



THE Australian (Sydney) Chapter of ICAI



Quarterly Newsletter

**“Counting More Than Numbers” –
Emphasising community, contributions, and
connections.**



■ From the Chair



CA Tanuja Bissa

Intentional Leadership!

■ Events & Updates

- **AGM**
- **CPD Events**
- **Social Events**

■ Volunteer Spotlight

**Acknowledging
Volunteers for their
incredible
contribution.**



The Chapter aims to provide a platform for its members in the Sydney region for their professional and personal development and positively contribute to the region's economy. It supports diversity and inclusion, bringing together individuals with deep insights into social, business, and economic developments in both India and Australia



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Chairperson's Message

January – April 2025 Newsletter

Dear Members,

As we reflect on the past few months, I want to begin this message by acknowledging the recent tragic fires in Pahalgam, India. Our hearts go out to the families and communities affected by this devastating event. In times like these, we are reminded of the importance of unity and compassion, and we stand with those who are facing unimaginable loss and hardship. Let us all keep them in our thoughts as they begin the long process of recovery.

As I write to you from Beijing, enjoying a peaceful Easter and ANZAC Day long weekend break, I've also had time to reflect on what has been an inspiring and action-packed start to 2025 for our community.

The first quarter of the year saw us kick off with a successful Annual General Meeting, as we reaffirmed our mission, and outlined an exciting roadmap ahead. We also appointed our inaugural Advisory Board at this meeting! We then came together to celebrate International Women's Day; the lived experiences of our speakers were a powerful reminder of the importance of equity and inclusion in our profession and beyond.

We held several other events like our CFO Breakfast Series offering valuable insights and networking opportunities, yoga session, promoting wellness in our busy professional lives, HR Summit that gave us insights into the skills gap report and who could forget the Budget Session by Paul Bloxham who took us on an economic world tour!

One of the highlights of the quarter was our participation in this year's Accounting and Business Expo at ICC Sydney – one of the largest accounting conferences in Australia! It was an honor for us to exhibit and engage with so many professionals and emerging leaders. I also had the privilege of speaking on two panel discussions, and I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our members who attended to show their support—your presence truly made a difference and boosted my confidence on stage!

I also attended Melbourne Chapter's International Conference, along with our vice-chair Shantilal Jain, in March. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Melbourne Chapter and its volunteer team on a successful and engaging conference. We also had the opportunity to meet our Parent Body's newly elected vice-president, Prasanna Kumar D.

As I wrap up, I look forward to the coming months and see several similar exciting events that the team is working tirelessly in the background to bring to you – including a networking only event, women's wellbeing workshop and singing carnival, to name a few. None of this would be possible without the dedication and passion of our committee members, the tireless efforts of our volunteers, the generous backing from our sponsors, and of course, the unwavering support of our members. Thank you for continuing to shape and strengthen our vibrant community.

We are always on the looking for volunteers – so if this newsletter inspires you and your passion to support our Chapter Community, please reach out to the management committee team.

**Warm regards,
Tanuja Bissa
Chairperson**

Annual General Meeting 2025



The ICAI Sydney Chapter's Annual General Meeting for 2025 proved to be a remarkable and engaging event, bringing together our vibrant community for a day of meaningful dialogue, reflection, and forward planning.

The day commenced with a compelling keynote presentation by Cameron Anderson from Silverhall, who shared timely insights into current property trends. His address, particularly relevant in light of the recent interest rate reduction, spurred thoughtful discussions and set an informed tone for the day.

The formal AGM proceedings followed, providing an opportunity to review the achievements and challenges of the past year. It was also a moment to chart our strategic direction for the year ahead. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Management Committee for their unwavering dedication and dynamic leadership throughout 2024.

Special recognition goes to the leads of our CPD, Social Events, and Memberships teams, whose ongoing contributions have played a vital role in enriching the Chapter's activities and member engagement.

A notable milestone of this AGM was the formation of our new Advisory Board, comprising members who have served on the Managing Committee over the past five terms. This initiative will foster continuity, strengthen institutional knowledge, and support smoother transitions in our operations.

With renewed energy and collective vision, we look forward to building on our shared successes and continuing to grow as a community in 2025 and beyond.

– ICAI Sydney Chapter



CFO Fireside Chat Breakfast Series

The Modern CFO: Navigating Financial Strategy

The Australian (Sydney) Chapter of ICAI, in collaboration with Kunal Gupta from AXR, hosted a CFO Fireside Chat as part of the CFO Breakfast Series titled “The Modern CFO: Navigating Financial Strategy.” The event featured Henning Neethling as the guest speaker.

