) Program



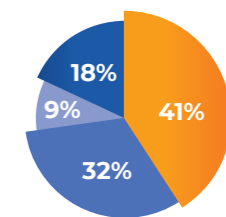
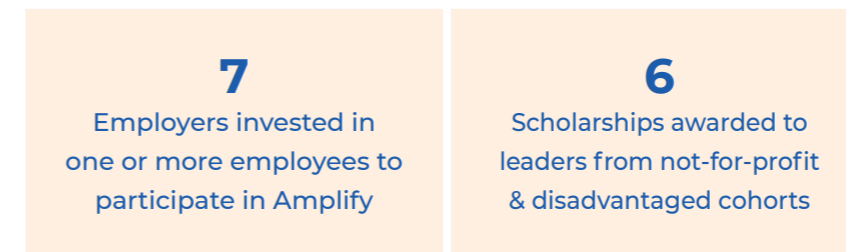
Industry breakdown of participants

- Business
- Education
- Not for profit
- Government

Program outcomes (average participant self-assessment 10 point scale)

Program Outcome	GLF
Improved ability to lead with impact <i>I collaborate others for input, inspiration and insight when navigating issues</i>	8.3
More confidence to navigate complex issues <i>I have the self-confidence, skills and knowledge to handle complex issues</i>	8.1
Increased self-confidence and awareness <i>I am aware of my impact on others</i>	8.2
Broadened adaptive capacity <i>I know how to make my colleagues feel valued and respected</i>	9.0

Amplify Program



Industry breakdown of participants

- Business
- Education
- Not for profit
- Private

Program outcomes (average participant self-assessment 10 point scale)

Program Outcome	Amplify
Improved ability to lead with impact <i>Leadership confidence</i>	7.6
More confidence to navigate complex issues <i>Confidence in taking part in a project on something unknown</i>	8.1
Increased self-confidence and awareness <i>Self-awareness and the ability to demonstrate empathy</i>	8.1

Our history and purpose

For more than 25 years, the Leaders Institute of South Australia has developed leaders who shape the future of our State.

In 2025, the Institute delivered our 26th Governor's Leadership Foundation program, contributing to our growing community of more than 900 GLF graduates across private enterprise, government and the community sector. Since launching the Youth Governor's Leadership Foundation in 2022, four cohorts of young South Australians (15-17 years) have also completed the program, strengthening the leadership pipeline for the next generation.

What began as a single flagship initiative at the turn of the century has evolved into a diverse portfolio of leadership development programs including Youth GLF, Amplify (for emerging leaders), regional programs, governance and other masterclasses, and tailored programs delivered in partnership with organisations across a broad range of industry sectors. In 2026, we will be launching our Expertship programs in collaboration with the Expertship Institute, designed for senior technical and subject matter experts.

“South Australia stands proud and strong once again - yet the need for adaptive, values-based leadership has never been greater.”

Through Community Action Projects, cross-sector collaboration and a connected alumni network, the Institute's impact extends well beyond individual participants. Our work has contributed to strengthening organisations, supporting community initiatives and building leadership capability across South Australia.

Our origin story

The origins of this work trace back to the late 1990s. At that time, South Australia was facing significant economic challenges. Recognising the need for renewed confidence and connected leadership in rebuilding our State's fortunes, the Honourable Sir Eric Neal AC CVO, then Governor of South Australia, worked alongside a group of forward-thinking South Australians to establish the Governor's Leadership Foundation.

They understood that long-term prosperity would depend not only on economic policy or industry growth but also on the quality of leadership guiding the State through complexity and change.

The Governor's Leadership Foundation was created to nurture leaders who could think systemically, collaborate across boundaries and act in service of the broader community.

Today, South Australia stands proud and strong once again. The State has grown in confidence, capability and global relevance. Yet the need for adaptive, values-based leadership has not diminished. The challenges have become more complex, more interconnected and more demanding of leaders who must navigate ambiguity and build trust across differing perspectives.

Since inception, all successive Governors of South Australia have agreed to serve as Patron of the Governor's Leadership Foundation. This continuity of support has reinforced the bipartisan and cross-sector nature of the Institute's mission and reflected a shared recognition that promoting leadership is an investment in the State's future.

2025 – A year of transition and renewed direction

The 2025 year marked both continuity and succession for the Leaders Institute.

Sarah Cutbush joined the organisation as Chief Executive Officer, continuing the Institute's commitment to strong, purposeful leadership. After five years of dedicated service, Chair Todd Roberts announced he would step down in early 2026, with Julianne Parkinson appointed as incoming Chair.

The Strategic Plan 2021-2025 concluded at the end of the year. Across that period, the Institute maintained program quality, expanded youth pathways, strengthened alumni engagement, increased brand visibility and matured its governance and operational capability - building the foundations on which the next chapter will be built.

“Long-term prosperity would depend not only on economic policy or industry growth, but on the quality of leadership guiding the State through complexity and change.”

During 2025, the Board and staff team also developed a new Strategic Plan for 2026-2030, focused on sustaining excellence in program delivery, deepening alumni contribution and building the partnerships needed for long-term impact.

The Institute enters 2026 with clarity of purpose, strong foundations and confidence in its ability to continue shaping leadership across South Australia.

The Honourable Sir Eric Neal AC CVO

Founding Patron of the Governor's Leadership Foundation



In 2025, we marked the passing of Sir Eric Neal, former Governor of South Australia and founding Patron of the Governor's Leadership Foundation.

