



# 2025

## PLACE LEADERS ASIA PACIFIC URBAN LEADERS' SUMMIT

2 - 5 APRIL 2025  
DARWIN, AUSTRALIA



HOSTED BY  
PLACE LEADERS ASIA PACIFIC



*We acknowledge the Larrakia people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Summit takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and reaffirm our commitment to working together to care for this land.*

# Welcome to the Place Leaders Asia Pacific Urban Leader's Summit 2025

## Message from the Lord Mayor

As Lord Mayor of Darwin, it is my pleasure to welcome you to our vibrant city for the 2025 Place Leaders Asia Pacific Urban Leaders' Summit.



Darwin is a city of remarkable resilience and diversity. From its rich cultural heritage as the land of the Larrakia people to its modern innovations in urban design and climate adaptation, Darwin is a testament to the power of community and collaboration. Our city has rebuilt itself time and again, emerging stronger and more connected each time.

Darwin's spirit is evident not only in the Waterfront Precinct but also in the lively heart of our city. Take time to explore our streets and laneways, where vibrant street art and smart city innovations showcase how creativity and technology can transform urban spaces. Stroll through the historic Smith Street Mall, reflecting Darwin's journey from

a frontier town to a modern hub of commerce and culture, or visit landmarks like Brown's Mart Theatre and the Town Hall Ruins, each a poignant reminder of our city's resilience and history.

This Summit is a unique opportunity to engage with place makers, thought leaders, urban planners, and cultural practitioners from across the Asia-Pacific region and explore how innovative placemaking can address critical challenges such as climate resilience, cultural preservation, and community vitality.

As you participate in immersive experiences and discussions, I encourage you to embrace the full breadth of Darwin's offerings. From the Waterfront to the CBD and beyond, you will find a city brimming with energy, creativity, and a deep respect for its history and people.

On behalf of the City of Darwin, I extend a warm welcome to all delegates. May this Summit inspire meaningful conversations and lasting connections as we shape the future of our cities together.

**The Honourable Kon Vatskalis**  
Lord Mayor of Darwin



## Message from Clare Ferres-Miles, Chair - Place Leaders Asia Pacific

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Join us in Darwin to shape the future of placemaking while celebrating the City's past and present.



Immerse yourself in a one-of-a-kind learning experience at the Place Leaders Urban Leaders' Summit 2025, set against the stunning backdrop of the [Darwin Waterfront Precinct](#) thanks to the support of our 2025 Summit Partner, Darwin Waterfront Corporation.

This event gathers a diverse group of place-makers, urban planners, policymakers, cultural practitioners, and industry leaders to explore critical themes in placemaking, including Indigenous wisdom, climate resilience, and vibrant public spaces.

Darwin's rich history and enduring spirit provide a remarkable setting for this Summit. Darwin embodies resilience, having repeatedly rebuilt itself after destructive cyclones - you'll visit just months after the 50th anniversary of [Cyclone Tracy](#) - and [World War II bombings](#) - where more bombs fell on Darwin than at Pearl Harbor, events that resonate in Darwin and its culture to this day.

Today, Darwin reflects the resilience of its people, each rebuilding effort blending innovation with their rich culture to create a city that respects its history while looking confidently to the future.

We invite you to join us for interactive sessions, cultural exchanges, and immersive tours, including 'On Country' experiences with Larrakia storytelling. Together, we will reimagine the future of cities while honouring the traditions that have shaped them.

Whether it's learning from real-world applications, connecting with leaders, or experiencing Darwin's distinctive energy, this event is a must for all people shaping the future of places.

**We can't wait to see you there.**

Register on-line now and stay up-to-date at: [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit)

Discount delegate accommodation is available. Learn more here: [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-accomodation](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-accomodation)

Flight and Darwin travel information is available here: [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-travel](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-travel)



# Summit highlights

- Complimentary access to the **Darwin Waterfront Wave Lagoon** for delegates and their families. You can also take a dip in the **tropical beach** at Darwin Waterfront - it's safe from crocodiles with a seawall separating the beach from the adjacent Darwin Harbour!
- Unique Darwin experiences, including a post-Awards evening Laksa 'Recovery' Breakfast prepared by finalists of the **Darwin International Laksa Festival** on the **NT Parliament Lawns**, a twilight Darwin Harbour cruise, and a visit to the famous **Parap Village Markets** for a 'coffee and croissants' street vibrancy session.
- Explore Darwin's dynamic street art scene with a guided tour showcasing over 130 vibrant murals installed as part of the **Darwin Street Art Festival**, stunning rooftop views, and exclusive artist residencies.
- Participate in 'On Country' storytelling with **Larrakia Nation** representatives, participate in the transformative pre-Awards Saltwater Ceremony, and discover and see the power of Indigenous placemaking in building vibrant and inclusive communities.
- Special video appearance from renowned urban designer **Jan Gehl**, who will inaugurate the **Jan Gehl Centrepiece Award** for placemaking excellence.
- Gain firsthand insights into the intersection of climate science and Indigenous knowledge, presented by leading experts from Charles Darwin University, **CSIRO Darwin Living Lab**, City of Darwin Council, and Larrakia Nation. See how Darwin's adaptive strategies, such as green infrastructure and shaded walkways, are shaping its urban landscape to mitigate climate emergency challenges.
- Build connections at the Summit's Happy Hour and the Place Leaders Asia Pacific **Awards Presentation and Dinner**, where you'll enjoy cultural performances, fine dining, and inspiring conversations.
- Connect with a diverse community of urban planners, cultural practitioners, and policy makers over networking lunches, where the backdrop of the Darwin Waterfront will inspire collaboration and new ideas for your placemaking projects.
- Optional tours of iconic locations like the Tiwi Islands and Kakadu National Park.
- Engaging keynote presentations, including the latest from Dr Robert Stokes, former NSW Minister for Cities and Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Don't miss this inspiring opportunity to hear Rob's insights and ideas for shaping the future of our communities.
- We're particularly proud of the conversations to led by the Larrakia people, which will highlight best practices in Indigenous placemaking. A Certificate of Completion for the 'Indigenous Perspectives and Place' Place Leaders micro-credential will be provided to each Summit attendee and is included in your Summit registration. This Summit is a unique opportunity for professionals in government and private enterprise who want to Design with Country and authentically engage with First Nations communities, hosted in a city leading the way in Voice and inclusion.
- Witness the best sunsets in the world!