Henning Neethling qualified as a Chartered Accountant at PwC in South Africa and completed his articles in 2008 as an audit senior. He was subsequently recruited through the Macquarie Bank CA Program and relocated to Australia in March of the same year. Since then, he has held various roles in financial control and financial planning and analysis across multiple industries including real estate, banking, insurance, funds management, retail, and media.

For the past five years, he has served as the Chief Financial Officer at Sky News, Australia’s most engaging TV news channel on social media, reaching over 11 million Australians each month across broadcast and digital platforms.



March Forward: Celebrating Women's Rights, Empowerment & Equality International Women's Day 2025 – ICAI Sydney Chapter, Australia



The ICAI Sydney Chapter proudly commemorated International Women's Day 2025 with an inspiring and empowering celebration that brought together a dynamic community of professionals, leaders, and change-makers.

Hosted under the theme "March Forward: Celebrating Women's Rights, Empowerment, and Equality," the event highlighted the importance of collective action, leadership, and progress towards gender parity in the professional landscape.

We were honoured to begin the evening with a warm welcome by Sonu Rastogi from CAANZ, followed by impactful opening remarks by our Chapter Chairperson CA Tanuja Bissa, who set a thoughtful and empowering tone for the discussions ahead.

Speakers



PERIN BERHARDT



CYNTHIA PAYNE



PATRICE SCOTT

Panel Discussion Highlights

A key highlight of the evening was the insightful panel discussion moderated gracefully by CA Mina Khandelwal, which explored themes of self-awareness, resilience, and leadership in the evolving world of work. Our esteemed panelists brought diverse and enriching perspectives:

- **Perin Berhardt** – Business Banking Executive, NAB
- **Cynthia Payne** – Managing Director, Anchor Excellence
- **Patrice Scott** – Partner, KPMG Australia

Their dialogue centered around career journeys, mentorship across generations, and strategies for staying ahead in emerging sectors like AI and technology. Attendees gained valuable takeaways on self-reflection, upskilling, and the need for community-driven support in fostering women's growth and recognition.





Special Moments and Recognitions

The event was elevated by a surprise giveaway from special guest Manjula Viswanath, who shared exclusive vouchers for her upcoming event. These were presented to five deserving members for their contributions and engagement:

- **Namita M.** – For being the first to actively engage with a thoughtful question
- **Bhavi Girglani** – Our talented volunteer photographer who captured the essence of the evening
- **Shalini G.** – Welcomed as our newest member at the event
- **Josephine D'Cruz CA, CPA** – Honoured as the longest-standing ICAI member present
- **CA Versha Agarwal** – Recognised for her exceptional behind-the-scenes support

A special vote of thanks was delivered by CA Suneet Jain [FGIA] [MAICD], followed by a delightful dinner catered by On The Platter Catering, which concluded the evening on a warm and celebratory note.

Moving Forward Together

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all speakers, volunteers, and attendees for making this event a memorable success. Your energy, support, and participation are a testament to the strength of our community.

As we look ahead, let us continue to march forward together—towards a future built on empowerment, inclusion, and equal opportunities for all women and girls.



Accounting Business Expo



Post-Event Summary: Accounting & Business Expo 2025

The Australian (Sydney) Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) was honoured to be a proud partner at the Accounting & Business Expo 2025, held on 12–13 March 2025 at the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney.

As Australia's largest gathering for accounting and finance professionals, the event brought together over 3,000 attendees, featured 120+ expert speakers, and hosted 80+ exhibitors. The expo provided an outstanding platform for learning, collaboration, and innovation within the accounting and finance industry.

Across two action-packed days, participants gained valuable insights into emerging trends, earned CPD points, and engaged in meaningful networking with industry leaders, technology providers, and peers from across the region.

The Australian Chapter of ICAI extends its sincere thanks to all members, partners, and delegates who contributed to the success of this event. We remain committed to supporting the professional growth of our members and fostering thought leadership within the global accounting community.

We look forward to seeing you at future events.



Bridging the Skills Gap: Insights from ICAI Sydney Chapter's CPD Event



On 20th March, the Sydney Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) successfully hosted a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) event focused on a critical topic – **“The Skills Gap and the Australian Employment Market.”** Held at CPA Australia, the session was presented in collaboration with global recruitment leader **Hays**.