Sir Eric lived a long, rich and extraordinary life. His distinguished career saw him serve as Chief Executive Officer and Director of several major corporations, Honorary Air Commodore of the Royal Australian Air Force, Colonel of the Australian Army, Governor of South Australia, and Chancellor of Flinders University. He passed away at the age of 101, closing a remarkable chapter in South Australia's history.

Sir Eric holds a special place in the story of the Leaders Institute of South Australia. As Governor, he helped establish the Governor's Leadership Foundation in 2000. His belief in the importance of connected, capable and values-based leadership laid the foundation for all the work that followed.

More than 25 years on, over 900 GLF graduates and countless others have been shaped by that legacy.

We were fortunate to benefit from Sir Eric's continued encouragement and guidance over a quarter of a century, as he remained a steadfast supporter of the Institute, its staff and its participants – past and present.

His influence endures in the leaders and communities shaped by his vision.

Program highlights

Governor's Leadership Foundation Program

South Australia's future depends on the quality of its leaders. The Governor's Leadership Foundation (GLF) Program exists to strengthen that leadership pipeline, developing senior leaders who are better equipped to navigate complexity, think across systems and contribute beyond the boundaries of their own organisations.

"South Australia's future depends on the quality of its leaders."

The GLF is the Leaders Institute of South Australia's flagship program and one of the State's most respected leadership development experiences. Those selected for the Program from diverse backgrounds and sectors, engaging with leaders who are foremost in their field and exploring aspects of our society often beyond their own experience - building the cross-sector relationships and social capital South Australia needs to tackle its most complex challenges.

The intensive 10-month program combines seminars, forums, field trips, retreats and community action learning. The 2025 cohort explored topics including economics and growth industries, the history and implications of the treatment of First Nations people, criminal and social justice, entrepreneurship, politics, social cohesion, the arts and the environment, with a rural study trip to the Riverland. At graduation, 40 new leaders joined the GLF alumni community, bringing the total to 958.

"GLF was not about tools and techniques. It was about shared learning, deep relationships and honest reflection. I leave with greater calm, thoughtfulness and clarity about the role I can play - not just as a leader, but as a human being."

– Ben Hall, CEO, Barossa Village

"GLF has been an invaluable and transformative experience. It deepened my understanding of how I lead, influence and contribute within complex systems. I've gained greater clarity and purpose, recognising that meaningful change takes time and intention."

– Jae Lam, Prin. Leadership Development, SAPOL

Below: Monique Russell, Lorraine Pitman, Jo Miller-Robinson, Simon Richardson, Andrew Raymond and Kathy Penver



Expanding access. Deepening impact. Shaping change.

Philanthropic scholarship support plays a critical role in strengthening the impact of the GLF. Scholarships help ensure each cohort brings together leaders with varied lived experience, insight and perspective - strengthening dialogue, sharpening thinking and enabling the cross-sector relationships essential for leaders working across complex systems. Leaders supported through philanthropy bring a strong outward focus grounded in community, service and responsibility, extending the ripple effects of the GLF well beyond the program year.

"Scholarships help ensure each cohort brings together leaders with varied lived experience, insight and perspective."

In 2025, 10 participants were supported through the generosity of individuals, organisations and foundations who believe in leadership as a force for positive change in South Australia:

- Community Business Bureau (CBB)
- Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment (OCPSE)
- REDARC
- Nunn Dimos Foundation
- James and Diana Ramsay Foundation
- Mike and Mary Heard
- Terry Teoh, FGLF 2005

We are deeply grateful for your support, which enables leaders to think more boldly, collaborate more openly and remain deeply connected to the communities they serve.

Impact in action: Tahlia Lloyd – Director Aboriginal Health, Strategy and Innovation

Scholarship support enabled Tahlia Lloyd to participate in the GLF at a pivotal moment in her leadership journey, strengthening her capacity to influence systems with purpose and integrity while stepping into a senior leadership role.

"Strong leadership is grounded in relationships, cultural safety, and the courage to challenge systems while remaining accountable to community."

Through the GLF, Tahlia sharpened her ability to lead with community voice at the centre - embedding shared decision-making, supporting Aboriginal workforce leadership and advocating for culturally safe, community-led models of care.

"Without the scholarship support, I would not have been able to participate. It removed a significant barrier and enabled my growth into senior Aboriginal leadership."

"I see leadership as something we give back to community, not just something we hold."

Tahlia was supported by a scholarship from Terry Teoh.



Right: Tahlia Lloyd and Kathy Penver

Amplify

Every organisation needs a strong pipeline of capable leaders. Amplify is designed for emerging and aspiring team leaders - people with potential who are ready to grow - equipping them with the self-awareness, confidence and practical skills to lead with clarity and purpose.

“Every organisation needs a strong pipeline of capable leaders.”

The Program is structured as a seven-day learning experience delivered over five months, making it accessible for busy professionals without compromising depth. Participants explore how to lead high-performing teams, adapt to change, build strong relationships and communicate with impact - with each session connecting directly to the real challenges they face in their roles.

In 2025, 22 leaders from a range of sectors completed the program, adding to a growing community of Amplify alumni lifting leadership capability across South Australian organisations.

“Amplify connected me with people from different industries in a way that genuinely challenged and evolved my thinking. The balance of in-depth learning and practical tools was well-judged, and the resources are ones I’ll continue to come back to.”
– Emma Ashwell, Baptist Care

Below Left: The 2025 Amplify Graduates
Below Right: Kamyar Fanaei with CBS Sponsors
Ada Caruana and Abby McKay

Broadening access. Building capability. Accelerating leadership impact.