## Sponsors



## Join Us at the Ultimate Darwin Destination proudly supported by Darwin Waterfront Corporation

Discover Darwin's vibrant Waterfront Precinct, a model of urban transformation and modern place-making, operated by our 2025 Summit Partner [Darwin Waterfront Corporation](#). Located just minutes from the city centre, [well-maintained pedestrian paths](#) (where granite set into the pavement spells out the word 'Resilience' in morse code), dedicated cycling tracks, and a convenient sky bridge connect you to all corners of the Waterfront and the CBD. Nearby [Stokes Hill Wharf](#) and Kitchener Bay offer additional exploration opportunities, from maritime adventures to insights into Darwin's rich history.

### One of Australia's leading examples of precinct place-making

Once an industrial port, the Darwin Waterfront is one of Australia's leading examples of precinct place-making - a lively centre for culture, commerce, and recreation. The Darwin Waterfront precinct offers a tropical blend of breathtaking harbor views, green public parks, and a range of activities and attractions, all in one spectacular location. Discover the strategic planning, community involvement and the successful collaboration between urban developers, local councils, and community leaders that drove this transformation.

### Darwin Convention Centre

The Summit takes place at the [Darwin Convention Centre](#), right on the edge of Kitchener Bay and a venue of modern design and functionality. The Convention Centre offers panoramic ocean views and a tropical atmosphere, creating an ideal environment for collaboration and inspiration.

### Lively, Accessible and Convenient

The Darwin Waterfront precinct buzzes with activity, featuring a variety of shops and specialty boutiques, [dining options](#), and [accommodations](#) just steps away. Stroll to Stokes Hill Wharf for maritime experiences or enjoy a meal overlooking the water. Its pedestrian-friendly design and dedicated cycling paths make navigating the area simple and enjoyable.



**DARWIN WATERFRONT**

2025 Summit Partner





The Darwin Waterfront Precinct.  
Photo: Alain Condino

## Join Us to Shape Climate-Resilient Cities

The Place Leaders Urban Leaders' Summit 2025 will showcase how targeted placemaking interventions can respond to the climate emergency. Inspired by Darwin's Climate Emergency Strategy and its unique history of resilience, the Summit will bring together experts to share practical and actionable strategies for combating climate challenges through placemaking, urban design, and community-driven initiatives.

### Climate Innovation in Practice

Your front-row seat at Darwin's Climate Emergency response will ensure that you leave the Summit with actionable tools for driving resilience and sustainability in your own cities and communities. You'll explore Darwin's innovative approaches to climate adaptation through walking tours and in-depth discussions:

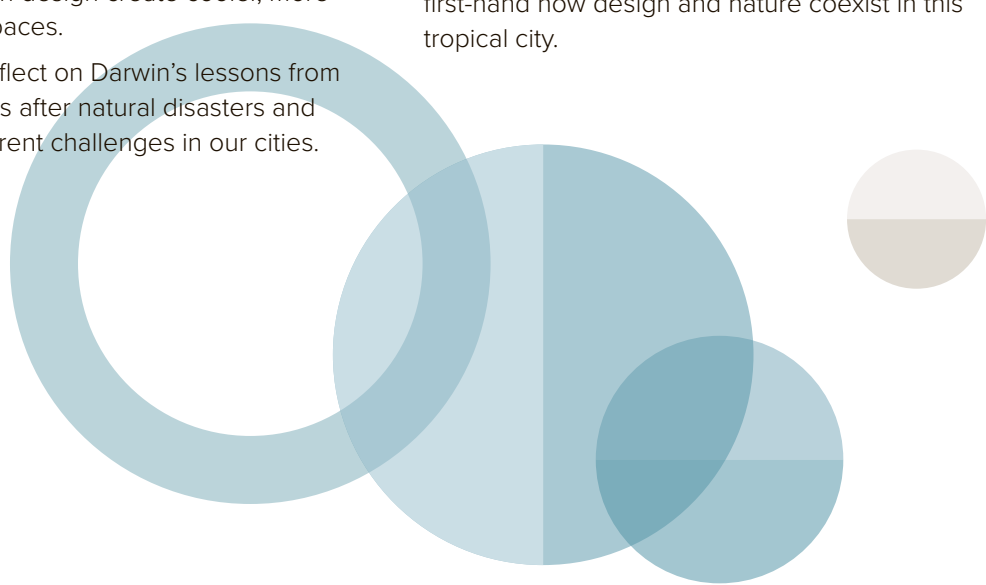
- Cavenagh Street's Green Spine demonstrates how tree canopies, heat-reflective surfaces, and water-sensitive urban design create cooler, more welcoming public spaces.
- Expert panels will reflect on Darwin's lessons from reconstruction efforts after natural disasters and its application to current challenges in our cities.

- The Climate Resilience Masterclass, led by the CSIRO Darwin Living Lab, Charles Darwin University, and Larrakia Nation representatives will show how the integration of Indigenous ecological knowledge with environmental science can develop adaptive, sustainable cities.

### Darwin as a Climate Resilience Model

The Smart Darwin Strategy presentation reveals how green infrastructure, shaded walkways, a city of smart climate sensors and integrated data, and heat-mitigation initiatives combined with sustainable transport and renewable energy initiatives are woven into urban design.

- A featured panel will discuss how Larrakia ecological knowledge strengthens climate resilience while preserving cultural heritage.
- The sunset Darwin Harbour Cruise provides a unique setting to witness these advancements from a unique vantage point while experiencing first-hand how design and nature coexist in this tropical city.



## Join Us for Authentic ‘On Country’ Experiences and Indigenous Wisdom

The Place Leaders Urban Leaders’ Summit 2025 is your unique opportunity to engage with the rich cultural traditions of the Larrakia people, the traditional custodians of Darwin. Place Leaders Asia Pacific is privileged to collaborate with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation to integrate authentic ‘On Country’ experiences into the program, ensuring that Larrakia voices, traditions, and stories are at the heart of the event.

