



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST FELLOWSHIP PRESENTATION **Friday 25 November 2022**

Associate Professor Jane Munro AM, Chair, Victorian Regional Committee of The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and Board Members

Adam Davey, CEO, The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust

Churchill Trust volunteers, sponsors, supporters and members of the Churchill Fellows Association

New Fellows

Distinguished guests

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be with us.

I am delighted to welcome you all here to Government House for the Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship presentation.

The Trust is dear to my heart and has been for what is now rapidly heading to three decades.

I am a Fellow, a former member of one of the selection sub-committees, a former member of the National Board and Chair of the Victorian Committee and, proudly, a Life Member.

It means that I have had the pleasure to be involved in these Award ceremonies since the mid-1990s – first, as a Fellowship recipient, and since 2015, as the co-host with Tony.

It means that I know well the excitement that you, the new fellows, are feeling today, as you share this proud occasion with your families and colleagues.

I know too the anxiety that many of you might feel, hoping to do full justice to the faith placed in you, while juggling family, work, complex travel plans and prospective absences from loved ones, and pressing responsibilities back here at home.

And I can easily recall the pride no doubt felt today by all who have helped select this year's Fellows. You know the rigour of the selection rounds. You know that these successful Fellows have shone from amongst many. You know that they can each make an outstanding contribution to the life of our country.

I look at the topics covered within this year's Fellowships. They tell a story. Two stories, really.

First, they tell a story of how these awards have evolved, to keep pace with the relevant issues at any particular point in time.

Work on hydrogen storage infrastructure, the impact of voluntary assisted dying legislation or agricultural greenhouse gas emission reduction schemes, for example, would not have been front of mind in 1965, when the Trust was founded.

But they also tell the story of the 'wicked' problems that have persisted and required revisiting in one form or another across those same many years.

Securing care for high-risk children and young people is one such example. Investigating programs to improve health outcomes of people with intellectual disabilities is another.

They are just examples of a full and diverse range of studies that our new Fellows will undertake.

What matters most is that each one of you has been chosen not just for the worth of your proposed program, but because you possess the personal attributes to represent Australia and the Trust well, to make the most of the learning opportunities and to set about sharing and implementing the fruits of your knowledge when you return.

You will be the stronger for the experience. Your workplaces and communities will be advantaged. And our nation will be enriched.

I say that with confidence because that is how it has been across the more than half a century since the Trust started. You join an impressive group of alumni who have made significant contributions to every sector and every aspect of life in our country.

Just as it was envisaged when this Trust was founded as the fitting commemoration for Sir Winston Churchill's commitment to public service.

I could not be happier for you that you will undertake your Fellowships 'on the road'. So much can be gained through the brilliance of modern technology. But, having travelled this year, promoting Victoria in face to face meetings, I am readily reminded that being face to face is ideal. Relationships can grow more naturally into friendships and connections upon which you can rely as you develop your first learnings into later iterations.

Although the spotlight today is firmly on you, the new Fellows, I do want to thank everyone connected with the Trust and the Awards.

That is, those who administer the Trust and carefully look after the funds. Those who sponsor and support awards. Those who give generously of their time and talent to make the selections. And, of course, the families and colleagues who support each one of the Fellows.

As Governor, I am privileged to be exposed to many different Award programs – each with their unique characteristics.

The hallmark of the Churchill Trust Fellowships – of which the Trust can be proud – is the open nature of them.

Selecting good people with good ideas for the good of our country is a magnificent way to proceed.

My paraphrasing, I know. But I hope that it does justice to the pure simplicity of what underpins these important awards.

I note that the Trust's constitution has been amended to once again broaden both eligibility and access to the Fellowships. Congratulations to those who implemented that change.

May I thank the Chair of the Victorian Selection Committee, Associate Professor Jane Munro, (whom I first met, when we interviewed her for a Fellowship, many years ago now), and the Victorian Regional Secretary Alison Power, with whom I have had a long association.

That leaves me only to say 'Congratulations' to the 2022 Victorian Churchill Fellows. I wish you the very best of luck in your research, your time away, and all your future endeavours.