Philanthropic support ensured a broad range of emerging leaders could participate in Amplify regardless of financial circumstance. Through the Community Bridging Services (CBS Inc) Scholarship, Australian Communities Foundation Grant and the Leaders Institute Impact Fund, six participants received scholarships - reaching individuals from backgrounds often under-represented in leadership development.

“Receiving a scholarship to attend Amplify was invaluable - without it I simply wouldn’t have been able to participate. Not only do I have a greater understanding of good leadership, I know myself better and trust myself more as a future leader.”

– Becci Love, Australian Communities Foundation Grant Recipient

Scholarship recipients reported meaningful growth in leadership confidence, self-awareness and communication, as well as greater ability to lead through ambiguity, and improved trust-building - capabilities essential for effective leadership in contemporary organisations.

“At Amplify, you can feel a remarkable ‘level up’ in your understanding of leadership in its 21st-century meaning.” – Kamyar Fanaei, CBS Inc Scholarship Recipient

Governance Masterclass

Effective governance is fundamental to organisational sustainability, accountability and risk management. During 2025, the Leaders Institute delivered two Governance Masterclasses, strengthening governance capability across the not-for-profit, community and business sectors.

Delivered by the highly regarded Alexandra Cannon OAM, the one-day Masterclass builds practical understanding of directors’ legal duties, the distinct roles of boards and management, and the governance systems that support effective oversight and decision-making. It supports alumni taking up board and committee roles, while remaining relevant to anyone seeking to strengthen board capability.

“I found the day’s content interesting and the facilitator Alexandra highly engaging. Insights gleaned from other attendees reinforce the benefits of face-to-face learning environments.”
– Cameron Mudge, Prezient Group

Participants reported increased confidence, clearer understanding of governance obligations and tangible improvements implemented immediately - including clearer agenda and paper design and more disciplined board meeting preparation.

“Alex managed content and pacing very well. Board paper format changes are already being applied.” – Rachel O’Halloran, Worley Consulting and FGLF 2020

Communicating with Impact Masterclass

The Leaders Institute delivered the Communicating with Impact Masterclass for the first time in 2025, extending leadership capability development through a focused emphasis on effective, values-led communication.

Open to alumni and a broader professional audience, the highly interactive session combined practical communication frameworks with self-awareness and reflection. Participants clarified their purpose and values, strengthened storytelling and listening skills, and developed greater

Strengthening governance. Building confidence. Sustaining purpose.

The Day Family Foundation generously supports Impact 100 and 10x10 Grant recipients to attend the Governance Masterclass, recognising the importance of sound governance.

“Good governance can help not-for-profits, big and small, to be the best that they can be. The Leaders Institute Governance Masterclass is an excellent introduction to board governance.” – Day Family Foundation

Beyond Bank, our banking partner, provides full scholarships for not-for-profit organisations as part of their commitment to sector sustainability. Together, this funding enables investment in governance that delivers benefits extending well beyond individual participants.

“So often in the not-for-profit world it is difficult to justify using donated funds for professional development, but it is so crucial for the organisation to continue to strengthen and grow.” – Scott Foreman, JusticeNet

“This practical offer of support for improved governance is a huge asset that will benefit our organisation for a long time to come.”
– Eloise Hall, TABOO Foundation

presence when communicating in complex or challenging situations - with practical exercises and feedback embedded throughout to support immediate application.

“I have already found that my confidence in delivering messages has improved, alongside the quality of my communication style. I have received positive feedback about this from others following speeches and presentations that I have since delivered.” – Program participant



Youth Governor's Leadership Foundation Program

The Youth Governor's Leadership Foundation Program develops teenagers into confident, resilient and empowered young people with the perspective, self-awareness and motivation to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

"I have become much more self-aware and reflective, learning to recognise both my strengths and areas for development. I've learnt that effective leadership is about understanding the bigger picture. I'm now more confident in decision-making, especially when ensuring choices reflect others' ideas." – Lily

Through fun, challenging and collaborative activities, participants learn to think "we" not "I" - building skills and relationships that extend well beyond the program itself.

The five-month experiential program is open to young people aged 15 to 17. It included a two-day opening retreat at Nunyara Conference Centre, small group work, face-to-face workshops and online sessions. Participants apply their learning through a self-led community action project, putting leadership into practice in a context that matters to them.

Now in its fourth year, the program continues to deliver meaningful growth for participants - and for the schools and families who invest in them. Young people who may have lacked the confidence to step up emerge with greater clarity, stronger communication skills and a genuine sense of agency.

"I have changed the way I work in a group. I now lead in a different way and see that everyone can have an input." – Calan

Below: 2025 Youth GLF Graduates with Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC Governor of South Australia



Growing confidence. Discovering leadership potential.

The Youth GLF program relies on scholarship support to ensure young people from diverse and under-represented backgrounds can take part, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Scholarships do more than open the door to participation. They bring together young people from different schools, communities and life experiences, creating connections that deepen learning for everyone involved. This shared learning builds empathy, confidence and a sense of collective responsibility that extends beyond the program.

Central to the Youth GLF is the idea that leadership is not about position, status or volume, but about awareness, courage and contribution. We actively encourage young people who may not yet see themselves as leaders to find that potential in themselves.