From the opening Welcome to Country ceremony to the Saltwater Ceremony that inaugurates the Awards, Larrakia elders will share their traditions, storytelling, and deep spiritual connection to the sea and land that has sustained their community for generations.

### Certificate of Completion for the ‘Indigenous Perspectives and Place’ micro-credential for delegates

Working with academics at the University of Notre Dame and representatives of Larrakia Nation, Place Leaders Asia Pacific has crafted the Summit’s Indigenous Placemaking sessions to align with the ‘[Indigenous Perspectives and Place](#)’ Place Leaders micro-credential and the Place Leaders ‘Indigenous Placemaking Award’. This element of the Summit offers a quality learning experience for industry and place-sector professionals, with a Certificate of Completion for the ‘Indigenous Perspectives and Place’ Place Leaders micro-credential provided to each Summit attendee is included in your Summit registration.

### Indigenous Placemaking

Guided by insights from the Larrakia people, these sessions emphasise deep listening, leadership, and collaboration with Indigenous communities. You’ll gain practical insights into how integrating traditional knowledge into urban planning strengthens

community ties, supports sustainability, and builds a sense of belonging.

- A dedicated session, *Cultural Resonance - Indigenous Placemaking for Vibrant Communities*, will showcase how integrating cultural heritage into urban design can create spaces that foster genuine connections to ‘Country.’
- The *Larrakia Cultural Centre Showcase* session will offer a glimpse into this [upcoming landmark](#) institution that embodies the Larrakia people’s connection to their land through innovative architecture and purpose-driven design. This cultural celebration will inspire you to consider how honouring Indigenous heritage can enhance urban spaces in your city.
- You’ll join guided tours with Larrakia representatives, highlighting the interconnection between the Larrakia people and their environment, offering you a deep understanding of how cultural identity can shape and strengthens placemaking.

Our collaboration with Larrakia Nation exemplifies the Summit’s commitment to reimagining urban leadership through diverse perspectives. This collaboration transforms the Summit into more than a conference - it will be a shared journey of learning, connection, and inspiration grounded in the values of the Larrakia people and their enduring relationship with Country.



Place Leaders Asia Pacific thanks Larrakia Nation for its kind support of this event





## Join Us for Amazing Street Art and Night-Time Economy

Did you know that the Darwin Street Art Festival, held annually since 2017, has transformed Darwin into what is now arguably Australia's most vibrant outdoor gallery?

To fully appreciate these artworks, you'll enjoy a walking tour of the Darwin CBD's 130 street murals along with insights into the artists and their creations. You'll use the augmented reality [Darwin Street Art Festival app](#) to bring the murals to life ([preview](#))! This is your opportunity to witness first-hand how public spaces can be transformed into canvases that tell diverse stories.

You'll also experience a vibrant Night-Time Culture and Economy Tour to see how creativity and sustainability come alive after dark. See how Darwin's night-time economy has been revitalised through smart lighting, street art, and strategic activation of underutilised spaces, and experience exclusive Cultural activities on the lawn in front of the historic Country Women's Association building in the CBD.



# Pre- Summit Program - Optional Pre-Summit Experiences

## Tuesday 1 April 2025

- **Arrive at Airport - flights arrive from 11:30am**
- Relax and refresh with complimentary access to the Darwin Waterfront Wave Pool (complimentary for entire Summit), a fun 'all-inclusive' ticket experience for delegates and their families. Covering 4,000 square metres, the lagoon features 10 different wave patterns, from gentle swells to waves up to 1.2 meters high - perfect for boogie boarders! A shallow water play area caters to younger children ensuring fun for the whole family. Relax on banana lounges under beach umbrellas or spread out on the lawn in the shade. Lifeguards are on duty, and amenities include accessible showers, seating, and a kiosk offering refreshments and swimming accessories.
- You can also take a dip in the tropical beach at Darwin Waterfront - it's safe from crocodiles with a seawall separating the beach from the adjacent Darwin Harbour!
- Explore the historic [Darwin Heritage Trail](#) including the Darwin Waterfront area, Stokes Hill, the Cyclone Tracy Memorial, and the WWII Oil Storage Tunnels. The trail is a wonderful view of Darwin's historical sites and their contribution to placemaking and community identity.

## Wednesday, 2 April 2025

- **Arrive at Airport - flights arrive at 11:30am, from Tuesday 1 April 2025, plus:**

### Optional Pre-Summit Experiences

#### Tiwi Island Adventure Tour

**Time:** 8:00am - 4:30pm

**Location:** Tiwi Island

**Cost:** \$500

Immerse yourself in First Nations culture on this exclusive day tour, exploring the traditions and landscapes of the Tiwi Islands.

Exclusive delegate registration link coming in January 2025.

#### Darwin Street Art Festival Tour

**Time:** 8:00am - 10:30am

**Location:** Darwin CBD

**Cost:** \$59 (includes refreshments)

Explore Darwin's dynamic street art scene with a guided tour delivered by the [Activate Darwin](#) team showcasing vibrant murals, stunning rooftop views, and exclusive artist residencies. Experience how the Darwin Street Art Festival has transformed the city's laneways into a spectacular outdoor gallery and redefined urban renewal in Darwin through traditional and digital media. Featuring over 130 large-scale murals by renowned local and international artists and integrating augmented



reality (AR) technology into the murals, the Festival has beautified the city and deepened community engagement in exciting new ways. The team behind the Festival will share exclusive behind-the-scenes insights, sharing how Street Art can be used as a tool for urban renewal, can drive visitation and tourism, and drive engagement with hard-to-reach communities.

Delegates will see:

- Austin Lane - home to some of the largest murals in the CBD
- West Lane - hidden artistic gems
- Shadforth Lane - the newest addition to the scene, with nine murals painted during the recent festivals
- Behind-the-scenes insights into the creative process
- Augmented reality experiences where murals come to life through an app
- Stunning city rooftop views of Darwin's street art scene
- Notable Artworks including Kaff-Eine 'Sistagirl', CTO 'The Multidimensional Man', Andrew Bourke and Jesse Bell 'Gurrumul', Dion Beasley 'Cheeky Dogs', Franck Gohier 'The Boxing Croc', Jesse Bell's Vincent Lingiari Tribute.



