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PRESS RELEASE

The Biggest Mistake Brands Make With Inclusive Campaigns Happens Before Casting

As Tall Poppy Mgmt celebrates its third anniversary, founder and award-winning talent manager Mikaela Copland says the biggest lesson she's learnt is that brands are still getting inclusive marketing wrong because they're thinking about diversity too late.

Australia: [Tall Poppy Mgmt](#) founder and award-winning talent manager Mikaela Copland believes many brands are still approaching inclusive marketing the wrong way by treating diversity as a casting decision instead of a planning decision.

"Diversity shouldn't begin at casting. It should be built into every stage of a campaign," Copland says.

Over the past three years, Copland has worked with organisations including the MCG, Rod Laver Arena and Melbourne Fashion Week, helping brands create more authentic campaigns alongside neurodivergent, queer, plus-size, Deaf, Disabled and intersex creators. Named AIMCO's Influencer Marketing Trailblazer of the Year in 2022 and Banyule's Young Business Achiever of the Year in 2025, she says that experience has reinforced one lesson above all else.

"One of the biggest misconceptions is that diversity comes in at the talent picking stage. In reality, inclusion needs to be built into the campaign from the very beginning. It should not be about finding diverse talent and then trying to fit them into a rigid mould.

So where should brands start?

"Rather than asking who should appear in a campaign, brands should first ask who should help shape it," Copland says.

That means embedding inclusion into every stage of campaign development, from involving people with lived experience in the earliest planning conversations and budgeting for accessibility, to staff training, internal processes and ensuring representation shapes the creative process, not just the casting process.

Copland points to her work on the MCG's Auslan Stadium Tour and Rod Laver Arena's sensory room initiative as examples of how accessibility and inclusion can create richer, more meaningful experiences when they're considered from the outset, rather than added as an afterthought.

"Some of the most meaningful projects I've worked on have been the ones that removed barriers rather than created more content. Accessibility doesn't just benefit the people it's designed for. It creates better experiences for everyone."





Long before Tall Poppy Mgmt, Copland ran one of Australia's largest One Direction Tumblr fan communities, growing it to more than 35,000 followers. She says that experience taught her something many brands are only beginning to understand: **people don't connect with campaigns, they connect with communities.**

As more identity led campaigns found their way to the agency, Copland realised the business could do far more than manage talent.

Copland says she continues to see accessibility barriers that could have been avoided through better planning, from inaccessible venues to organisations treating interpreter costs as optional rather than essential.

For Copland, authentic representation has never simply been about who appears in a campaign. It's about creating work where more people genuinely feel seen, included and able to participate.

She encourages brands to ask three simple questions before launching their next campaign:

- Who with lived experience should help shape this campaign?
- Have we budgeted for accessibility from the outset?
- Are we creating genuine participation, or simply visible representation?

To learn more about Tall Poppy Mgmt or discuss how to build more authentic and inclusive campaigns, visit www.tallpoppymgmt.com.

For interviews or further information, please contact Amanda Kuhn at Missy Mischief PR & Creative on amanda@missymischief.com

Media Kit [HERE](#)

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About Tall Poppy Mgmt

Founded in 2023, Tall Poppy Mgmt is an Australian talent management agency representing creators, musicians, authors, advocates and speakers from a diverse range of backgrounds and lived experiences. The agency partners with brands, organisations and government to create authentic, inclusive and accessible campaigns through meaningful creator collaborations. Beyond talent management, Tall Poppy Mgmt delivers **The Bloom Sessions**, a workshop series supporting emerging musicians, and **Community Garden**, an online directory connecting Australian artists with grants, opportunities and industry resources.