The evening commenced with a warm welcome and opening remarks by **Suneet Jain [FGIA, MAICD]**, setting the stage for an insightful and engaging session.

Hays presented findings from their comprehensive **Skills Gap Report**, offering an in-depth analysis of the Australian labour market. The discussion centred on current shortages across key industries, reasons for these widening gaps, and how both employers and professionals can respond to the evolving landscape.

Speakers



CAROLINE EDWARDS



LIZZIE WRAGG



DOMENIC CIOFANI

Key Highlights from the Presentation:

- Skills shortages are becoming more pronounced in sectors such as Public Safety & Administration, Manufacturing, Financial & Insurance Services, and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, with projections exceeding 50%—expected to deepen over the next five years.
- The Accounting and Finance sector is currently facing an alarming 86% skills gap, driven by emerging technologies, notably Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Contributing factors include the rapidly changing nature of work, ageing workforce, and shifting education trends.
- In this dynamic environment, human-centric skills such as communication, critical thinking, strategic acumen, and a lifelong learning mindset are

The session was led by **Lizzie Wragg** and **Domenic Ciofani** from Hays, who offered rich perspectives and real-world examples, followed by an interactive **Q&A session**. They effectively addressed a wide range of member questions, sharing practical insights that added significant value to the discussion.

The ICAI Sydney Chapter extends heartfelt thanks to our dedicated volunteers **Himanchal Pathak**, **Shalini G.**, and **Sunil Malhotra**, whose efforts were instrumental in the seamless execution of the event.

Shantilal Jain delivered a gracious vote of thanks, acknowledging the contributions of **CPA Australia** as the venue partner, the **speakers**, **members**, and all **volunteers** whose participation made the evening a remarkable success.

Soulful Sunday: Yoga, Sound & Meditation



The Australian (Sydney) Chapter of ICAI hosted a serene and rejuvenating experience through “Soulful Sunday: Yoga, Sound & Meditation”, bringing together members and guests for a morning of mindfulness and well-being.

The session offered a calming space to unwind and reconnect through guided yoga, immersive sound healing, and meditation practices. Participants engaged in mindful movement, deep breathing, and sound therapy designed to relax the body and refocus the mind.

The event was a refreshing break from routine, promoting mental clarity, inner balance, and holistic wellness. It was a reminder of the importance of self-care and mindfulness in maintaining personal and professional harmony.

A peaceful start to the week, shared in community.

Australian Federal Budget 2025 & Global Economic Outlook Insights from Paul Bloxham, Chief Economist, HSBC Insights from Paul Bloxham, Chief Economist, HSBC



The Sydney Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) recently hosted an exclusive thought-leadership event in collaboration with HSBC at their Barangaroo office. Members had the unique opportunity to hear from Paul Bloxham, Chief Economist for Australia, New Zealand, and Global Commodities at HSBC, and Managing Director, Global Research.

Set against the stunning backdrop of a Sydney sunset from HSBC's 36th floor conference room, the session was introduced by Wade Benson before handing the floor to Paul. Despite the recency of the April 3rd U.S. tariff announcement, Paul delivered an in-depth and insightful analysis that reflected both deep expertise and clarity of perspective.

Speaker:



PAUL BLOXHAM

HSBC's Chief Economist

HSBC's Chief Economist For Australia, New Zealand, And Global Commodities. With Over A Decade Of Experience, Paul Leads HSBC's Economic Forecasts And Global Commodity Insights. His Team Won Two Focus Economics Awards In 2017, And He Also Serves As An Adjunct Professor At Curtin University.

Highlights from the Session:

•Global Trade Shifts & US-China Dynamics:

Paul Bloxham provided critical insights into the escalating U.S.-China trade tensions, including the imposition of an additional 54% tariff in recent weeks. While global trade may feel the ripple effects, Australia's direct exposure remains limited, with only 4.5% of exports directed to the U.S.

•Economic Slowdown in Europe:

Europe is facing an industrial recession, compounded by rising debt levels. These factors pose risks to sustained growth within the region.

•Australia's Resilience & Strategic Outlook:

Australia continues to maintain a strong position in the global economic landscape, thanks to its robust commodities sector and diversified trade partnerships. The upcoming federal budget is expected to focus on key sectors such as mining, renewable energy, education, and deepening engagement with emerging markets, notably India and Indonesia.