Welcome to the Darwin Convention Centre Waterfront Rooms.

### **Climate Resilience Masterclass - Environment, Climate Change & Indigenous Science**

**Time:** 2:30pm - 4:15pm

**Location:** Charles Darwin University

**Cost:** \$95

Join us for an insightful masterclass exploring how Indigenous knowledge and contemporary environmental science can enhance climate resilience. Experts from Charles Darwin University, CSIRO Darwin Living Lab, and Larrakia Nation will share interdisciplinary approaches to help us understand the complex relationship between people and the environment. You'll learn practical strategies to build adaptable and sustainable communities by including Indigenous perspectives in urban planning and climate adaptation policies.

Delegates will discover:

- How Indigenous knowledge provides insights into long-term climate patterns and community-based risk management responses.
- Methods for integrating traditional ecological knowledge with modern environmental science.
- Practical case studies on collaborative projects between Indigenous communities and researchers.
- Real-world approaches for embedding cultural perspectives into climate adaptation policies and urban planning.
- The role of storytelling and cultural practices in promoting community engagement and resilience.

Presented by

- Charles Darwin University, Larrakia Nation, CSIRO Darwin Living Lab, City of Darwin Council.

# Summit Program Commences

## Delegate Registration and Sunset Harbour Cruise Wednesday, 2 April 2025

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### Delegate Registration

**Time:** 2:30pm - 5:30pm

**Location:** Darwin Convention Centre

Check in and collect your summit materials, network with fellow delegates, and get ready for an inspiring event, commencing with a Darwin Harbor cruise.

### Darwin Harbour Cruise Experience

**Time:** 6:00pm - 8:30pm

**Location:** Darwin Waterfront

Kick off your Summit journey with an unforgettable catered Darwin Harbour Cruise as we set sail on the breathtaking Darwin Harbour for a climate-resilient city showcase and networking event, where you'll witness how urban design and nature co-exist - all while soaking in panoramic views and networking in a relaxed setting. The evening will include canapes and drinks (beer, wine, soft drink).

Includes commentary by: CSIRO Darwin Living Lab, Activate Darwin, Larrakia Nation



Town Hall ruins.

## Day 1 - Urban Leader's Summit Thursday, 3 April 2025

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### Explore Darwin's Heart: Walking Tour of the CBD

**Time:** 7:30am - 10:00am

**Location:** Darwin CBD

We start the Summit by discovering the heartbeat of Darwin on a guided walking tour through the Central Business District. Starting at 7:30am, we'll take you on a dynamic journey through the city's rich history, showcasing climate-adaptive architecture and an ever-evolving public art scene. Experts from Activate Darwin, Darwin City Council, and Larrakia Nation will share stories of wartime resilience to modern design. You'll experience the city's rich history, climate resilience adaptations, and artistic rejuvenation, while also learning about its cultural significance and connection to the Larrakia people. Complimentary refreshment breaks.

Delegates will see:

- Smith Street Mall - diverse retail outlets and historical significance
- Brown's Mart Theatre - a heritage-listed stone building from the 1880s, now operates as a cultural hub for performing arts
- Town Hall Ruins - the original Palmerston Town Hall, constructed in 1882 and partially destroyed by Cyclone Tracy in 1974, standing as a testament to the city's resilience
- Cavenagh Street Green Spine - a climate-resilient initiative with extensive tree canopies, heat-reflective surfaces, and water-sensitive urban design
- Vibrant AR street art and murals

## **SUMMIT DAY 1: People-Centric Urban Spaces and Climate Resilience**

**Time:** 10:00am - 4:40pm

**Location:** Darwin Convention Centre

Join thought leaders and urban innovators in panels and workshops that explore the future of urban spaces and sustainability, inspired by Darwin's reputation as a global leader in climate adaptation and forward-thinking design. After the morning's walking tour of the Darwin CBD, you'll spend the day in a tropical waterfront location at the Darwin Convention Centre.

### **10:00am Refreshment and Break & Exhibition**

Take a short break to recharge, connect with fellow attendees, and explore exhibitions.

### **10:30am Keynote: Opening Addresses and Welcome to Country**

**Presented by:**

- Larrakia Nation
- The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Darwin, the Honourable Kon Vatskalis, Lord Mayor of Darwin
- Claire Ferres-Miles, Chair - Place Leaders Asia-Pacific



Darwin's technological transformation. Photo: City of Darwin Council

### **10:50am Smart City Evolution: Designing People-Centric Urban Spaces**

**Presented by:** Alice Percy, General Manager Innovation, City of Darwin

City of Darwin's groundbreaking #SmartDarwin Strategy redefines urban living through cutting-edge smart climate adaptation. After deploying one of Australia's largest and fastest smart city projects including smart LED lighting, environmental sensors to monitor weather and climate changes, microclimate sensors to collect data on CO2 levels, water and energy monitoring sensors to improve resource use, and all aggregated on a centralised data platform to analyse and visualise data to inform decision-making, don't miss this opportunity to learn first-hand how smart cities can rise to meet the climate challenge. You'll also discover how Darwin is transforming its public domain to become a global leader in sustainability and resilience. This presentation will showcase front-line Climate Emergency initiatives that integrate climate-adaptive strategies like green infrastructure, shaded walkways, and smart environmental management to monitor and manage urban places, enhance comfort, reduce urban heat, and promote social interaction.

### **11:30am Cultural Resonance - Indigenous Placemaking for Vibrant Communities**

**Presented by:** Larrakia Nation

Learn about the profound influence of cultural identity on placemaking, guided by insights from the Larrakia people. In this session you'll gain a deeper understanding of how creating spaces rooted in cultural heritage fosters genuine connections to 'Country.' The session will highlight the importance of strong leadership, deep listening, building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, and embracing innovative design practices that honour cultural traditions and spiritual ties to the land.

