



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

**AMERICAN AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIAN ALUMNI AND BUSINESS NETWORKING  
RECEPTION  
Friday 7 June 2024**

It's a pleasure to join you this evening.

For more than 75 years, the American Australian Association has committed itself to connecting our two cultures and providing opportunities for greater collaboration.

Offering educational, artistic and commercial programs, the Association ensures members of both countries are exposed to the benefits of cross-cultural exchange.

The Association's work is just one example of the long and significant history of cooperation between our nations.

Diplomatic relations were formally established in 1940, followed closely by the beginning of the Fulbright Program in 1949.

It's worth noting that the treaty to establish the Fulbright Program was the first signed between our two nations, predating ANZUS by two years.

Since its establishment, the Program has created a network of over 5,000 alumni – including myself.

Commercial ties were further cemented by the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement of 2005, facilitating the expansion of our economic collaboration.

The collective impact of these milestones is demonstrated in the strength of the Australian and United States relationship today.

The United States is Australia's largest two-way investment partner with two-way investment stock valued at \$2.2 trillion in 2022.

In Victoria specifically, the U.S. is the second largest two-way merchandise trading partner with an approximate value of \$17.3 billion in the 2022-2023 financial year.

With a focus on health and life sciences, technology, and consumer goods, this two-way relationship is expected to grow in the coming years.

Many US companies are already realising this potential.

Victoria has become a leading destination for New-York led companies to establish research and manufacturing facilities.

A recent example includes biopharmaceutical company Pfizer which has established its Asia-Pacific mRNA clinical research and development centre in Melbourne.

The Moderna Manufacturing Facility, set to be completed later this year, will also allow for the production of mRNA vaccines and medicines in Victoria.

Beyond the biotech ecosystem, anti-fraud technology company Riskified, with the support of Invest Victoria, have announced Melbourne as the location of their Australia and New Zealand headquarters.

While Fractal, an AI and analytics company dually headed in New York and Mumbai, has had a Melbourne office since 2023.

Of course, the American-Australian relationship goes beyond purely economic interests.

Since 1982, the American Friends of the National Gallery has worked to foster the visual arts and cultural exchange between Australia and the U.S.

And the American Australian Association hosts its annual Arts Gala, promoting the work of industries and individuals that tell each community's story.

Similar collaboration is also seen in defence and agriculture.

There are many aspects to the Australian and American relationship.

The diversity of this relationship ensures we will continue to find new avenues through which to connect.

Thank you to John Berry, President of the American Australian Association and former Ambassador for organising tonight's event.

To the American Australian Association for their ongoing work supporting this important relationship.

And to all of you for joining us this evening.