

FICPI AUSTRALIA Conference for IP Firm Leaders

Crystalbrook Riley, Cairns, Far North Queensland | 6 – 9 August 2026

THURSDAY

6 August 2026

14:30 – 18:00 Arrival & check-in at Crystalbrook Riley
 18:30 – 19:30 Welcome Drinks & Canapés
 19:30 – 22:00 Conference Dinner — Crystalbrook Riley

FRIDAY

7 August 2026

SESSION 1 RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND THE CHANGING BARGAIN — THE TALENT MARKET HAS CHANGED, AND IP FIRMS NEED A NEW PERSPECTIVE

People are every IP firm's most valuable — and complex — asset. This session tackles the full talent lifecycle: what great hiring looks like in a competitive market, how to structure onboarding and development, what determines whether your best people stay, and of course: what happens when you throw AI into the mix!

Chair	Ronelle Geldenhuys	Principal, Jones Maxwell Smith & Davis
Speakers	Andy Mukherji	Principal, MBIP
	Eva Grabner	Recruitment specialist, Elite Executive
	Michael Caine	Principal, DCC

Morning Tea

SESSION 2 THE REAL COST OF IP ENFORCEMENT: HUMAN, LEGAL AND ECONOMIC REALITIES

Fashion designer Katie Perry successfully defended her right to her own name against one of the world's biggest pop acts. In this candid session, Katie shares her firsthand experience — the decisions, the costs, the emotional toll, and ultimately the win — and what it means for clients navigating similar battles. Expert financial analyst Hans Weemaes will provide an economic and evidentiary lens for this case.

Chair	Chris Bird	Principal, FPA Patent Attorneys
Speakers	Katie Perry	Fashion Designer & Trade Mark Holder, katieperry.com.au
	Hans Weemaes	Financial analyst and expert witness on pricing and costs, The Brattle Group

Lunch

SESSION 3 CASE LAW TO EXAMINATION PRACTICE: HOW IP AUSTRALIA IMPLEMENTS CHANGE

Changes in patent law do not implement themselves. This panel will explore how developments in case law are translated into examination practice within IP Australia, including updates to the Patent Manual of Practice and Procedure, examiner training, stakeholder consultation and feedback from the profession. Using the 2025 Aristocrat decision and the related consultation process as a case study, the panel will discuss how examination practice evolves, how feedback is received and considered, and how the profession can engage constructively with IP Australia.

Chair	Rohan Wallace	Principal, IP Sentinels
Speakers	Speakers Pradnya Satarkar	Supervising Patent Examiner and Hearing Officer, IP Australia
	Representative (TBC)	Computer-Implemented Invention Task Force

Afternoon Tea

SESSION 4 FROM CAMPUS TO PRACTICE: PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF IP PROFESSIONALS

There is a persistent gap between what law and IP programs teach and what life in an IP firm actually demands. This panel brings together leading academics and a recent graduate-turned-practitioner to explore what universities are — and aren't — preparing graduates for, and what firms can do to bridge the gap.

Chair	Maryam Tabari	Principal, Chrysiliou IP
Speakers	Prof. Jessica Lai	University of Wellington
	Prof. Andrew Christie	Melbourne Law School
	Andrew Counsell	Associate, FB Rice

*Transport to dinner
Conference Dinner — Tamarind Restaurant, Cairns*

SATURDAY 8 August 2026

SESSION 5 BUILDING YOUR BRAND, GROWING YOUR FIRM: MARKETING AND BD STRATEGIES FOR IP PRACTICES

Marketing and business development are core to sustainable growth. This session brings together specialists at the intersection of professional services and revenue growth to share practical strategies for building your firm's profile, attracting the right clients, and converting relationships into revenue.

Chair	Christian Schieber	Principal, Griffith Hack
Speakers	Sue-Ella Prodonovich	Prodonovich Advisory, Professional Services BD Specialist
	Tracey Langdale	Head of Marketing & BD, MBIP

Morning Tea

FICPI AUSTRALIA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Transport to lunch
Long Lunch — Ochre Restaurant, Cairns*

SUNDAY 9 August 2026

OPTIONAL EXCURSION — GREEN ISLAND, GREAT BARRIER REEF

A short boat trip from Cairns out to Green Island on the Great Barrier Reef. Optional glass-bottom boat tour, time on the beach, and a late Sunday lunch at Salthouse Restaurant. Children welcome. Back on the Cairns Esplanade by 14:30.

Green Island morning reef tour (glass-bottom boat) Late Lunch — Salthouse Restaurant, Cairns Esplanade

Program subject to change. Further session details and speaker biographies to follow. | www.ficpi.org