### **12:10pm Activate Darwin and the Power of Place-Led Urban Design and Activation**

**Presented by:** Jo Smallacombe,

Executive Director, Activate Darwin

Go behind-the-scenes of place-led urban design in Australia's tropical north. Discover how Activate Darwin - as part of the transformative Darwin City Deal - has reshaped the city's public spaces through a unique blend of cultural vibrancy and community engagement. This session is an insider's perspective on the strategic thinking, creative processes, and collaborative efforts that brought place-making iconic projects to life. From the evolution of the renowned Darwin Street Art Festival - where hidden laneways were transformed into an outdoor gallery - to innovative public space activations that have redefined community gathering spots, to the iconic Darwin International Laksa Festival which built upon the city's love of food and Asia-Pacific connection to create a cultural and economic phenomenon. Hear stories of triumphs, challenges, and the passion driving these initiatives.

### **12:50pm Networking Lunch & Exhibition: Connect and Collaborate**

Enjoy a networking lunch where you can engage with fellow participants, visit exhibitions, and share ideas for future collaborations.

### **1:50pm Keynote Address:**

Dr Robert Stokes, former NSW Minister for Cities and Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Don't miss this inspiring opportunity to hear Rob's insights and ideas for shaping the future of our communities.



Darwin International Laksa Festival.

### **2:30pm How to Build a Climate Resilient City: (Re)Building Darwin's Future after Historic Storms**

**Presented by:** CSIRO Darwin Living Lab

Darwin is a model for cities worldwide, prepared for a changing climate. This session will explore climate adaptation strategies that prepare liveable cities for future weather extremes. Emphasising lessons learned from Darwin's past severe storms, from cyclones to flooding events, and innovations emerging from the NT Government and Darwin City Council Climate Emergency and Heat Mitigation Strategies, the session will highlight urban design, infrastructure resilience, and traditional ecological knowledge.

### **3:10pm Refreshment and Break & Exhibition**

Take a short break to recharge, connect with fellow attendees, and explore exhibitions.

### **3:30pm Panel Session: Darwin's Climate Emergency Lessons for Australian Cities - Science, Government, and First Nations**

**Presented by:** Charles Darwin University -

specialising in climate change adaptation in tropical and remote regions.

- Larrakia Nation - insights on integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge into climate resilience planning.
- CSIRO Darwin Living Lab - specialising in urban resilience and sustainable development and research into new approaches to urban resilience and urban mitigation through infrastructure projects.
- City of Darwin Council - City leadership and climate initiatives, the declaration a climate emergency, and setting ambitious climate action goals.
- NT Government - the future planning and policy approach from the Climate Change Response Plan and strategies for long-term resilience.
- Moderator - Dr Robert Stokes, former NSW Minister of Planning and Place and Minister for Cities

### **4:30pm Day 2 Wrap-Up**

**Presented by:** Claire Ferres-Miles, Chair - Place Leaders Asia-Pacific

### **4:40pm Summit Day 1 Close**

**Placemaker’s Happy Hour: Lawn Beers and Networking (Cash Bar)**

**Time:** 4:30pm – 5:30pm

**Location:** Darwin Waterfront Lawns

**Cost:** Self-catered

Connect with a diverse community of urban planners, cultural practitioners, and policy makers in the lead-up to the Place Leaders Asia-Pacific Awards evening

**Saltwater Ceremony**

**Time:** 5:30pm - 6:00pm

**Location:** Darwin Waterfront Lagoon

Join the Larrakia Nation in a Saltwater Ceremony at the Darwin Waterfront Lagoon, an experience that honours a deep cultural and spiritual connection to the sea. Participate by stepping into the shallow water or watch from the beach as we mingle our sweat with the saltwater, connecting us with elders for recognition and protection on Larrakia land. Don't miss this unique cultural experience.



**2024 Place Leaders Asia Pacific Awards Presentation and Dinner**

**Time:** 6:00pm - 9:00pm

**Location:** Wharf 1, Darwin Waterfront Precinct

Celebrate the best in placemaking with an unforgettable evening of fine dining, inspiring cultural performances, and networking opportunities, all set against the backdrop of the Darwin Waterfront with unrivalled water views that sweep from Stokes Hill Wharf to the Waterfront Lagoon. Only minutes from the Darwin Convention Centre, be part of the inaugural awarding of the Jan Gehl Centrepiece Award for excellence in place-making featuring a special video appearance from renowned urban designer Jan Gehl, who will personally introduce the Jan Gehl Centrepiece Award.



Wharf One, venue for the Place Leaders Asia Pacific Awards.



## Day 2 - Urban Leaders' Summit Friday, 4 April 2025

### Laksa 'Recovery' Breakfast on NT Parliament Lawns

**Time:** 8:00am - 10:00am

Kick-off your post-Awards morning with an authentic Top End experience: a delicious Laksa 'Recovery' Breakfast in Australia's 'laksa capital' on the scenic NT Parliament Lawns, where you'll sample award-winning Laksa dishes prepared by top entrants from the Darwin International Laksa Festival, all while enjoying a guided discussion of the area. A perfect morning of taste, culture, and relaxation.

### SUMMIT DAY 2

**Time:** 10:00am - 4:30pm

**Location:** Darwin Convention Centre

After your breakfast on the lawns of NT Parliament, you'll return to Darwin Convention Centre to explore stories of how urban design and cultural visibility has driven economic growth and strengthened community ties.

### Certificate of Completion for the 'Indigenous Perspectives and Place' micro-credential for delegates

Working with academics at the University of Notre Dame and representatives of Larrakia Nation, we've crafted the Summit's Indigenous placemaking sessions to align with the 'Indigenous Perspectives and Place' Place Leaders micro-credential and the Place Leaders 'Indigenous Placemaking Award'. This element of the Summit offers a quality learning experience for industry and place-sector professionals, with a Certificate of Completion for the 'Indigenous Perspectives and Place' Place Leaders micro-credential provided to each Summit participant.



Place Leaders  
Asia Pacific thanks  
Larrakia Nation for  
its kind support of  
this event

### 10:00am Refreshment and Break & Exhibition

Take a short break to recharge, connect with fellow attendees, and explore exhibitions.

