AUSTRALASIAN
Management
Challenge

Challenge Yourself in 2027

Local Government Professionals AUSTRALIA

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The Australasian Management Challenge

AUSTRALASIAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE 2027

OVERVIEW

The Australasian Management Challenge has been at the forefront of professional development in local government in Australia and New Zealand for more than 30 years. The Management Challenge is a simulation-based team building, learning and networking program using real local government themes.

Teams are provided a series of tasks throughout 'Challenge Day' which require them to respond to a range of scenarios.

Some tasks require written responses, some take the form of role play or presentations and the teams are challenged to work collaboratively and effectively while managing time pressures.

The Management Challenge helps participants to develop key skills such as leadership, analytics, communication, negotiation, decision-making and presentation skills.

"REGULAR PARTICIPATION IN THE CHALLENGE BUILDS A BROAD LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ASPIRING LEADERS WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION AND DEMONSTRATES A POSITIVE CULTURE AND WILLINGNESS TO INVEST IN THEIR FUTURE."

WHO SHOULD BE PART OF YOUR TEAM?

Anyone! You don't have to be a manager to enter – the Management Challenge is about developing people, including future leaders. The many thousands of local government employees who have participated in the Management Challenge have demonstrated that almost any local government officer with the right attitude will take away enduring benefits from the experience.

Past participants have included staff members from all council disciplines and levels including librarians, works team leaders, IT specialists, community service professionals, marketing professionals, HR managers, arborists and experienced managers, to name a few.

"THE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE WAS AMAZING - ESPECIALLY WITNESSING THE GROWTH IN TEAM CAMARADERIE AS EVERYONE PULLS TOGETHER TO TACKLE CHALLENGES. IT'S INSPIRING TO SEE BOTH THE TEAM STEPPING OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONES TO TAKE ON NEW TASKS. ON CHALLENGE DAY, MEETING THE OTHER COUNCILS WAS A HIGHLIGHT – I HAD INSIGHTFUL CONVERSATIONS, EXCHANGING IDEAS AND LEARNINGS. I HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT FOR THE TEAMS THAT DUG DEEP, COLLABORATED EQUALLY WITHIN THEIR TEAMS AND DELIVERED OUTSTANDING RESULTS."

2024 Management Challenge Team Mentor

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Benefits of participation

ASSIST WITH GROWTH

BOOST PRIDE & REPUTATION

BUILD CORPORATE KNOWLEDGE

BUILD NETWORKS

CREATE STRONG TEAMS

DEVELOP LEADERS

INCREASE STAFF SKILLS

SHOW COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

ACCELERATE LEARNING

BUILD CONFIDENCE

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

CREATE TEAM SPIRIT

DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS

DEVELOP NETWORKS WITH OTHER COUNCILS

INCREASE KNOWLEDGE

INCREASE PRIDE, SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT & PRESTIGE

BUILD CONFIDENCE

ENHANCE LEADERSHIP SKILLS

INCREASE PRIDE, SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT & PRESTIGE

RAISE PROFILE

Choosing a team and a mentor

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TEAMS MUST BE MADE UP OF FIVE TO SIX TEAM MEMBERS PLUS A MENTOR.

APPOINTING A MENTOR

The Mentor must be someone who can, with material supplied, guide the team through the preparation phase.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the appointment of an appropriate mentor who will assist the team both in preparation for the Management Challenge and the post event debrief.

The role of the mentor is:

- to facilitate a team preparation process
- to support a team debrief (focusing on strengths, weaknesses and learning opportunities) at various stages both before and after the event
- to work with the team to identify and implement opportunities
- to maximise learning and capacity-building

The mentor's role is to guide the team. They should be someone who can make suggestions without directing team members and taking over the team leader role. They should be good at drawing out contributions from all team members, a good timekeeper, organised, willing to work with the team after the event and able to help the team effectively debrief and translate their learning into workplace change.

Mentors may be former Management Challenge participants, or current or emerging managers wanting a genuine professional development opportunity.

The mentor cannot be a team member.

Appointing a mentor early in the preparation phase will greatly assist with your team's formation and preparation.

All communications to your team will be through your Mentor and as such, they should be available in the lead up to the event and always ensure their contact details are kept up to date.

Forming a team

Each Australasian Management Challenge team must have a minimum of five and a maximum of six team members. They may be made up of staff from all departments, in management or non-management positions.

Each council is free to assemble teams to suit its professional development plans. Some will enter the Management Challenge to win, and for others it's more important to introduce particular staff members to the learning experience.

There are three common approaches to team formation:

The 'objective is winning' approach

This approach involves selection of a team whose main focus is to win. It could involve selecting the most experienced people from within council to form the team with expert skills across a wide spectrum of council activities or might even be made up of those who have competed in a previous Challenge.

It could be argued that the gains associated with this approach are short-term and limited in value in terms of broader professional development and organisational growth.

The professional development approach

The aim of this approach is to ensure the greatest number and cross-section of individuals gain exposure to the experience. Each year new people are selected to participate from a range of departments. The benefits to the organisation are enhanced as the new skills and knowledge flow to a greater area of the organisation.

