



MEDIA RELEASE – DRAFT ONLY

Trust & Safety Festival tackles the collision of AI, cyber, scams, regulation and online safety

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As artificial intelligence reshapes technology, business and public life, the boundaries between online safety, cybersecurity, fraud, human rights, regulation and platform responsibility are rapidly disappearing.

How governments, businesses and civil society respond to that convergence will be at the centre of the inaugural Trust & Safety Festival Sydney, taking place at Pullman Sydney Hyde Park on 8–9 October under the theme *From Regulation to Real-World Impact*.

The Festival will bring together leaders from across industry, government, regulators, civil society and other sectors to examine how those challenges play out in practice.

Festival co-founder Kim Chandler McDonald said the Festival was created because too many of the conversations that belong together are still happening in separate rooms.

“Trust & Safety, AI, cyber, fraud and scams, online safety, human rights, regulation and geopolitics are increasingly colliding in the real world, but the people working on them don't always get the opportunity to grapple with that collision together,” Ms Chandler McDonald said.

The Festival will examine what happens when regulation meets an actual product, an actual organisation, an actual victim, an actual regulator or an actual crisis.

“There’s no shortage of regulation, principles, frameworks and well-intentioned policy. The much harder question is what happens when those ideas meet the real world,” Ms Chandler McDonald said.

She added: “Accountability matters, but if all our energy goes into deciding who should carry the blame rather than understanding why the system failed



and what needs to change, we can end up with the blame neatly allocated and the system still broken.”

Sessions over the two-day programme will include speakers from Microsoft, Canva, Snap and TikTok, with an opening keynote from Lorraine Finlay, Australian Human Rights Commissioner.

Miss Finlay said, “These are difficult issues, and they are not helped by treating them as an ‘us versus them’ debate. We need serious, practical conversations about where the risks are, where responsibility sits and, most importantly, what actually works.”

“This means bringing different perspectives together and looking for areas of genuine consensus, rather than simply reinforcing existing positions.”

Also appearing will be the Hon Dr Andrew Charlton MP, Assistant Minister for Science, Technology and the Digital Economy, and the Hon Victor Dominello, CEO and co-founder of the Future Government Institute and former NSW Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government.

“Australia is a world-leader when it comes to online safety, and artificial intelligence is now front and centre of the policy debate,” said Assistant Minister Charlton.

“We welcome the initiative of the Trust and Safety Festival in bringing together civil society and experts to progress this important discussion.”

Festival sponsors include platinum sponsor CyberCX, gold sponsor Corrs Chambers Westgarth, silver sponsors Match Group and TikTok, along with founding partners, 3 Steps Data and Primary Purpose Advisory.

The cross-sector programme will explore AI governance, human rights, cybersecurity, scams, online safety, platform regulation, digital sovereignty, technology-facilitated abuse and safety by design.

“We aren't pretending the Festival is going to ‘solve’ Trust and Safety in two days,” Ms Chandler McDonald said.

“What we hope is that people leave with a better understanding of how these issues connect, a clearer sense of what is working or failing in practice, and



relationships with people they may need to call when the next difficult problem lands on their desk.”

She said the Festival’s ambition was straightforward: “Fewer siloed conversations, more honest ones, and a much stronger connection between the rules we write, the technologies we build and what people actually experience in the real world.”

The Trust & Safety Festival Sydney 2026 will take place on 8–9 October at the Pullman Sydney Hyde Park. Registrations and more information are available at <https://www.trustandsafetyfestival.com/sydney-2026/>.

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