In 2025, 10 participants were supported through the generosity of philanthropic partners including Variety - the Children's Charity, GLF alumni Emily Quinn and Robyn Verrall, and SA Unitarians. Their support, alongside the contribution of alumni who volunteer as coaches, reinforces a powerful message to young people: leadership is for everyone, and those who benefit have a role in giving back.

"I've done lots of leadership programs, but this is the only one I've felt changed by." – Faith

Impact in action: Pearl Mead, Youth GLF 2025

Scholarship support enabled Pearl Mead to participate in the Youth GLF as a boarding student from rural South Australia - providing access to an experience that has reshaped how she sees leadership, herself and the world around her.

Through the program, Pearl developed greater confidence, self-awareness and a deeper understanding of leadership as a collective practice.

"Leadership needs to be a team effort. Success comes from the group, not one overpowering voice."

One of Pearl's most significant learnings has been the ability to step back, observe and reflect before responding.

"Taking a 'balcony perspective' has helped me think more clearly, listen more carefully and make better choices."

Pearl leaves the program with a stronger sense of agency and purpose.

"Through this scholarship, I've been able to grow into a young woman who knows when a difference needs to be made."



Right: Nikos and Pearl

Tailored Programs

Innovation Leaders Network Leadership Program

The Innovation Leaders Network (ILN) Leadership Program is a South Australian Government initiative delivered by the Leaders Institute of South Australia in partnership with Adelaide University's Innovation and Collaboration Centre. Commissioned by the Department of State Development, the program builds the leadership capability, resilience and networks that high-potential startup founders need to scale innovative businesses in South Australia.

In 2025, the program delivered a founder-centred experience for 10 emerging leaders, combining a residential retreat, leadership workshops, coaching, mentoring and connection to the state's innovation ecosystem. All participants reported the program met or exceeded their expectations, with strong outcomes across leadership development, wellbeing and organisational impact.

“Building the leadership capability, resilience and networks that high-potential startup founders need to scale innovative businesses in South Australia.”

Participants reported increased confidence, more effective decision-making and greater resilience. All implemented tangible changes within their organisations, contributing to stronger teams, clearer strategic direction and a more connected startup community.



Above: 2025 Empowered Committees Program Graduates

“I clarified our mission and vision, reshaped our priorities and made several structural changes to the team. The program gave me the frameworks and confidence to make these decisions decisively and with intention.”

“I realised I was holding myself back. The power of saying no to things that don't align with our vision freed up time for the work that actually matters.”

“I am now much more confident as a leader, can make decisions more effectively and delegate more easily. As a result, the business can operate more effectively and move faster.”

Empowered Committees Program

The Empowered Committees Program, delivered in partnership with Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains (RDA BGLAP) and funded by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA), strengthened the leadership, governance and operational capability of volunteer-led organisations across the region.

“Strengthening not only individual leaders, but the long-term governance, sustainability and resilience of community organisations.”

Below: 2025 ILN Leadership Program Graduates with the Hon Joe Szakacs



Above: Leaders Institute facilitator Sarah McGregor with participants from the MJN Centre for Women's Sport Program. Photo by Emma Hoppo

The program supported Chairs, Presidents and executive committee members through workshops, masterclasses, panels and individual coaching. Participants developed practical, transferable skills across 15 priority capability areas, including governance and finance, strategic planning, volunteer management, community engagement and adaptive leadership - with evaluation results demonstrating uplift across all 15 areas.

“The frameworks taught are vital to the success of committees and will ensure organisations reach their highest potential.” – Kylie Falkenberg, Partner, Brian Deegan Lawyers

Participants described the learning as practical, relevant and immediately useful. High-quality facilitation fostered strong peer connection, building a shared leadership language and toolkit that extended well beyond individual organisations.

“The program lived up to its name. It increased my confidence and skills as a leader, and I wish I had a course like this at the start of my career.” – Michael Bowmer, Vice Chair, Greenock Lutheran Parish

Through PIRSA's investment and RDA BGLAP's trust in our place-based leadership approach, the program strengthened not only individual leaders, but the long-term governance, sustainability and resilience of community organisations across the region.

“The frameworks were practical and easy to apply, and I would recommend this program to anyone looking to grow their leadership skills and impact.” – Rhys Hinds, Prospective Student Coordinator, Flinders University

Partnering with Sport SA

The Leaders Institute continued its partnership with Sport SA in 2025, delivering leadership development across two initiatives: the Marjorie Jackson-Nelson (MJN) Centre for Women's Sport and Sport SA's Governance Reform Program - supporting the people who lead, govern and contribute through volunteer and community-based roles across South Australian sport.

“Supporting the people who lead, govern and contribute through volunteer and community-based roles across South Australian sport.”

Through the MJN Centre for Women's Sport, we delivered People, Culture and Environment - a full-day module strengthening leadership confidence, communication and cultural influence. Participants reflected on their values, built psychological safety, developed storytelling and public speaking skills, and navigated leadership transitions with clarity.

Through Sport SA's Governance Reform Program, the Leaders Institute delivered a Governance Masterclass for State Sporting Organisations, strengthening participants' understanding of roles, legal responsibilities, financial oversight, risk and strategic leadership - delivered in a flexible evening format to accommodate volunteer directors.

By investing in the people who give their time, expertise and energy to sport, these programs contribute to stronger clubs, more inclusive leadership and resilient community systems across South Australia. We look forward to continuing this work with Sport SA in 2026.

