

# Media Release

**The Hon Danny Pearson MP**  
Assistant Treasurer  
Minister for Regulatory Reform  
Minister for Government Services  
Minister for Creative Industries



Friday, 11 March 2022

## NEW CHAIR AND DIRECTORS FOR WHEELER CENTRE BOARD

The Andrews Labor Government welcomes new board leadership at The Wheeler Centre – Victoria’s home of books, writing and ideas – bringing a new era of creativity and connection as it embarks on a new chapter.

Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson today announced Julie Ligeti as the organisation’s new chair alongside new board directors, authors Jamila Rizvi and Jock Serong.

A lawyer and experienced board director and chair, Ms Ligeti’s 30-year career has focused on social and health policy fields and advocacy for access and equality. Currently the Director of Global Public Advocacy at Cochlear Limited, Julie is a Human Rights Law Centre Ambassador with a strong commitment to the not-for-profit sector.

Julie takes up the mantle from Susan Oliver AM whose outstanding leadership since 2017 has strengthened the organisation through a period of change, success and the challenges of the pandemic.

Ms Rizvi is an author, podcast host, presenter and media commentator. She is Chief of Content, Community and Online Learning for Nine’s Future Women platform.

Mr Serong is an award-winning author of five novels, including the *Rules of Backyard Cricket*, *Preservation* and *The Burning Island*. He is also an editor, features writer and qualified as a lawyer.

Two current board directors, Chaman Sidhu and Rebecca Batties, have also been re-appointed for a further term.

Established in 2010, The Wheeler Centre hosts more than 120 events a year featuring local and international writers and thinkers, showcasing diverse stories, issues, and voices.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

*“Julie Ligeti and the new board members bring a wealth of governance expertise, ideas and talent to the Wheeler Centre, which connects audiences to a compelling world of ideas, stories and perspectives.”*

*“Susan Oliver’s stewardship has ensured the Centre has taken pride of place in our City of Literature, I acknowledge and thank Susan for her dedication, steadfast leadership and outstanding contribution.”*

### Quotes attributable to outgoing Wheeler Centre Chair Susan Oliver AM

*“I’m proud of what we have achieved at The Wheeler Centre, creating a robust organisation with a new CEO and board able to succeed and provide inspiration and connection through the pandemic.”*

*“I am leaving a strong organisation and I look forward to seeing it continue to flourish under Julie Ligeti’s leadership.”*

### Quotes attributable to incoming Wheeler Centre Chair Julie Ligeti

*“The Wheeler Centre provides opportunities for the whole community to experience Victoria’s vibrant and diverse culture and literary life and be challenged by new ideas.”*

*“I look forward to working with staff, partners, stakeholders and the board to ensure the Wheeler Centre continues to flourish.”*

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