

2023 Conference – Biographies of Presenters

Benjamin Beckers

Ben Beckers is a Manager in the Financial Stability Department of the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) where he focuses on assessing the financial health of Australian households and the risks to banks arising from their lending to this sector. Prior to this, Ben was a Research Manager in the Bank's Economic Research Department where he focused on using structural time series modelling to understand and quantify the channels through which monetary policy operates in Australia. He has further worked on the drivers of recent inflation outcomes in Australia and the importance of foreign shocks in driving economic outcomes in Australia more generally.

Ben holds a PhD in Economics from Freie University Berlin, a Masters in Quantitative Economics from Kiel University, and a Bachelor of Economics from European-University Viadrina in Germany. He completed his PhD research as part of the Graduate Center of the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) and has completed to PhD internships at the IMF and Norges Bank.

John Bluedorn

John Bluedorn is a Deputy Division Chief on the *World Economic Outlook* in the IMF's Research Department. Previously, he has been a Senior Economist in the Research Department's Structural Reforms Unit, a member of the IMF's Euro Area Team in the European Department and worked on the *World Economic Outlook* as an Economist, contributing to a number of chapters. Before joining the IMF, he was a Professor at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom, after a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Oxford. Dr Bluedorn has published on a range of topics in international finance, macroeconomics, and development. He holds a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley.

Michele Bullock

Michele Bullock is an Australian economist who is currently Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia. In July 2023, she was appointed as Governor of the RBA, commencing on 18 September 2023. She will be the first woman to hold the role.

Michele was appointed to her current position on 2 April 2022. She is Deputy Chair of the Reserve Bank Board and Deputy Chair of the Payments System Board and a member of Chief Executive Women (CEW). Prior to her current role, Ms Bullock was the Assistant Governor (Financial System).

Michele also held a variety of senior management positions in the Bank. She was Assistant Governor (Business Services), Assistant Governor (Currency), Adviser for the Currency Group and, before that, Head of Payments Policy Department.

Iris Chan

Iris Chan is a Fellow in Grattan Institute's Budgets and Government Program. She previously worked in a wide range of policy roles at the Reserve Bank of Australia, including as a senior research economist specialising in using microdata to answer policy questions, and as a manager of teams focusing on emerging financial market and payments policy issues.

She holds a Master in Public Affairs (Economics) from Princeton University, and honours degrees in Commerce (joint honours in economics and econometrics) and Law from the University of Sydney.

John Cochrane

John Cochrane is the Rose-Marie and Jack Anderson Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution. He is also a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research and an Adjunct Scholar of the CATO Institute.

Before joining Hoover, he was a Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, and earlier at its Economics Department. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Physics at MIT and his PhD in Economics at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Junior Staff Economist on the Council of Economic Advisers (1982–1983).

John's recent publications include the book *Asset Pricing* and articles on dynamics in stock and bond markets, the volatility of exchange rates, the term structure of interest rates, the returns to venture capital, liquidity premiums in stock prices, the relation between stock prices and business cycles, and option pricing when investors can't perfectly hedge. His monetary economics publications include articles on the relationship between deficits and inflation, the effects of monetary policy, and the fiscal theory of the price level. He has also written articles on macroeconomics, health insurance, time series econometrics, financial regulation, and other topics. He was a co-author of *The Squam Lake Report*. His Asset Pricing PhD class is available online via Coursera.

He frequently contributes editorial opinion essays to the *Wall Street Journal*, Bloomberg.com, and other publications. He maintains the Grumpy Economist blog.

Paul Conway

Paul Conway became the Reserve Bank of New Zealand's Director of Economics and Chief Economist in May 2022. He joined the Reserve Bank from Bank of New Zealand where he had been Chief Economist since January 2021.

Before joining BNZ, Paul spent seven years as the Director of Economics and Research at the New Zealand Productivity Commission. Much of Paul's work at the Commission was focused on firm-level productivity and understanding the obstacles New Zealand businesses faced in using technology to improve performance.

Paul has extensive international experience and has previously worked at the OECD and with the World Bank. Paul initially started his career at the Reserve Bank of New Zealand as an Economist after studying at Victoria University of Wellington and Otago University.

Fiorella De Fiore

Fiorella De Fiore is Head of Monetary Policy at the Bank for International Settlements and Research Fellow of the Centre for Economic Policy Research. She previously held the position of Adviser in the Monetary Policy Research Division and in the Financial Research Division of the European Central Bank. She holds a PhD in Economics from the European University Institute and a MSc in Economics from the London School of Economics.

Her main research is in the field of monetary and financial economics, and focuses on macro-financial linkages and their implications for monetary policy. She has published in the *Journal of Monetary Economics*, the *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, the *Economic Journal*, and the *Journal of Money Credit and Banking*, among others.

Cassandra Goldie AO

Cassandra Goldie is CEO of ACOSS and Adjunct Professor with UNSW Sydney. With public policy expertise in economic, social and environmental issues, civil society, social justice and human rights, Cassandra has represented the interests of people who are disadvantaged, and civil society generally, in major national and international processes as well as in grassroots communities. Prior to joining ACOSS, Cassandra held senior roles in both the not-for-profit and public sectors, including with the Australian Human Rights Commission, Darwin Community Legal Service and Senior Executive with Legal Aid in Western Australia.

