



The Outlook Breakfast Roundtables

Join us on the morning of Friday 12 October for The Breakfast Roundtables: an opportunity for in-depth discussion of key policy issues affecting Australia, guided by subject-matter experts.

The Breakfast Roundtables are free to attend and breakfast is provided. For those not attending a Roundtable, a separate networking breakfast will be available.

Explore the topics below and sign-up for your chosen Roundtable at registration.

Employment in the 21st century: is job quality declining?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

Employment is central to life in modern society, with meaningful employment critical to the well-being of a majority of the population. In Australia, the character of jobs and workers has been changing rapidly. What does this mean for job security, wage growth and employment regulation?

Human capital in the workplace: how is demand changing and how can we adapt?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

The standard employment base of manufacturing in many advanced western economies is rapidly disappearing, as demonstrated by the recent closure of Australia's automobile assembly operation. This has dramatic consequences for middle-aged existing employees no longer demanded in local labour markets, as well as large pools of yet to be employed school-leavers. What are the key issues in this area, and what can be done to ensure good matching of both high school graduates to next level education, and completed education to industry demand?

Socioeconomic status: how is it linked to hospital utilization?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

A patient's socioeconomic status (SES) is linked to their health outcomes in many ways. As funding approaches move away from fee for service (where the impact of SES appears modest) and towards outcome-based accountability and capitation (where the impact is large), accounting for patient SES becomes an important issue. What are the measures of SES in hospital funding and is it a good predictor of hospital utilization?

Fee transparency for medical specialists: can it work?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

Doctors in Australia face no restriction on their pricing, and the large fee variations that exist, as well as increased out-of-pocket payments, have prompted government and public scrutiny as a result. Is fee transparency and increased accountability the answer?

Homelessness: what triggers it? Can we prevent it?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

There are many factors that lead to homelessness. In order to design effective policies for reducing the level of homelessness, it is crucial to identify and understand these pathways. What do we know to be the real triggers of homelessness, what aspects need further exploration, and how can this knowledge influence policy?



Evaluation of social and economic programs: how do we really improve outcomes?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

To understand if policies and programs are achieving their goals, and the reasons why (or why not), robust evaluation is essential. What are some examples of effective evaluation that enables well-informed, sound and defensible policy decisions? What challenges exist and how can they be overcome?

Economic inequality in Australia: what needs to be done?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

While there has been an increase in public discussion about inequality in Australia and a widespread impression that inequality has grown in recent years, the available evidence is less clear cut. Is the level of inequality a cause for concern and should steps be taken to reduce it? If so, what should be done?

Mental health: a key to social policy success?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

Mental disorders are one of the leading causes of disability in Australia and worldwide, and unlike other common chronic diseases/conditions, the burden occurs during the prime working-age years. Is there the necessary awareness and familiarity among policymakers and those delivering welfare services of the high rates of mental disorders? What strategies can be employed to manage and improve mental health within this context, and what is the role of social policy?

Beyond nudging: how can behavioural economics inform public policy?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

Nudges are increasingly being used by business, non-profits and government to affect behaviour. Sometimes, though, a change in the way an option is presented, without changing incentives, is not enough to affect choices in any meaningful way. In these cases, what is a policy maker to do? How can insights from behavioural economics help inform public policy?

Beyond the budget deficit: what are the aims of fiscal policy?

Moderated by the Melbourne Institute

The Charter of Budget Honesty Act of 1998 enshrines the vision that the Budgetary measures should be set to produce a clear strategy for fiscal policy; however much of the discussion about the 2018-19 Budget is around the fragility of the forecasts and the likely transition to a budget surplus. What are the broader aims of the Budget and fiscal policy – will the 2018-19 budgetary measures promote economic growth and social equity? Will they ensure that Australia is set upon a long-term trajectory of growth and prosperity rather than on a short-term path of balancing the budget?

The China conundrum

Moderated by The Australian

How does Australia continue to deal with an increasingly powerful China? After a year of diplomatic skirmishing, what are the lessons to be drawn? Can a nation like Australia have real influence over China and how will it impact on our role in the region?



Are newspapers dying?

Moderated by The Australian

Social media has turned everyone into reporters and opinion writers, but increasingly audiences understand that they need more than citizen journalism to be truly informed. Can traditional media recover their central role in our society after years of erosion of their authority?

Disrupt or perish?

Moderated by The Australian

It's conventional wisdom that if your business model has not yet been disrupted by technology, it soon will be. But change is not necessarily for the worst. What should companies do to embrace and benefit from disruption?

The city or the bush?

Moderated by The Australian

Our farmers have become increasingly innovative in agriculture but some Australian cities seem unable to cope with their population growth. How do we rebuild regional and rural Australian towns so that they become viable and attractive hubs?

The economics of care: how do we recognise its true value and why does this matter for gender equality?

Moderated by the Women in Economics Network

For female workforce participation to continue to increase, families need to have access to good quality commercial care, however childcare is expensive and inaccessible, and elderly care is also in need of reform. The issue is symptomatic of care being undervalued and taken for granted. How do we recognise the true value of care, in all forms, to overall wellbeing and the functionality and sustainability of the economy and society? How do the economics of care disadvantage women, and what can policymakers and business do about it?

Victorian property market and household wealth: What are the trends?

Moderated by the Department of Treasury and Finance

Property price growth has doubled in the past 11 years in Melbourne. With the owner-occupied home often representing the majority of a household's wealth, the distribution of home ownership and variations in property prices impact on the distribution of wealth across the community. Recent property price gains have largely been concentrated in the highest income quintile of the Victorian population that also has the highest home ownership rate. What are the implications of these trends for household wealth, inter-generational wealth transfer and social cohesion in Victoria?