

A historic first - Australia's media leadership convene diversity, equity and inclusion roundtable

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Media Diversity Australia (MDA) on Friday July, 14 held its inaugural industry roundtable in Sydney, bringing together Australia's media leadership and the Federal Communications Minister to commit to a path to industry-wide improvement around diversity, equity and inclusion.

The meeting, which was held at SBS, brought together the CEOs, Managing Directors and other senior representatives from MDA member organisations AAP, the ABC, Private Media Group, News Corp Australia, Nine, SBS, Seven, Ten, The Daily Aus, The Conversation Group and The Guardian, alongside the Minister for Communications Michelle Rowland.

Some notable attendees included Nine's CEO Mike Sneesby, Ten's Executive Vice President, Chief Content Officer & Head of Paramount, Beverley McGarvey, Seven's Chief People and Culture Officer Lucinda Gemmell, ABC's Chief Content Officer, Chris Oliver-Taylor, SBS's News Director Mandi Wicks and News Corp Australia's Group Executive, Corporate Affairs, Campbell Reid.

The roundtable provided a platform for an honest and robust initial discussion around barriers to equity and inclusion and opportunities for industry collaboration. The group also started initial discussions around talent pipeline and debated the merits of uniform measurement and tracking of progress across all parts of the industry to ensure greater accountability as an industry.

The event included an address by Minister Rowland who reiterated her support for MDA's mission. A copy of her speech can be accessed [here](#).



[From left to right Mandi Wicks (Director of News & Current Affairs, **SBS**), Lenore Taylor (Editor **The Guardian**), Chris Oliver-Taylor (Chief Content Officer **ABC**), Mariam Veiszadeh (CEO Media Diversity Australia), Hon Michelle Rowland (Federal Communications Minister), Isabel Lo (Founding Chair Media Diversity Australia), Beverly McGarvey (Executive Vice President, Chief Content Officer and Head of **Paramount Network Ten**), Mike Sneesby (CEO **Nine**), Lucinda Gemmell (Chief People and Culture Officer **Seven**), Lisa Watts (CEO **The Conversation Group**), Zara Seidler (Co-Founder **The Daily Aus**), Andrew Drummond (Editor **Australian Associated Press**) & Campbell Reid (Group Executive, Corporate Affairs, Policy and Government Relations, **News Corp Australia**). Ai Mawdsley (COO **Private Media Group**) was also in attendance.

Mariam Veiszadeh, CEO of Media Diversity Australia commented on the importance of the roundtable providing a launchpad for shifting the dial on industry-wide change.

“For the first time, we have brought together our members for an authentic and frank conversation about what needs to be done to make real inroads in diversity, inclusion and equity. As individual media organisations, each member has the power to have a meaningful impact, but as a collective, this group’s ability to move the dial cannot be underestimated.

“The pace of industry-wide change is slow and inconsistent. This roundtable was a call to action to the industry - together we have started the journey towards agreeing to collective commitments.”

Mariam Veiszadeh, CEO of Media Diversity Australia.



Isabel Lo, Chair and Founder of Media Diversity Australia reflected on the significance of the roundtable.

“MDA was proud to be facilitating a conversation with industry heads about what we can be doing as a collective to improve representation in mainstream media that truly reflects Australia, one that supports and empowers journalists from all walks of life so that they can report on vital issues in the public interest.”

Isabel Lo, Chair & Founder of Media Diversity Australia



Communique

The following communique has been endorsed by all members who attended the roundtable:

- The roundtable was the first time this group of Australia’s most influential media industry representatives have come together to consider actions to progress diversity, inclusion, and equity as a sector
- The first roundtable focused on establishing a firm commitment around the importance of having a media that is truly representative of our community, setting out the challenge at hand and sharing information on approaches media organisations are using to boost diversity, equity and inclusion
- There was broad agreement that sustained effort was needed to boost the diverse talent pool across the media and there was an appetite to collaborate with MDA to achieve this
- Attendees were united in collective commitment to ensure a diverse media industry and welcomed support and guidance to accelerate these efforts
- A working group will be established to continue discussions and to prepare an agenda for upcoming roundtable meetings
- MDA member Nine will host the next roundtable in early 2024. The group will meet twice yearly to ensure ongoing discussions take place and that communication channels remain open across the sector

For media enquiries please contact ceo@mediadiversity.org.au or 1300 694 190