### 10:30am Stories of Place: Integrating Indigenous Wisdom in Urban Design

**Presented by:** Larrakia Nation and Darwin City Council

This session focuses on integrating traditional knowledge into urban design, setting an inclusive tone for the discussions ahead. Drawing from the Larrakia Nation's cultural protocols, and the Darwin City Council Place and Liveability Plan, it will explore how respecting and incorporating First Nations practices and perspectives can inform and enhance urban development and work towards creating a safe, liveable, healthy, cool, green, clean, smart, prosperous, vibrant and creative city. Gain insights into the significance of acknowledging traditional custodianship.

### 11:10 am Interactive Panel Discussion - Cultural Visibility: Celebrating Ceremonies in Urban Public Spaces

**Presented by:** Larrakia Nation, Darwin City Council, Activate Darwin

This Panel session highlights the importance of ceremonies and cultural practices in public spaces. Discover how public parks, recreational areas, main streets and malls, and other community spaces can serve as platforms for ceremonies and services and how these practices build community identity and cultural visibility. Using real-world practical examples, Panellists will share success stories of unlocking incredible opportunities for increasing dwell times, bringing diverse groups together, energising local businesses, and transforming the social fabric of entire communities.

### 11:50 Showcasing Larrakia Heritage: The Larrakia Cultural Centre

**Presented by:** Larrakia Development Corporation  
Stunning, vibrant, and unique, the Larrakia Cultural Centre is a project of the Larrakia Development Corporation and will be built at the feet of the Larrakia sacred site at Stokes Hill overlooking Darwin Harbour, adjacent to Darwin Convention Centre. The Larrakia Cultural Centre will maintain Larrakia culture, heritage, language and arts for future generations, and remain



in Larrakia ownership. Scheduled for completion in early 2026, this session will showcase the Larrakia Cultural Centre's unique architectural design, inspired by an ancestral bird in flight, symbolising the Larrakia's enduring connection to their land and traditions. By integrating traditional knowledge into urban design, the Centre shows how cultural heritage can inform and enrich contemporary placemaking efforts. Learn the long history of bringing a place-based vision of this scale to life, and the co-operative efforts of Larrakia Development Corporation, the Aboriginals Benefit Account, the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government.

**12:30pm Networking Lunch & Exhibition: Connect and Collaborate**

Enjoy a networking lunch where you can engage with fellow participants, visit exhibitions, and share ideas for future collaborations.

**1:30pm Keynote Address - To Be Confirmed: Stay Tuned for an Inspiring Speaker**

**2:10pm-3:10pm - Creating a Premier Place Destination: The Darwin Waterfront Success Story**

**Presented by:** Alastair Shields, CEO, Darwin Waterfront Corporation

One of Australia's premier examples of precinct placemaking, the Darwin Waterfront Precinct, managed by the Darwin Waterfront Corporation, exemplifies the integration of Indigenous heritage with contemporary attractions, creating a welcoming destination for all. Established under the Darwin Waterfront Corporation Act, the Corporation is dedicated to developing, managing, and servicing the precinct for the community's benefit, promoting it as a place of residence, business, and a venue for public events and entertainment.

**3:10pm Refreshment and Break & Exhibition**

Take a short break to recharge, connect with fellow attendees, and explore exhibitions.

**3:30pm Exploring Opportunities in the Night-Time Economy**

**Presented by:** Darwin City Council

Explore the vibrant and evolving landscape of Darwin's night-time economy in this engaging session that shares insightful analysis and forward-thinking strategies. With 525 Core NTE businesses contributing \$573 million to the local economy and

supporting 3,735 jobs, Darwin's night-time scene is an import player in economic and cultural activity. This session will explore how Darwin leverages its unique blend of waterfront dining, cultural festivals, and a thriving food and entertainment scene to build retail and recreation activity levels above pre-pandemic baselines. You'll gain insights into the city's strategies for optimising evening activities. This session is a must for delegates seeking to harness multicultural appeal, enhance safety, and craft policy frameworks for their night-time economies.

**4:10pm Summit Day 2 Wrap-Up**

**Presented by:** Claire Ferres-Miles, Chair - Place Leaders Asia-Pacific

**4:20pm Summit Day 2 Close**

**Darwin After Dark - Night-Time Economy Tour**

**Time:** 6:30pm – 8:30pm

**Location:** Darwin CBD, starting at Darwin Convention Centre

Grab some dinner and then experience Darwin's night-time culture and economy on this exclusive evening tour. Wander through lively laneways and hidden backstreets, where you'll hear from local property owners about how once-forgotten corners were transformed with street art and buzzing bars. Discover the impact of intelligent, sustainable lighting design, enhancing safety and creating a welcoming atmosphere. This tour goes beyond the postcard views to explore the real stories, challenges, and community-driven efforts - and a creative energy! - that makes Darwin come alive after dark. Experience exclusive Cultural activities on the lawn in front of the historic Country Women's Association building in the Darwin CBD where the tour will for delegates to enjoy the city at their own leisure.



Graffiti Walls in Austin Lane, Darwin CBD.

## Day 3 - Saturday, 5 April 2025

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### **Parap Village Markets Tour & Trader Insights - Coffee and Croissants Presentation**

**Time:** 8:00am - 10:30am

**Location:** Parap Village Markets

Presented by: Parap Village Traders Association  
Start your morning with fresh coffee and croissants as you stroll through the famous Parap Village Markets, a highlight of Darwin's vibrant place activation where the aroma of sizzling street food mingles with the buzz of local traders. Discover how this bustling market has become a hub of community connection and local entrepreneurship, while gaining exclusive insights from the traders.

#### **End of Summit**

Departure from Airport, Flights from 12:20pm

## Post-Summit Program - Optional Post-Summit Experiences

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### **Optional Kakadu National Park Adventure**

**Time:** 8:00am - 5:45pm

Extend your Summit experience with a full-day adventure to Kakadu National Park, where you'll explore ancient rock art, spot wildlife in their natural habitat, and immerse yourself in the breathtaking beauty of Australia's most iconic landscape.

Exclusive delegate registration link coming in January 2025.