Financial Overview

Financial Performance 2025

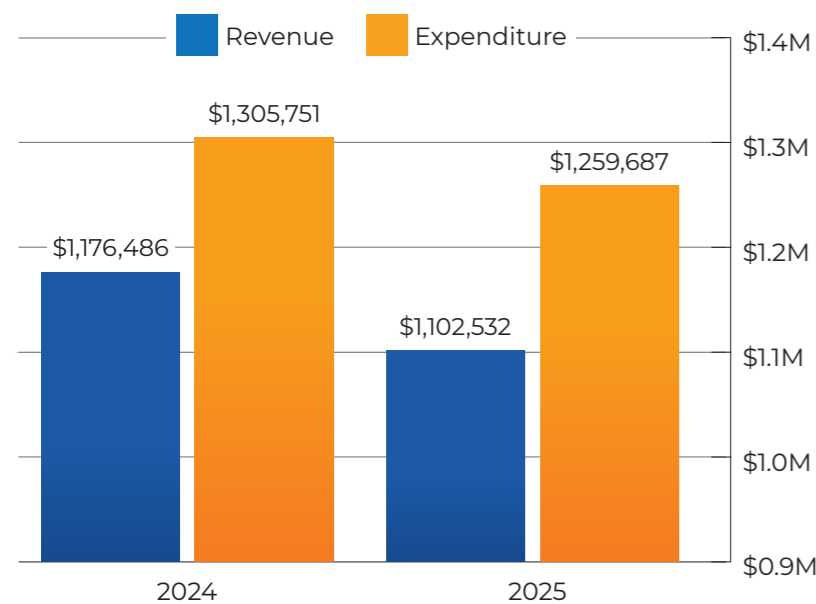
2025 was a year of transition and strategic investment for the Leaders Institute, with the organisation maintaining strong reserves while strengthening its foundations for future growth.

Financial Snapshot – 2025

Category	2025 Result	2024 Result
Total trading income	\$1,102,532	\$1,176,486
Net operating result	-\$157,155	-\$129,265

Metric	Position at 31 Dec 2025	Position at 31 Dec 2024
Total assets	\$1,617,182	\$1,977,932
Cash and financial investments	\$1,363,621	\$1,788,180
Total equity	\$947,124	\$1,104,279

Revenue vs total expenditure



Key Factors

- Lower revenue from tailored programs during leadership transition
- Strategic investment in organisational capability and systems
- One-off governance and advisory costs during the year (Chair recruitment, strategic planning costs)

What Drove The Result

In 2024, the Board approved a 2025 budget anticipating an operating loss of \$72,524, recognising that the year would involve leadership transition and several organisational initiatives. The final result for the year was a net loss of \$157,155.

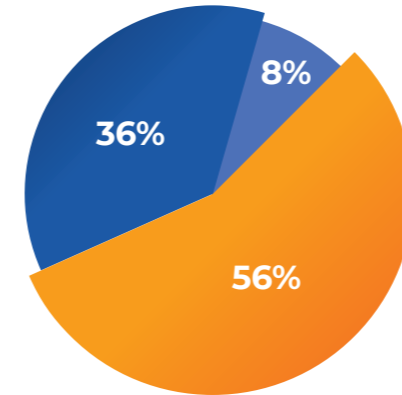
The result was driven by lower-than-expected revenue from tailored leadership programs. Business development activity for tailored programs had previously been concentrated in a single role and, following leadership and staffing changes early in the year, the organisation experienced a period of reduced pipeline activity while responsibilities were redistributed, and the new Chief Executive Officer and team established new relationships and opportunities.

Strategic Investments

During the year, the Institute also made several investments to strengthen its organisational capability and position the organisation for future growth. These included developing a new strategic plan, transitioning to an outsourced finance function to strengthen financial processes and reporting, and establishing a new role focused on philanthropy and stakeholder engagement to support long-term sustainability.

With the exception of those unbudgeted strategic expenses, operating expenditure remained carefully managed and broadly in line with budget.

Program and partnership revenue 2025



- GLF participant fees \$618,282
- Other programs & income \$398,035
- Sponsorship \$86,215

Program Income

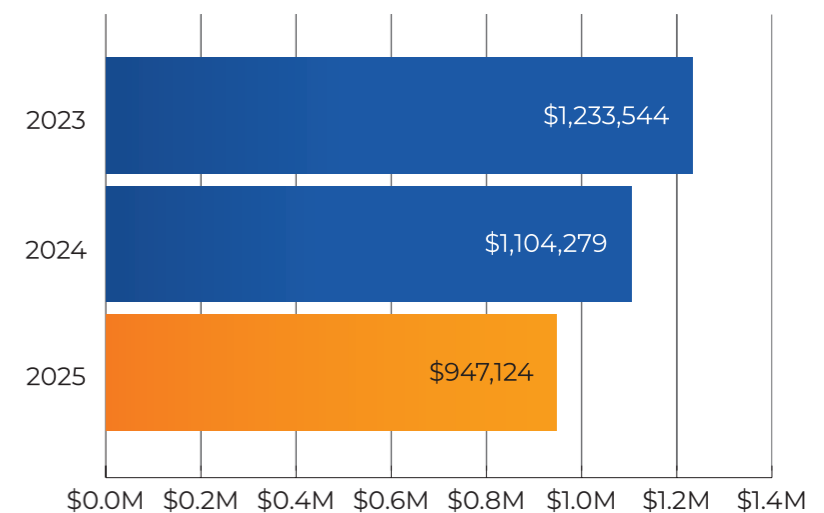
The Institute generated \$1.10 million in program income during the year, with the Governor’s Leadership Foundation remaining the Institute’s largest program and most significant contributor to revenue. Other programs including Amplify, Masterclasses and Youth GLF also made positive contributions to income during the year.

