

# AUSTRALIA VISIT TO LAUNCH TECH AUSTRALIA ADVOCATES MARCH 2024

Following my travels to Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur (please see separate blog), I headed to Adelaide on 7th March to meet up with Dickie Currer and Claire Bull, the new co-leads of Tech Australia Advocates. We were joined by Leslie Sarma, co-lead of Tech Singapore Advocates and GTA Asia Pacific Regional Lead.

I arrived the towards the end of an annual event called \_SouthStart, which is billed as Australia's Festival of Innovation, Imagination and Impact. The event took place across three days at over 10 venues with 6 content streams, and it didn't disappoint. I participated in 'Untethered', described as a 'full-sensory escapade' which took place in McLaren Vale & Fleurieu Coast south of Adelaide (which was spectacular). After everyone attended one of the various experiences, the entire delegation came together at Chalk Hill Winery for music, networking and fun.

More info is here about \_SouthStart: <https://www.southstart.co>



It felt like a uniquely Australian event, which is why Claire and Dickie wanted their new leadership of Tech Australia Advocates to kick off at \_SouthStart to symbolise that they want to take a balanced approach to supporting the various tech hubs. I learned that each of the various State Governments has significant input and influence on their tech ecosystems.

Dickie and Claire are bringing in great leaders representing each of the states to ensure they have input from a nationwide perspective. Their aim is to help connect the various tech hubs across Australia and encourage the various startups and scaleups around the country to expand internationally with support from Global Tech Advocates.

The new Tech Australia Advocates website is here (and you can 'meet' the various leaders across the group): <https://www.techaustraliaadvocates.com/about>

## MEET THE LEADERS



**DICKIE CURRER**  
CO-NATIONAL LEAD



**CLAIRE BULL**  
CO-NATIONAL LEAD



**PAULINE FETAUI**  
QLD LEAD



**NATASHA PREVOT**  
WA LEAD



**PAUL MITCHINSON**  
VIC LEAD



**JOSH GARRATT**  
SA LEAD



**AMY FOGARTY**  
TAS LEAD

---

During the reception at Chalk Hill Winery, Claire and Dickie gathered up some of the 'Founding Advocates' to kick off the new group.

The following day, Claire, Dickie, Leslie and I were invited by the Government of South Australia to join a CEO Innovation Roundtable session at Lot Fourteen, Adelaide's innovation hub. I was invited to do an introductory keynote to discuss Global Tech Advocates and reflect on Australia's tech sector in the global tech ecosystem. We were joined by a variety of leaders and CEOs representing startups, scaleups, Adelaide University, BAE Systems, Stone & Chalk, Defence Training Centre, Santos, Amazon Web Services, 42 and others.

It was an excellent opportunity to hear about the South Australia tech sector opportunities and challenges. Like many other tech hubs, scaling capital is a challenge and funding for female founders has been limiting. I was also struck by the lack of deeper engagement between larger corporates and universities in the region, especially in relation to tech transfer/spinout collaboration demonstrated by American and British universities.



---

There is a strong desire to address these challenges, and an understanding that collaboration across the ecosystem is critical. Diane Dixon, State Project Lead from the Government of South Australia who co-hosted the session, has taken this on board as part of her remit. Claire and Dickie explained how Tech Australia Advocates can play a key role here across the various states across Australia, to help with the collaboration across the national ecosystem.

Claire, Dickie, Leslie and I then spent some time discussing next steps for the new 'TAA' in terms of building the community, linking to the new GTA Launch Pad initiative and planning for future events.

I am delighted to welcome Claire and Dickie as TAA Leaders, and a big thank you to Leslie for her efforts to bring them into the GTA family. More information about Claire and Dickie is here:

[> Meet Claire](#)

[> Meet Dickie](#)