Cassandra has a PhD from UNSW Sydney and a Masters of Law from University College London. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and serves on the UNSW Law Advisory Committee, the Australian Climate Roundtable and the Energy Charter Independent Accountability Panel. Cassandra is Co-chair of the ACOSS and UNSW Sydney Poverty and Inequality Partnership and a member of Chief Executive Women.

Cassandra has been recognised as one of the Inaugural Westpac Australian Financial Review 100 Women of Influence. She has been voted one of the Impact 25 Most Influential People in the Social Economy, most recently in 2021. In 2018, Cassandra was recognised as one of Australia's top 50 Outstanding LGBTI Executives by Deloitte and, in 2021, she received the 2021 UNSW Alumni Award for Social Impact and Service.

Jonathan Hambur

Jonathan is a Senior Research Manager in the Economic Research Department, leading the Microdata Analysis and Data stream at the Reserve Bank of Australia, having previously held a role at the Australian Treasury leading its Microdata Analysis team. He is part of the Committee for Economic Development of Australia's Member Advisory Council on Dynamism, and is a Research Associate in the 'Micro-Heterogeneity and Macroeconomic Performance' program at the Centre for Applied Macroeconomic Analysis at the Australian National University. Jonathan holds an MSc in Econometrics and Mathematical Economics from the London School of Economics. His research focuses on using microdata to better understand macroeconomic questions, particularly around productivity and labour markets.

Huw Pill

Huw Pill is the Chief Economist and Executive Director for Monetary Analysis and Research at the Bank of England. He is a Member of the Monetary Policy Committee. Huw is responsible for the analysis used to make monetary policy decisions. He also leads the research that supports all other functions within the Bank of England.

Previously, Huw was Chief European Economist at Goldman Sachs (2011–2018). Before that, he worked at the European Central Bank in Frankfurt. He served as its Deputy Director of Research (2009–2011) and Head of its Monetary Policy Stance Division (2004–2009). He also worked in its Strategic Policy Issues Unit (1998–2001). Huw was also a member of the faculty at Harvard Business School (1995–1998, 2001–2004, 2019–2021). At the start of his career, he worked as an Economist in the Bank of England's then Economics Division (1990–1992).

Huw has a BA (Hons) from the University of Oxford and an MA and PhD from Stanford University.

Bruce Preston

Professor Bruce Preston joined the University of Melbourne in 2015. Prior to this, he held positions at Monash University (Richard Snape Chair) and Columbia University. He is currently a Senior Economic Research Advisor to the Reserve Bank of Australia and consultant to the Australian Treasury. He was an Australian Research Council Future Fellow, 2014–2018.

Bruce earned a PhD in Economics from Princeton University and is an Associate Editor at the *European Economic Review*. His research primarily concerns monetary and fiscal policy. He has published in leading international journals, including *The American Economic Review*, the *Journal of Economic Literature*, the *Journal of Monetary Economics*, the *Journal of International Economics* and the *Journal of Econometrics*.

John Romalis

John Romalis is the Head of Department of Economics at Macquarie University. John studies international economics and macroeconomics. He has published well-known papers on the determinants of international trade, and on the economic effects of tax and trade policy in journals such as *The American Economic Review*, *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, and the *Journal of the European Economic Association*. He has three main current lines of research.

He studies how rising income inequality in the United States has been partly offset by low and middle-income households experiencing a lower inflation rate for many of the products they purchase. This research is being extended to identify the causes of this lower inflation rate, such as rising international trade with developing countries. A second line of research studies the causes of the collapse of international trade during the recent global recession. Finally, he studies how firms engaged in international competition determine the quality and price of their products.

After completing degrees in Economics and in Law, John worked negotiating contracts governing swaps and other derivatives for a commercial bank, and then moved to the Economic Research Department in Australia's central bank. After completing his PhD in Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he joined the University of Chicago Booth faculty in 2001. In 2013 he moved to the University of Sydney. John has also served as a Resident Scholar for the International Monetary Fund, has been a Faculty Research Fellow for the National Bureau of Economic Research, and had appointments at Princeton University and Australian National University.

Iain Ross AO

Dr Iain Ross AO is a retired Australian Jurist with extensive experience dealing with workplace relations matter. He has a deep understanding of labour markets and economics, having been a Partner in the Workplace Relations Practice Group at Corrs Chambers Westgarth and as Assistant Secretary of the ACTU.

Dr Ross is currently a member of the Reserve Bank Board, having started his term in May 2023. He was a judge of the Federal Court of Australia and President of the Australian Fair Work Commission (formerly Fair Work Australia) from March 2021 to November 2022, and a Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria from 2009 to 2012.

He was also Vice President of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission from 1994 to 2006, President of the Victoria Civil and Administrative Tribunal, Chair of the Council of Australian Tribunals and held positions with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and with the Law Reform Commissions in New South Wales and Victoria.

In 2005, Dr Ross was awarded an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to industrial relations through contributions to institutional reform, particularly the development of a universal superannuation system and enterprise bargaining, and as a teacher and researcher in the field.

