

# 2023 ABS and RBA Joint Conference – Biographies of Presenters

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## Nicole Adams

Nicole is a Research economist at the e61 Institute. She previously worked at the Reserve Bank of Australia in a range of roles, analysing household balance sheets, commercial property markets, capital flows and foreign exchange markets. Nicole holds an honours degree in Economics from the University of Western Australia.

## Dan Andrews

Dan is Research Director and Head of Policy Engagement at the e61 Institute. Previously he was Head of the Structural Policy Analysis Division at the OECD, where he led teams to analyse the policy drivers of productivity and employment growth. As a senior executive at the Australian Treasury, Dan founded the Treasury microdata unit and served as Co-Chair of the OECD Global Forum on Productivity and Australian delegate to the OECD Economic Policy Committee. Dan's research documents the productivity implications of the COVID-19 shock and structural reforms, and has produced seminal research on the divergence between frontier and laggard firms, the rise of zombie firms and bank forbearance. He has also led research into the scarring effects of recessions, housing markets, globalisation and inflation, and the inequality–social mobility–growth nexus.

## Professor Jeff Borland

Jeff is Truby Williams Professor of Economics at the University of Melbourne. His main research interests are analysis of the operation of labour markets in Australia, program and policy evaluation and design, Australian economic history and sports economics. Jeff is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia. In 2020 he received the annual Distinguished Fellow Award from the Economic Society of Australia. His main current fields of teaching are microeconomics, economic analysis of public policy and economic history. He has authored the textbook *Microeconomics: Case Studies and Applications*, now in its 4th edition. At University of Melbourne Jeff has been a recipient of the Ed Brown University Teaching Prize and the Ross Williams Award for Career Achievement in Teaching in the Faculty of Business and Economics.

## Michael Brennan

Michael is Chair of the Productivity Commission. Previously Michael was Deputy Secretary, Fiscal Group, in the Federal Treasury with responsibility for budget policy, retirement incomes, Commonwealth-State relations, social policy and infrastructure financing. Before that he was Deputy Secretary, Economic in the Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance. Michael has worked as an Associate Director in the economics and policy practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers, and as a senior adviser to Treasurers and Ministers for Finance at the state and federal level. Michael holds a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) from the ANU.

## Gina Cass-Gottlieb

Gina started her five-year appointment as Chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) on 21 March 2022. Gina is the first female Chair of the ACCC since it was established as an independent statutory authority in 1995. Before she joined the ACCC Gina was a senior and founding partner of Gilbert and Tobin's competition and regulation team. Gina has over 25 years' experience advising on a large number of merger, competition and regulatory matters in Australia and New Zealand. She is widely recognised as one of Australia's leading competition and regulatory experts. Gina was a Fulbright Scholar at UC Berkeley from 1986 to 1987, majoring in US competition law, financial institutions regulation and securities regulation.

## Robert Ewing

Robert is Program Manager for the Business Indicators Branch at the ABS, leading the ABS's production of a range of business-related monthly, quarterly and annual publications. Robert has worked in roles in the ABS, Department of Home Affairs and Australian Treasury, focusing in these roles on using quantitative analysis and data to deliver better policy analysis and policy outcomes. Robert has degrees in Economics, Psychology and Public Administration from the Australian National University.

## Professor Kevin Fox

Kevin is a Professor of Economics and Director of Centre for Applied Economic Research at the UNSW Business School. He works primarily in the field of economic measurement, with a focus on productivity and prices. His research on the use of scanner data in price indices has changed CPI construction in multiple countries. He is President of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth, Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and member of the NBER-affiliated US Conference on Research in Income and Wealth. He chaired the 16th Series CPI Review Advisory Group in 2009–2010, is a member of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Methodology Advisory Committee, and has been a consultant for agencies such as the Australian Treasury, UK Office for National Statistics, Reserve Bank of New Zealand, the Swiss National Bank, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, the Asian Development Bank, and the New Zealand Treasury. He is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Productivity Analysis* and an Editorial Board member of *The Review of Income and Wealth*.

## Jonathan Hambur

Jonathan is a Senior Research Manager in the Economic Research Department at the RBA, leading the Micro Analysis and Data stream. He has previously held positions in Domestic Markets and International Departments of the Bank, as well as a role at Australian Treasury leading their microdata analysis team. Jonathan holds a Masters in Econometrics and Mathematical Economics from LSE. His research focuses on using microdata sources to understand macroeconomic phenomena, with a particular focus on productivity, competition and labour markets.

## Fred Hanmer

Fred is an economist in the RBA's business liaison team. In this role Fred has been responsible for monitoring developments in housing markets by gaining insights from liaison contacts. Over the past few months Fred has been seconded to the ABS to conduct research on the ABS's new rental price dataset.

## Gianni La Cava

Gianni is Research Director and Head of Academic Engagement at the e61 Institute. He previously held several senior positions at the Reserve Bank of Australia, including establishing and leading a research team – Micro Analysis and Data (MAD) – dedicated to examining macroeconomic issues using microeconomic data. He also spent time working at the London School of Economics (LSE) in the United Kingdom and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) in Switzerland. Gianni holds a PhD in Economics from LSE and a Bachelor of Arts/Commerce from the University of Sydney. Gianni's research focuses on answering policy questions with micro data and covers topics such as household wellbeing, inequality, the housing market, and the role of the financial sector in the economy.

## **Michelle Marquardt**

Michelle is the Program Manager, Prices Branch at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). In this role she manages the ABS's suite of price indices, including the Consumer Price and Wage Price indices. These indices provide important insights that are relied upon by decision-makers and researchers to understand and manage the economy. Prior to her current position, Michelle has worked in many roles across the vast array of economic and social statistics produced by the ABS. She has also worked internationally at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Michelle has a Bachelor of Science from Melbourne University and an MBA from the University of Canberra.

## **Leigh Merrington**

Leigh joined the ABS in 2008 having graduated from La Trobe University with a Bachelor of Business (Honours). Leigh has worked predominately on the Consumer Price Index in both production and research roles, including 18 months at the UK's Office for National Statistics. Most recently Leigh led the development of the monthly CPI indicator, which was released for the first time at the end of 2022.