## Who should attend?

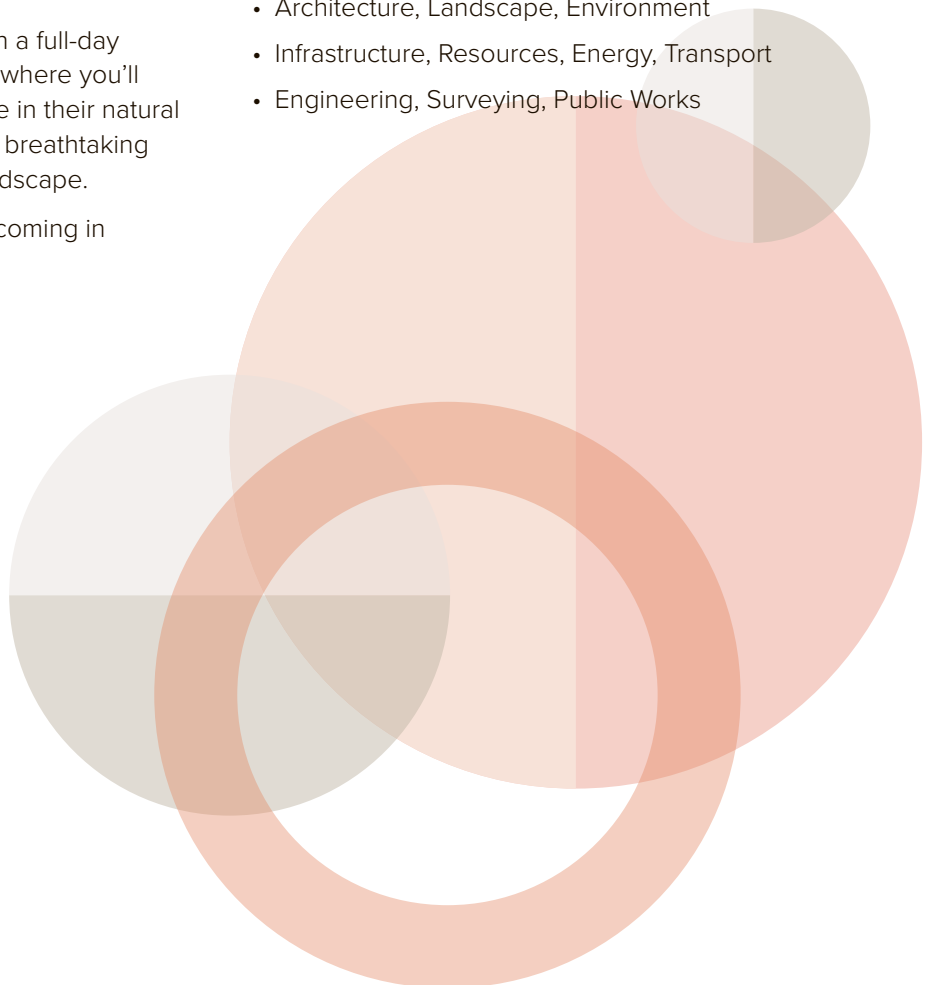
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This summit is a must for professionals dedicated to urban planning, climate resilience, community development, policy making, and placemaking. Don't miss this unique chance to stay ahead in your field.

- Local Government (Mayors, Councillors, Directors, Managers and other decision makers), State and Federal Government
- Private firms
- Main Street Businesses and Consultants
- Business Associations
- Academics
- Industry Groups

#### **With interests in:**

- Planning, Urban Design, Development, Property
- Main Streets, Retail, Shopping and Town Centres
- Economic Development, Demography
- Place making, Project Management, Marketing
- Architecture, Landscape, Environment
- Infrastructure, Resources, Energy, Transport
- Engineering, Surveying, Public Works



# Registrations Now Open!

Register online via the secure registration site at [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit)

## Registration Fees

Full Registration Member*	\$690
Full Registration Non-Member*	\$745
Awards Event Guest Ticket	\$195
Darwin Street Art Festival Tour (2 April 2025 - optional)	\$59
Climate Resilience Masterclass - Environment, Climate Change & Indigenous Science (2 April 2025 - optional)	\$95

All prices include GST and are in Australian Dollars.

\* Member discounts are available to members of Place Leaders Asia Pacific.

## Registration Inclusions

Full delegate registration for speakers, members, and non-members includes:

- Attendance at all conference sessions from the Wednesday evening sunset cruise to the Saturday morning visit to Parap Village Markets
- Attendance and dinner/drinks at the Place Leaders Asia Pacific Awards on Thursday evening
- Daily catering including morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea - Thursday and Friday
- Certificate of Completion for the 'Indigenous Perspectives and Place' Place Leaders micro-credential provided to each Summit participant by Place Leaders Asia Pacific
- Optional day and evening field trips (additional cost)
- Delegate list\*\*
- Speakers' papers and presentations post conference.

## How do I pay?

Payment can be made online at Register on-line now at: [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit) by credit card (Visa or MasterCard), Cheque or EFT transfer. Please note 1.5% credit card surcharge will apply to transactions using your credit card.

## How do I get a Tax Invoice?

A Tax Invoice will be generated upon completing your registration and attached to your confirmation. Should you need another copy please email [hello@placeleaders.com](mailto:hello@placeleaders.com)

## What about travel and accommodation?

Discount delegate accommodation is available. Learn more here: [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-accomodation](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-accomodation)

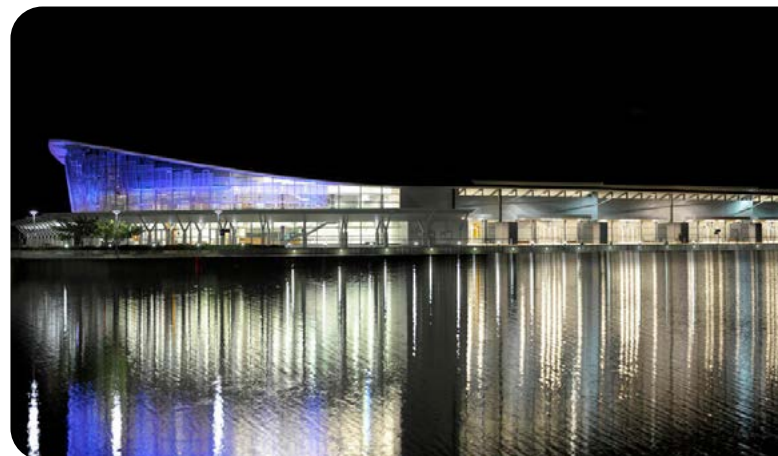
Flight and Darwin travel information is available here: [www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-travel](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit-travel)

## How do I change my registration?

Changes to registrations can be made up until 2 weeks prior to the Summit.