In 2019, he became a Fellow of the Academy of Social Science in Australia.

Since 1997, Dr Ross has been a lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the University of Sydney, where he teaches units in its Master of Laws Program. In 2004, he was appointed an Adjunct Professor in Law. For his services to law, the University of Sydney conferred upon Ross an Honorary Doctor of Laws on 23 May 2014.

Petr Sedláček

Petr is a Professor of Economics at the UNSW Business School and a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. His research primarily focuses on labour markets, worker and firm heterogeneity and the influence of startups and young businesses on the rest of the economy.

Petr has advised the European Commission and his research has attracted several grants (European Research Council, German Research Foundation, UniCredit and Daimler and Benz Foundation) and awards (Neuron Foundation, Amsterdam School of Economics, Czech Economic Society and Society for Computation Economics). Petr has also published in journals including the *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*; the *Journal of the European Economic Association*; and the *Journal of Monetary Economics*.

Penny Smith

Penny Smith is the Head of International Department at the Reserve Bank of Australia. International Department is responsible for the Bank's foreign exchange operations, the investment of international reserve holdings, and the provision of advice on developments in international financial markets to the Governors and the Reserve Bank Board. The department is also responsible for maintaining the Bank's relations with a number of international institutions.

Since joining the Bank in 2009, Dr Smith has held the positions of Deputy Secretary, Deputy Head of Financial Stability Department and management positions in Economic Analysis, Economic Research, Financial Stability and International Departments. Before joining the Bank, Dr Smith worked as a Manager of Strategy and Research at Westpac, and as a Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne.

Dr Smith has a PhD from the University of Melbourne and a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) from the University of Western Australia. She has published research on a range of topics in the areas of macroeconomics and econometrics.

Adam Shapiro

Adam Shapiro has been with the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco since 2012 and is a Research Advisor in the Microeconomics Research section of the Economic Research Department. Prior to joining the Federal Reserve, Adam was at the Bureau of Economic Analysis in Washington, DC where he served as an Economist in the Office of the Chief Economist.

Adam has taught courses in Economics at UC Davis and American University and has published numerous articles in both academic and policy-oriented journals on industrial organisation, health economics, and macroeconomics. Adam's research primarily aims at understanding price and inflation dynamics. This includes studying how firms compete with one another when setting prices.

Adam completed his PhD and MA in Economics at Boston University, and his BA in Economics and Mathematics at Columbia University.

John Simon

John Simon is Head of Economic Research at the Reserve Bank of Australia. In this role he has promoted a culture of intelligent enquiry, challenge and analytical excellence. He spent three years at the International Monetary Fund, where he led major analytical projects published in the IMF's flagship publication, the *World Economic Outlook*. He was previously the Chief Manager in the Payments Policy Department of the Reserve Bank of Australia where he was involved in the design of regulatory frameworks for the Australian payments system. He has published research across a diverse range of topics, including productivity, consumer payments choice, central bank communication and seminal work on the 'Great Moderation'. John holds a PhD from MIT.

Growing up John didn't plan on being an economist, but after he found out what the employment prospects of mathematicians were like he decided he ought to choose something that paid the bills.

Danielle Wood

Danielle Wood is CEO of the Grattan Institute where she heads a team of leading policy thinkers, researching and advocating policy to improve the lives of Australians.

Danielle also leads Grattan's Budgets and Government Program and has published extensively on economic reform priorities, budgets, tax reform, women's workforce participation, generational inequality and reforming political institutions. She is a sought-after media commentator and speaker on policy issues.

Danielle was previously Principal Economist and Director of Merger Investigations at the ACCC, a Senior Economist at NERA Economic Consulting and Senior Research Economist the Productivity Commission. She holds an Honours degree in Economics from the University of Adelaide and two Masters degrees, one in Economics and one in Competition Law, from the University of Melbourne.

Danielle is a member of the Australian Government's Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, the Parliamentary Budget Office Expert Advisory Committee and the Commonwealth Bank CEO Advisory Council.

Danielle is an Honorary Fellow and former President of the Economic Society of Australia and a Research Fellow of the Women's Leadership Institute. She is also a passionate advocate for women in economics and was the co-founder and first Chair of the Women in Economics Network.

Muhammed Ali Yildirim

Dr Muhammed A Yildirim is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Koç University in Istanbul, as well as the Research Director for the Growth Lab at Harvard's Centre for International Development (CID). He obtained his PhD in Applied Physics from Harvard University and BS degree from California Institute of Technology. After his graduate studies, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow at CID between 2011 and 2014.

His research is focused on understanding network and spillover effects in a multitude of research areas including industrial policy, international trade, productivity, economic growth, and matching. His research has appeared in high-impact economic journals and prestigious working paper series. He is also a co-author of *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*, published by the MIT Press, and contributes to the back end of the associated website.

His PhD research revolved around using tools and concepts from complexity, network science, and evolution to understand complex biological and the pharmaceutical industry. His research in these areas has been published in high-impact journals including *Science*, *Nature*, *Nature Biotechnology*, and *Cell* and has been cited extensively.