

## Science for Action: *Changing the world in small steps*

**18 July 2024, 5:00pm – 8:00pm AEST**

**Venue: Owen J. Wordsworth Room, S Block, Level 12, Room 1215  
QUT Gardens Point Campus, 2 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000**

### Background

The link between science and its application to help society prosper should be direct and quick: once there is sufficient evidence, it should be used in practice as a basis for our actions.

However, history tells us that this is not the case, with many examples of not just years, but centuries or even millennia passing before action was taken while the evidence was there and waiting. For example, the impact of asbestos on health was understood as early as Roman times, but only recently were regulations introduced to stop the use of asbestos (2003 in Australia).

There are many other examples: the impacts of greenhouse emissions in the atmosphere and scientific predictions about the effects on climate were in place for decades before actions began, only when it was already difficult to ignore these impacts.

There are numerous barriers to using existing and emerging scientific evidence. There is inertia in the acceptance of science and even when it is accepted, there is often even greater inertia in its use.

The science of indoor air and, in turn, the impact of indoor air on public health is another example of the lack of connection between science and the actions that should be taken based on science. In a way, "science stops" at the entrance to the building.

We spend most of our time indoors, but scientific methods are rarely used to ensure the good quality of the air we breathe indoors, nor is there legislation to check indoor air quality. But there is a solid scientific basis for the importance of clean, healthy indoor air, and we know how to achieve it.

The program we are initiating will use this knowledge to improve public health in small, science-based steps in the absence of regulations. We will demonstrate that this program is possible, that it works, and that it can be scaled up. Small steps will become bigger, and our vision is that they will influence action for good.

### **Speakers (3-5 minutes each, no slides necessary): Small steps – steady progress**

- Distinguished Professor Lidia Morawska, QUT and THRIVE
- Mr Ted Baillieu, Former Premier of Victoria
- Mr Matthew Rilew, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
- Mr Greg Bell, Department of Education, Training and Employment (Queensland)
- Professor Brendan Crabb, Burnet Institute (TBC)
- Ms Kate Cole OAM, Cole Health
- Mr Robin Scott, Former Member of Victorian Parliament
- Distinguished Professor Barbara Finlayson-Pitts, Director, AirUCI Institute, University of California, Irvine (Pre-Recorded Message)

### **All participants: How do we start?**

What small and big steps would you/your organisation like to take?

**Outcome of the episode:** A consensus on the first step to be taken.

## Agenda

<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Arrival and Welcome</b>
<b>5:15pm</b>	<b>Speakers (3-5 minutes each): Small steps – steady progress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distinguished Professor Lidia Morawska, QUT and THRIVE</li><li>• Mr Ted Baillieu, Former Premier of Victoria</li><li>• Mr Matthew Rilew, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water</li><li>• Mr Greg Bell, Department of Education, Training and Employment (Queensland)</li><li>• Professor Brendan Crabb, Burnet Institute (TBC)</li><li>• Ms Kate Cole OAM, Cole Health</li><li>• Mr Robin Scott, Former Member of Victorian Parliament</li><li>• Distinguished Professor Barbara Finlayson-Pitts, Director, AirUCI Institute, University of California, Irvine (Pre-Recorded Message)</li></ul>
<b>6:00pm</b>	<b>All participants: How do we start?</b>
<b>6:30pm</b>	<b>Buffet dinner</b>
<b>8:00pm</b>	<b>Session ends</b>