

QLD Branch Committee Elections 2023 Nomination Statements

Charles Lemckert | Southern Cross University

Charles has over 25 years of experience working in the water sector and is currently the Discipline Chair of Engineering and Information Technology at Southern Cross University. Charles has served on various AWA and Engineering Australia committees and he has a strong passion for enhancing student education, community involvement, and industry engagement with the tertiary and secondary education sectors. I am nominating for this important committee as we need to keep improving AWAs voice and ability to improve the quality our lives and the environments around us.

Christina Feenstra | Veolia

I have worked in the industrial and municipal water treatment sectors for the past 15 years, across the mining, gas and public sectors, in a range of mostly site-based operations and engineering roles. My current role is as the General Manager for Veolia's water business in Queensland, which includes industrial water and brine treatment, desalination, recycled water treatment and remote conventional water treatment. Throughout my career, I have participated in various safety, operational and investment committees, and am currently a member of the Operations Specialist Network committee with the AWA. I would like to see the increased focus on water security and climate-friendly water supply options continue - and feel that my experience across my career can be instrumental in advancing this cause.

Declan Hearne | Seqwater

I have 20 years of distinctive experience in the delivery and leadership of adaptive approaches to integrated water management (IWM) across private, public and not for profit organizations. I am passionate about collaborative and evidence-based strategies that support healthy, adaptive, resilient communities and ecosystems. I have an excellent track record in community and stakeholder engagement for the design and development of strategies, policies and projects that enable collective delivery of social, cultural, environmental, and economic outcomes. These skills and experience would add value and diversity of opinion in AWA branch discussion, planning and delivery of impactful sessions.

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Natalie Muir | Stantec

I've been a part of the water industry for over 25 years – and I'm incredibly proud to be part of it. Our industry is rich in knowledge, is collaborative in nature, and is innovative in how we solve problems. AWA is such a key part of this – sharing knowledge with our members, connecting people within the industry but also with industries beyond our own, and inspiring change. I have spent the last 4 years on the AWA Queensland branch committee and have thoroughly enjoyed making a contribution to the industry association that has given me so much over my career. I am the current chair of the Membership Services Subcommittee, I regularly support and participate in AWA events and conferences, and enjoy meeting new people and learning more about our amazing industry. I would be honoured if our members elected me to serve another term on the committee!

Nicolaas Tjaart Strydom | WSP Australia

My career has taken me across the globe. I have been fortunate enough to have worked in South Africa (2011-2018), New Zealand (2018-2021) and more recently Australia. This has exposed me to a range of different industries, people, cultures, and ways of doing business. I relocated to Australia in 2021 and now work as Associate Civil Engineer in the Water/Utilities division of WSP. By joining the AWA committee I would like to contribute my experience from working across water industries in different countries. I would also be advocating for migrant engineers in the rapid digital transformation of how projects are delivered in the water industry. I served on the Taranaki Branch Committee for Engineering New Zealand in 2018

Olivia Newman | CPM Advisory and Project Management

Over the past two years as committee member of the AWA Queensland Branch, I have really enjoyed aligning to AWA's ethos of SHARE, CONNECT and INSPIRE, with the opportunity to support my water colleagues in coming together to share knowledge, showcase new technologies and supporting the promotion of diversity within water sector. In this time, I have been active on the Membership Sub-committee, assisted in the planning and volunteering at the Queensland Conferences and Technical/Networking Events and I am currently the Qld Source Coordinator, ensuring the articles are relevant, interesting and promote our members. I am looking to continue to support the industry and give back, particularly continuing the Woman of Water connections, regional engagement and support and looking at ways to ensure the future of the industry, particularly with the new generation of talent coming through. Additionally, with a diverse career in the both the water and civil sectors, I am able to share my experience and connect people across industries, which helps broaden the thought process and challenge us. Looking forward to continuing to support a wonderful team of volunteers that make AWA a great association.

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Sam Magill | Water Infrastructure Services

Sam Magill has over two (2) decades of experience within the water industry. Sam has presented several papers related to the water industry and safety throughout his career. Sam has received multiple awards for these papers, and by clients in recognition of his commitment to health and safety. He is well respected within the water industry for his reservoir specialist knowledge, and with a strong focus on asset management, he sees the opportunity for utilities to improve the standardisation of design, inspection and maintenance best practices. Sam's motivation to nominate for this committee is driven by his desire to share his industry experience and knowledge with others and specifically rural and smaller utilities. Sam has been the Managing Director of Water Infrastructure Services for the past several years and continues to oversee a business which has experienced significant growth. Through this role he has led several internal committees.

Shihu Hu | The University of Queensland

I have been working in the water industry for 18 years, initially as a postgraduate student and then as a researcher at UQ. Currently I am an associate professor at UQ, focusing on the development of next generation water treatment technology, while teaching water engineering courses and supervising PhD students. Over the years, I had the privilege to know and work with many water professionals in the state and the nation, especially through my role as UQ manager at Urban Utilities' Innovation Centre. I have contributed to the projects winning the last six AWA QLD Branch's Research Innovation Award. I have just been awarded a prestigious ARC Industry Fellowship to work with utilities partner on novel technology development and translation. If I become a committee member, I like to help promote the collaboration across the whole sector to stimulate innovation, knowledge transfer, upskilling water professionals to be a future-ready workforce.

Toni Veronese | Cairns Regional Council

Working in the Water Industry for the entirety of my career has been a rewarding and fulfilling role, with the unexpected learnings of enabling liveability in urban, rural and very remote communities. I have had a number of unique opportunities working with Universities, State and Local Government agencies on bespoke, place-based solutions. A major highlight was working with a sister city project in Vietnam, addressing critical water issues as part of the AWA program. Additionally, the diversity of my roles has enabled me to be a valuable contributor to the State and National Water conversations. My lived experience and challenges faced in regional and remote situations would bring a diverse perspective to the committee. The industry continues to inspire me with advances in technologies, training and new infrastructure, with this focus, I believe in giving back to the industry whenever possible. Participation in a committee such as this would provide this opportunity.

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Tony Prenzler | Arup

I've been active in the water industry now for over 23 years. Over the course of my engineering career, I've worked for several water service providers, bulk water suppliers and consultancies. I currently fulfil the Queensland Water Business Leader role at Arup. If my nomination is successful, I would truly appreciate the opportunity to represent you on the AWA Queensland Branch Committee. AWA has been a consistent and common theme throughout my time in the water industry. Many of the leaders I have worked with from the outset of my career have always placed a high degree of importance in the role of AWA. I now wish to contribute back, continue the legacy of past leaders as well as helping navigate a period of challenge and unprecedented change for the industry (e.g., climate, energy, talent retention etc). I look forward to this opportunity to represent you on the QLD Branch Committee.

William Speirs | Urban Utilities

I am passionate about the essential role that water management and stewardship plays in caring for country, caring for community and promoting sustainable economic growth. Coming up on my 14th year working in the Queensland and NT water sectors, I started out in research with CSIRO before moving into 6 years of engineering consulting and onto the utility side for the past 7 years in strategy roles with both Unitywater and now Urban Utilities. Since 2017 I have served on the AWA Queensland YWP and Branch committees, and currently serve as Branch Vice President. I want to ensure that the AWA continues to improve its connection to its members and supporters to better reflect their views, needs and expectations through relevant events and initiatives, and am keen for the Association play a stronger role in facilitating professional relationships and knowledge sharing opportunities between members, their organisations and other peak bodies.