Financial Position

Importantly, the Institute continues to maintain a strong financial position. At year end, total equity stood at \$947,124, and the organisation retained significant cash reserves and financial investments. Liquidity ratios remain healthy and provide the financial resilience required to manage short-term fluctuations in program revenue while continuing to invest in strategic priorities.

The work undertaken during 2025 has strengthened the Institute’s foundations and clarified its strategic direction. With strong reserves, disciplined financial management and a renewed focus on partnerships, philanthropy and program growth, the organisation enters 2026 focused on its next phase of development.

Net assets (accumulated surplus)



Community Connection

Youth GLF Community Action Project – Gender Equity

The Youth GLF Community Action Project challenges participants to take meaningful action on real-world issues. In 2025, CAP groups selected projects aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - a global framework of 17 goals addressing the world's most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges.

“To create meaningful, long-term change, it was important to address the issue at its source.”

As part of our Community Action Project, our group focused on gender equality (SDG 5). We decided that to create meaningful, long-term change, it was important to address the issue at its source - by engaging with younger generations and helping to instil these values early on.

We visited four schools and spoke to more than 200 students, delivering a presentation on gender inequality and running an interactive activity to demonstrate how it appears in everyday life. We asked students to draw roles such as a nurse, ballet dancer, police officer and doctor - highlighting how many instinctively associated

Below: Annabelle, Jessica, Lily and Mary

certain genders with particular jobs, and opening a discussion about gender stereotypes and unconscious bias.

We could clearly see the impact as students began to recognise their own assumptions and reflect on them. Our team also grew through the process, developing our communication, public speaking and leadership skills along the way.

The Youth GLF was an incredible experience. It provided us with the opportunity to make a real impact while developing valuable lifelong skills.

– **Mary, Lily, Jessica and Annabelle, Youth GLF 2025**

GLF Community Action Projects

A core element of the GLF Program, the Community Action Project (CAP) puts leadership into practice in the real world. Participants work in small groups on an action learning project brought to them by a not-for-profit or social enterprise organisation, applying the skills and frameworks developed throughout the program to address genuine community challenges.

Since the GLF began in 2000, participants have collaborated with more than 110 South Australian community organisations - a testament to the program's enduring impact beyond the boardroom.

“To create meaningful, long-term change, it was important to address the issue at its source.”

Each year, CAP groups conduct a feasibility study, consult with key stakeholders and develop a pilot project or business plan, which they present to the Board of the Leaders Institute prior to graduation.

“Since the GLF began in 2000, participants have collaborated with more than 110 South Australian community organisations.”

In 2025, the cohort partnered with seven organisations across community services, First Nations, youth, arts and social enterprise: Kaurra Warra Karrpanthi, Mosaic Adelaide, Play It On, St John's Youth Services, Village Co., Wyatt Trust, and the Tjindu Foundation.

“Although the CAP was hard and very time consuming, I absolutely loved it. My key learning was how important it is to recognise everyone's talent and skill - and most importantly, when to use it to maximise the outcomes of the work you are delivering.” – **Shane Mooar, SA Health**

“Our CAP group and project was a gnarly one, and I loved being involved every step of the way. It challenged our leadership, the way we hold ourselves in relationships and how to use collective smarts all at the same time.” – **Jo Miller-Robinson, Kaurra Warra Karrpanthi CAP**

Below: Shane Mooar, Alan Boddy, Seshnie Taylor, Jo Miller-Robinson, Jo Telfer and Kate Donnelly. Below Right: Dennis Mutton and Kathryn House



Dennis Mutton Award - Celebrating Leadership Beyond Self

The Dennis Mutton Award honours the legacy of Dennis Mutton by recognising GLF alumni who demonstrate leadership beyond self - leadership that strengthens civic life through service, generosity and ethical influence. It celebrates sustained contribution over time, acknowledging those whose work has created opportunity for others and delivered enduring benefit for the South Australian community.

This year's recipient, Kathryn House, embodies these values through her commitment to philanthropy, community connection and values-led leadership. Through her roles as Chair of Impact 100 South Australia, founder of Young Impact SA and founder of Powerful Women, Kath has championed collective giving as a powerful force for change. She serves on multiple boards across health, arts and social services, consistently activating others to give their time, skills and resources in ways that create lasting benefit.

Kath credits the GLF with helping her find her *ikigai* - the intersection of what you love, what you are good at, and what the world needs.

"Leadership beyond self isn't just about what we give; it's about how we use our voice, our networks, and our experiences to create opportunities for others."

"Leadership is amplified when shared and when in the service of others." – Kathryn House, Dennis Mutton Award recipient 2025



Finding Her Voice

Seshnie Taylor and the story of Vocare

Seshnie Taylor's GLF experience in 2025 was a little different from most. Not only did she take a leap to establish her own business during the program, she fundraised to pay for her GLF place. Seshnie's story, like Seshnie herself, is original and inspirational.

A linguist and entrepreneur who migrated to Australia after living in several countries, Seshnie Taylor had always assumed programs like the Governor's Leadership Foundation were reserved for people who could afford it, or whose companies would foot the bill. When she was accepted to the 2025 GLF, her first response was joy. Her second was: how do I pay for this?