Paul's data-backed responses to audience questions further enriched the session, offering attendees practical takeaways on how global macroeconomic trends may shape the domestic fiscal landscape.

Acknowledgements:

The evening concluded with a vote of thanks and mementos presented to Paul Bloxham, Mark Liu, and Wade Benson by Navpreet Singh, Sunil Malhotra, and Sandeep Saini (FCPA, CA ANZ, CA India).

Special appreciation goes to Shreya Rewari and the HSBC team for their instrumental role in organizing this event. We also thank our dedicated volunteers—Navpreet Singh, Nishit Vyas, Vikas Surana, and Surendra Joshi—for their support in ensuring its success.

Excel-lence Unleashed

Next-Gen Commands for Smarter Analytics

As we wrap up our events for April, we couldn't have asked for a more "Excel-lent session by our own chapter stars **CA Sundeep Vanjara** and **CA Sagar Sane**. The event brought together professionals eager to level up their data skills with modern Excel functions and best practices.

Event Highlights:

- Hands-on walkthroughs of Lambda, LET, SWITCH, XLOOKUP, TEXTSPLIT, and more
- Real-life use cases and demonstrations for smarter data handling
- Practical tips to boost productivity and streamline analytics workflows
- High engagement and great feedback from attendees

Speaker:

SPEAKERS



Sundeep Vanjara CA, CPA Australia and CA ANZ

Group Financial Controller 4WD Supacentre

Sundeep, a core presenter for Chapter's FPG session, brings 20+ years of experience in FMCG, Retail, and E-Commerce across finance functions like FP&A, Commercial Finance, Accounting, Tax, and Treasury.

SPEAKERS



Sagar Sane CA, CFA, CPA Australia

General Manager Finance 4WD Supacentre

Sagar is a Finance and IT expert in automation and financial modeling, with experience at PWC and Maersk. He specializes in Google Big Query, Data Studio, Power Automate, and business intelligence dashboards.

The session was a perfect blend of learning and interaction, leaving participants empowered to use Excel more efficiently in their day-to-day roles. A big thank you to all the attendees for making the event a great success!

Our Volunteers



CA Versha Agarwal

A Chartered Accountant with global audit experience, specialising in delivering audits that add value to the business. Outside of work, i find purpose in volunteering, giving back to the community that supported me.

CA Sunil Malhotra

I'm Sunil Malhotra, a results-oriented Chartered Accountant with over 25 years of expertise in finance, business development, and operations. Volunteering with the Sydney Chapter of ICAI allows me to stay connected to the profession and contribute to its growth. Life in Sydney with my wife, Chandra, and our two sons, Sidhya and Surya, is vibrant and sporty—weekends often revolve around cricket and soccer. As a Delhi boy at heart, the saying “Main aham tha, yeh waham tha” keeps me grounded and connected.



CA Nikhil Heroor

CA Nikhil Heroor is a seasoned finance professional with over 20 years of experience across diverse sectors, now leading his own practice. As a CA (India) and CPA (Australia), he finds purpose in volunteering with the ICAI Sydney Chapter, connecting with peers, contributing to the growth of the Indian accounting community, and sharing knowledge within a supportive network.



6th Annual Conference – 2025 Swift ICAI–Melbourne

The ICAI Melbourne (Australia) Chapter Inc. hosted an exclusive gathering of professionals, thought leaders, and industry experts, offering powerful insights into Sustainability, Wealth, Innovation, Funding, and Transformation. Among the distinguished attendees were CA Tanuja Bissa and CA Shantilal Jain, who actively participated in the engaging discussions and knowledge-sharing sessions.



Upcoming Events



THE AUSTRALIAN (SYDNEY) CHAPTER OF ICAI



UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY-JUL 2025



MAY - 1st

THURSDAY

- **Members Networking Event**

CA ANZ

MAY - 8th

THURSDAY

- **Financial literacy and year planning session**

Morgan Stanley
2 Chifley Sq, Sydney
New South Wales 2000



MAY - 22th

THURSDAY

- **Restructuring & Solvency Market CPD Event**

TBA



MAY - 25th

SUNDAY

- **New Migrant Session**

WSU - Parramatta

JUN - 5th

THURSDAY

- **KPMG - Accounting Standards CPD Event**

TBA



JUN - 19th

THURSDAY

- **Members In Practice - overview and requirements CPD Event**

TBA

JUL - 3rd

THURSDAY

- **Ethics CPD Event**

TBA

