



**PROFESSIONS
AUSTRALIA**

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NEW HORIZONS FOR PROFESSIONS: TIME TO THINK BOLD

The future of the professions, professionals and professionalism in a rapidly changing, digital world will be in the spotlight tomorrow at a forum in Sydney convened by Professions Australia.

President of Professions Australia Michael Catchpole believes that in an increasingly technology-driven world, there are many challenges for the professions as we know them today to be more agile and to adapt and tailor services to meet the changing expectations and needs of consumers.

“Technological change is not to be feared, but embraced – and quickly. Already many professions such as accounting, health and engineering have adopted new technologies and innovative ways of service delivery. The professions are evolving just as the technology around us is,” Mr Catchpole said.

“There will be new roles for professionals that we can’t imagine today and no doubt the way professionals work will change over time. Just a few years ago, it would have been difficult to imagine a need for data scientists or professionals in e-health but these and other professional roles have emerged or expanded.”

Mr Catchpole will chair the forum, which will discuss some of the controversial findings in a new book released by UK authors Richard and Daniel Susskind. The Susskinds question the relevance of the professions in the 21st Century.

“With the development of technologies such as artificial intelligence and robotics, and the Australian public’s rapid adoption of social networks, the professions have much forward-thinking to do in terms of knowledge management,” he said.

Forum keynote speaker, Chief Executive of CPA Australia and former President of Professions Australia, Mr Alex Malley said, “As professionals, we strive every day to meet the contemporary expectations of a personalised, accessible brand: where our professional judgment is nothing less than compelling to our clients. It’s about relevance and standing out from the crowd.”

Special guest panellists, Ms Brenda Aynsley, Senior Vice President of Professions Australia and President of the Australian Computer Society and, and Dr George Beaton, Chair of Beaton will discuss the ‘Future of the Professions and Professionalism in the Age of Digitisation’.

Dr Beaton believes “The threshold question is ‘To what extent will digital technologies replace or enhance the work of professional practitioners?’, as we know them today. My prediction is that by 2025 we will have a kaleidoscopic world of both in which many neo-professions will be emerging. This scenario has profound implications for regulators and educators, as well as professional bodies and the professionals.”

Ms Aynsley said whatever shape this kaleidoscope takes, it will be absolutely vital that underpinning it all will be the issue of trust. Professionals, in the practice of their profession, must be held in high regard by the communities they serve if the professions are to survive.

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