“Instead of saying I can't afford this, how can I be creative?”

What followed was a masterclass in creative thinking and sheer determination. Working with a professional development budget of \$3,000 from her employer, Seshnie saved hard, squeezed the household budget - and then took a deep breath and stepped well outside her comfort zone. She hosted a salon dinner at home for a handpicked group of women she admired in the South Australian ecosystem, a dinner at her favourite local restaurant, and an afternoon tea - all drawing on support from friends, as well as the courage to ask people to back her and the impact she would have.

Seshnie's *how can I make this happen?* mindset was forged early in her life. She grew up in South Africa, one of four children raised by a single mother (who later re-married a wonderful English man), and life was hard. The family moved to the UK to escape domestic violence and for a new start. The experience of suddenly having access to free education and healthcare, as well as more opportunities, left a deep impression.

“I felt like we'd won the lottery,” she recalls. “And I thought, I never want cost to stop me achieving my dreams and doing what I want to do.”

The GLF came at a pivotal moment. Seshnie had spent four years working in Adelaide's innovation ecosystem, but in the back of her mind, she knew she wanted to build something of her own. She'd done it before, running a profitable languages tutoring business in China for four years. But her confidence had faltered and the leap back into entrepreneurship felt daunting.

The GLF program changed that.

“I said in my interview when I applied that I hoped the GLF could nudge me into being less afraid and just going for it,” she says. “And they asked me this really important question: when you're 70 years old, what does your life look like? That got me thinking - I wanted to found a company that went on to help thousands of skilled migrants to improve their linguistic clarity and confidence so they can shine.”

The GLF cohort also gave Seshnie something she hadn't expected - a mirror. Surrounded by leaders from across sectors who heard her story and reflected it back to her, she began to recognise that her self-doubt wasn't warranted.

“I don't think I would have done it without the GLF. I was way too scared. Being in the room with these people and watching how they interact showed me what good leadership looks like.”

Seshnie took the leap and founded Vocare - Australia's first pronunciation refinement tool built specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse frontline workers in aged care and NDIS settings. Using AI and machine learning, the platform helps workers refine their pronunciation



Above: Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC and Seshnie Taylor

and communication confidence through short, private practice sessions on their mobile devices - no classroom, no pressure, no downloads required. Vocare's focus is not on changing accents - Seshnie is emphatic about that - but on refining specific sounds so workers can be heard and understood the first time.

“It's about clarity and the safety that comes with it. When you have an emergency and you need your carer to pick up the phone and call for help, you need them to be heard and understood.”

In just eight months since founding Vocare, Seshnie has secured four contracts and hired her first employee. Early access partners include Resthaven, Barossa Village, CARA and St Basil's. At Resthaven, engagement with the platform exceeded 90% - well above the industry standard of around 40% for voluntary training.

“I thought maybe one or two people would try it... it's been blown out of the park.”

It is perhaps no coincidence that someone who fundraised her own way into the GLF has built a business grounded in the same spirit of generosity and access. One of the things that has stayed with Seshnie most from the program is a simple question: who's not in the room, and why?

“In every talk and every circle I went to in the GLF, I felt very welcome,” she says.

“And I kept thinking: how do I pass this on? How do I lift others up?”

She carries that into how she builds her team at Vocare - asking new hires about their dreams and mapping out paths to help them get there.

“Just go out there, be mindful, do good, do what you say you're going to do. And always be thinking about who's not in the room - and what you can do about that.”

GLF Connect

Staying Connected. Learning Together. Paying It Forward.

GLF Connect exists to support Governor's Leadership Foundation alumni to stay connected, continue learning and create positive impact across South Australia. Conceived and led by alumni volunteers and supported by the Leaders Institute, GLF Connect brings together more than 26 years of graduates as a connected network of adaptive leaders shaping South Australia's future.

In 2025, the GLF Connect Working Group delivered four alumni-led events across the seasons, each designed to spark conversation, connection and reflection on the leadership challenges shaping our communities.

Below: Sef van den Nieuwelaar, Aaron Vogt, Sam Sturm, Paul Mayers, Richard Littleton



Autumn | Beginnings, Endings and Everything in Between Hosted at MOD – More than 40 alumni explored ideas about leadership, time, identity and change through the FOREVER... exhibition, with insights from Distinguished Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington AO and Dr Lisa Bailey.

Right: Kathryn Eaton, Susan Baker, Lesley Marchioro, Bernie Dyer



Top: Heather Holmes-Ross, Jose Siliezar, Poppy Anastassiadis, Sonia Mir, Reuben Chambers
Bottom: Jo O'Callaghan, Pepper Mickan, Fida Hussain, Claire (Youth GLF guest speaker), Bel Ryan

Winter | Activating Our City at Stone and Chalk – 60 alumni heard from leaders across Illuminate Adelaide, the Adelaide Economic Development Agency and the city's innovation ecosystem. The evening raised \$1,132 for the GLF Connect Scholarship.

Spring | GLF Connect Takes on Democracy at Yungondi – More than 40 participants engaged with a bold question - is democracy still fit for purpose? - through a diverse panel and an interactive "democracy fitness" session led by DemocracyCo. The event raised \$585 for the GLF Connect Scholarship.



Summer | Creating Sustainable Futures at the Gardens – More than 70 alumni gathered in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens to welcome the newest GLF cohort, hear from Professor Michelle Waycott and enjoy a live performance by the Adelaide Youth Orchestras. The evening raised \$1,835, with 2025 alumni Ben Hall and Michael Kromwyk topping up the final amount to ensure the scholarship campaign reached its goal.