The hybrid approach

This is where an organisation creates a team with the best winning potential but still focuses on fostering high levels of professional and organisational development.

"EVEN IF YOU'RE IN YOUR FIRST LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE, OR YOU THINK YOUR TECHNICAL BACKGROUND WON'T BE HELPFUL – HAVE A GO. DRAW ON YOUR EXISTING SKILLS, LEARN FROM FEEDBACK AND IMPROVE, AND KNOW THAT EVERYONE HAS VALUE TO OFFER."

Molly Ferrier,

Business Partner Communications & Brand,
City of Wanneroo,
Australasian Management Challenge Final Winner 2022

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How to form a team

A common way is to call for expressions of interest for team members. This may require an information session or the like to explain the benefits and requirement of the event. During the selection process ensure there is a cross section of the organisation represented, if the aim of entering the Management Challenge is to genuinely build capacity and provide professional development opportunities.

Care should be taken to ensure existing organisational relationships do not suppress free participation. Chief Executive Officer/General Managers do not usually join teams as members, although this may be appropriate in teams from smaller councils.

It is important to note that the members of the winning teams entered in the Australasian Final of the Management Challenge must be the same team members who participated in the regional event. Substitution of team members requires the approval of your regional association.

Composite teams

TOO SMALL? TOO FAR AWAY? PROBABLY NOT!

Sometimes councils feel they are too small to field a competitive team. However, this can also be an advantage because you may already have a highly functioning, close-knit team! You could also consider entering a composite team- made up of members of your own council plus one or more other councils.

Smaller councils that cannot form their own team are encouraged to enter a composite team with neighbouring organisations.

Councils may also wish to enter a composite team as part of an ongoing partnership arrangement with another Council.

Download the appropriate information on the website to assist in preparing a composite team for the Management Challenge.

"THE CHALLENGE PROVIDES PARTICIPANTS WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE THEIR LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES. TEAMS DEVELOP A DEEP SENSE OF CAMARADERIE, SHARING DIVERSE EXPERIENCE AND IDEAS TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER TO COMPLETE REAL-LIFE TASKS IN A FAST-PACED ENVIRONMENT."

Rebecah Brosnan and Sheree Chant,

Co-Mentors, Central Highlands Regional Council, Runner-Up, Australasian Management Challenge Final 2023

AUSTRALASIAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE 2027

How the Challenge works

THERE ARE THREE STAGES TO THE EVENT:

1. PREPARATION & PRE-CHALLENGE TASK

Team Preparation

Team mentors will lead participants through a team-building process to prepare for the day. They will be provided with a resource to guide them through this.

Pre-Challenge Task

All teams are required to submit a Pre-Challenge Task prior to the regional event. This will involve a specific task or some form of research or preparation on a particular subject or theme. The Pre-Challenge Task will be distributed to teams 6-8 weeks prior to challenge day.

This task submission will be assessed and form part of the teams overall score, so teams should allow sufficient time to fulfil its requirements.

2. THE REGIONAL EVENT DAY

The Australasian Management Challenge is held in each Australian state and territory, and also in New Zealand. This is referred to as your 'Regional Challenge'.

Teams come together at a venue within their regions and throughout the day are given a number of tasks to complete. Each is designed to deliver on the learning outcomes related to the core competencies of the Management Challenge. Teams will also be required to deal with and respond to a number of simulated situations and scenarios which relate to various management themes specific to the local government environment.

3. POST MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE - TRANSLATION OF LEARNING BACK TO THE WORKPLACE

Your team will participate in a post-event debriefing process. This will include:

- An optional debrief by a Management Challenge facilitator
- A debrief back at work led by the team Mentor

The post-event phase is extremely important as it provides the basis of application of learning outcomes to the workplace.

It is designed to help participants translate learning outcomes into a personal action plan for professional development and addresses how the team can leverage off the Management Challenge experience.

This phase should include the creation of a personal action plan by each team member and a structured process of engagement with the CEO/GM and/or senior management and/or peers. Without a commitment to this phase by the organisation from the outset, the enduring benefits of the Management Challenge experience are diminished.

And a possible fourth stage.....

4. THE AUSTRALASIAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE FINAL

Following the Post-Challenge assessment process, one overall winning team will be declared in each region. These teams will go on to participate in the Australasian Final to be held in New Zealand in August 2027, competing against the winning teams from all other regions.

Teams will be required to cover their own travel expenses. Information relating to accommodation including location and costs will be made available prior to the Australasian Final.

AUSTRALASIAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE 2027

Registration and Important Information

Your region's office will run the Australasian Management Challenge regional event between March and May 2027. Please contact your region's office to confirm key dates for 2027, including:

- Registration close date
- Pre-Challenge task release date
- Pre-Challenge task due date
- Regional Challenge event date

Your regional office will also be able to confirm the team registration fee, and the event cancellation policy.

Please see details below:

LGMA QLD

www.lgmaqld.org.au
P: 07 3174 5006

LGPRO

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LG PROFESSIONALS NSW

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