Top: Kate Donnelly, Shane Mooar, Sanjay Garg, Craig Jones, Rachel Fahey
Bottom: Lesley Marchioro, Simon Richardson, Gemma Cooper, Sarah Cutbush



Thank you to the GLF Connect Working Group for their dedication and energy in bringing these events to life: Greg Knagge, Paul Mayers, Bel Ryan, Lesley Marchioro, Kath House, Nic Jeffries, Vanessa McDaid, Nikki Salerno, Chris Sutton, Scott Mosen, Kathryn Broadbent, Paula Gillespie-Fotheringham, Mina Powell, Mimi Crowe, Cassandra Douglas, Tobyn Bearman and Jessica George.

GLF Connect Scholarship – Paying It Forward

Established by alumni in 2023, the GLF Connect Scholarship supports capable future leaders who would otherwise be unable to participate due to financial barriers. Through year-round donations, seasonal events and a powerful pay-it-forward culture, alumni and supporters raised \$15,400 in 2025 - enabling one full scholarship or two half scholarships for 2026. We are pleased to announce Erin Leggat and Susan McCormack as the 2026 recipients.

"This scholarship is about paying it forward - backing leaders who are stepping up for their communities and for South Australia. Congratulations, Erin and Susan." – Margo Hill-Smith and Greg Knagge, GLF Alumni Board representatives

Thank you

Thank you for the commitment and contributions of our:

Volunteer Board of Directors

Todd Roberts FGLF 2005
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Monique Newberry
Treasurer and Audit, Finance & Risk Committee

Jane MacFarlane FGLF 2018
Chair of the GLF Compliance Committee, member of the Audit, Finance & Risk Committee

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Peter Stevens
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Margo Hill-Smith FGLF 2023

Greg Knagge FGLF 2019
Member of the GLF Compliance Committee and GLF Connect Working Group

Peta St Clair (appointed July 2025)

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Sue Mitchell FGLF 2017

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GLF Program Manager

Jo Carrick
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Sarah Ballantine
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Amber Jung (until June 2025)
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Jackie Carletti (appointed March 2025)
Administration Coordinator

Lachlan Cupit (appointed September 2025)
Communications and Engagement Coordinator

Thanks to everyone who donated to the GLF Connect Scholarship. Special thanks to those who have donated multiple times.

Adam Bishop (2015), Alex Emmerich** (2021), Bec Adams (2018), Bel Ryan (2021), Ben Hall (2021), Ben Makepeace (2025), Boo Hooi Khoo (2019), Brionne Gay (2022), Caprice Davey (2017), Cassie Day (2023), Cathie Brown, Christine Robertson (2024), David Coombe** (2014), David Harrihill** (2021), Deb Medve (2022), Enyo Agbodo (2025), Erin Faehrmann (2020), Faith Coleman (2012), Gemma Cooper (2021), Glenn Lydyard (2024), Gordan Lesicar** (2008), Greg Knagge** (2019), Hender Consulting, Heather Gryst (2013), Heather Holmes-Ross (2024), Ilan Sagi (2024), Ivan Kempson (2016), Ivy Valle (2017), Jackie Sincock (2018), Jan-Claire Wisdom (2015), Jane MacFarlane (2018), Jenal Dhar (2023), Jess Bostock (2024), Jess George (2023), Jo Carrick, Jose Siliezar (2024), Josie McLean, Julie Petersen (2024), Karen Hughes** (2015), Kate Hobbs (2021), Kate Rush** (2009), Kathryn Eaton*** (2020), Kathryn House AM (2020), Kristy Kokegei (2025), Kristy McMillan (2024), Kym Della-Torre (2006), Lana Ngo (2023), Leigh Robb (2022), Lena Gasparyan (2020), Lesley Marchioro**** (2017), Lisa Farrell-Smart, Lisa Smart** (2022), Lisa Tarca, Luke van Kempen (2018), Mark Buckerfield (2008), Mary-Anne Healy** (2008), Matt Mitchell (2022), Maureen Lawlor (2017), Michael Kromwyk (2025), Michelle Peterson (2014), Mimi Crowe (2023), Mina Powell (2024), Monika Sikora** (2010), Monique Roberts (2022), Naomi Ebert Smith (2017), Nic Jeffries (2024), Nikki Hamdorf** (2021), Nikki Salerno** (2023), Noel Fraser (2020), Paola Niscioli (2018), Paul Bradley, Paul Mayers*** (2020), Paula Davies (2021), Paula Marie, Pepper Mickan (2023), Poppy Anastassiadis** (2024), Rachel O'Halloran (2020), Reuben Chambers*** (2024), Richard Littleton** (2020), Rob Absalom (2018), Robert Brown (2020), Rodney Miller (2003), Saibeth Walls** (2021), Samantha Sturm (2020), Scott Mosen (2019), Sef van den Nieuwelaar (2020), Sheree Brooks** (2020), Simon Millcock (2005), Simon Mills** (2024), Simon Sherriff (2015), Skye Hayes** (2024), Sonia Mir (2024), Sophie Doyle (2021), Stacey Thomas (2021), Stephen Handrick, Susan Baker (2019), Tamara Rohrlach (2014), Tania Sulan, Tobyn Bearman** (2021), Todd Roberts (2005), Tracy Neldner (2005), and Trish Giannini (2023).

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