## How do I cancel my registration?

Cancellations will only be accepted in writing to [hello@placeleaders.com](mailto:hello@placeleaders.com). Cancellations made prior to 21 March 2025 will be refunded less \$200.00 to cover administration costs. No refunds will be made after this date. As an alternative to cancellation, your registration may be transferred to another person without incurring any penalty. NB: All refunds will be processed two weeks after the completion of the conference. Credit card fees cannot be refunded.



### **What if I have a food allergy/intolerance?**

Please email [hello@placeleaders.com](mailto:hello@placeleaders.com) with any allergy and/or intolerance information in the dietary requirements section when you complete your registration, so that we can notify catering about meal needs. We will not be able to cater for your request if they are not communicated.

### **Do I need to pre-register for individual sessions?**

The only sessions we require you to pre-register for are prompted on your registration. It is usually only field trips, specialist workshops, masterclasses, special interest groups. There is no need to pre-register for other plenary and concurrent educational sessions.

### **Do I need a badge?**

Yes, a conference badge is required for entry into the conference and offsite events, and should be worn at all times. Please pick up your badge at the registration desk during open registration hours. If you lose your badge, you may need to show photo identification and have it reprinted at a registration desk

### **What do I wear?**

The dress code is smart casual throughout the conference.

### **Travel Insurance**

We recommend you take out travel insurance to cover you for cancellation of travel plans due to an unforeseen circumstances preventing you from traveling, please click here for an obligation free quote.

### **I have a question that isn't listed here, who can I ask?**

For any other queries, please email [hello@placeleaders.com](mailto:hello@placeleaders.com).

\*\*Due to privacy laws, delegate lists include only name and organisation. If you do not wish to be included in this list, please email [hello@placeleaders.com](mailto:hello@placeleaders.com)



Enjoy a post-Awards Laksa 'recovery breakfast' on the lawns on NT Parliament.

## Accommodation

Place Leaders Asia Pacific has negotiated discounted room rates at the following hotels and townhouses on behalf of delegates attending the Place Leaders 2024 Awards and Urban Leaders' Summit on 2-5 April 2025 in Darwin Waterfront - some right on the Waterfront and only a couple of minutes from the summit venue, Darwin Convention Centre. The discount applies for rooms booked between 30 March 2025 and 7 April 2025 to cover delegates attending for pre or-post-event tours or simply staying-on for a family experience in the Top End. Our pre or-post-event tours will be announced soon but be ready for an authentic First Nations island experience or adventure trip into Kakadu. Email [hello@placeleaders.com](mailto:hello@placeleaders.com) for the discount code to use when making your booking.

### Adina Apartment Hotel Darwin

Perfectly positioned on Darwin's seafront promenade, [Adina Apartment Hotel Darwin Waterfront](#) is the closest accommodation to the Darwin Convention Centre, only a short 2-minute walk.



### Vibe Hotel Darwin

If you want to be in the middle of the action, [Vibe Hotel Darwin Waterfront](#) is positioned amongst the entertainment and dining hub of Darwin's seafront promenade, surrounded by shopping, Territorian pubs, and restaurants and cafés. Only a short 5-minute walk to the Darwin Convention Centre.



### Travelodge Resort Darwin

The [Travelodge Resort Darwin](#) is in the heart of Darwin's CBD, centrally located to all of Darwin's key attractions. Here you'll find a range of budget-friendly options as well as larger, family-friendly accommodation options including multi-level townhouses. Approx. 10-15 minute walk to the Darwin Convention Centre.



# ANNOUNCING A LANDMARK CHANGE TO THE PLACE LEADERS ASIA PACIFIC AWARDS

The prestigious Centrepiece Award will now be named the Jan Gehl Centrepiece Award - with Jan Gehl's enthusiastic support.

This Award celebrates Jan's transformative impact on placemaking and firmly establishes the Place Leaders Asia-Pacific Awards as one of the region's premier accolades for excellence in creating vibrant, people-focused spaces.

Jan is a global icon of people-centred urban design and will deliver an exclusive 'flaming inauguration speech' (Jan's words!) via video link for the Jan Gehl Centrepiece Award winner, bringing his inspiring vision directly to the Awards and Presentation Dinner at the Darwin Waterfront on 3 April 2025.

As always, the Jan Gehl Centrepiece Award represents



the pinnacle of excellence in placemaking, chosen by our esteemed 2024 Awards Jury.

## 2024 AWARDS JURY

Our 2024 Awards Jury brings together Place Leaders who embody the vision, resilience, and creativity that defines place leadership.



1

1. Nicole Brown

### Community Engagement Strategist

A proud Larrakia woman and fierce advocate for First Nations communities, Nicole is a powerhouse for First Nations advocacy. Her initiatives create safe spaces that honour Indigenous identity, and empower young leaders and marginalised communities. Recognised as the 2022 City of Darwin Citizen of the Year, Nicole's work echoes the inclusive and community-driven spirit at the heart of our Awards.

2. Louise Ford

### Senior Associate - Place and Engagement, Hatch

As a Human Geographer, Louise reimagines spaces into resilient community hubs. From co-design workshops to place-based economic strategies, Louise's approach aligns with the Awards' mission to empower communities and build lasting connections to place with measurable impact. Louise has worked on one of the world's largest solar farm and battery storage facilities in the Northern Territory.



2



3

3. Jo Smallacombe

### Executive Director, Activate Darwin

Jo's bold leadership has transformed Darwin's public spaces into dynamic hubs of culture. A driver of urban transformation in a city on the front line of climate adaptation, Jo champions partnerships that bring ambitious ideas like the multi-award-winning Darwin International Laksa Festival and Darwin Street Art Festival to life. Jo's work exemplifies our Awards' values of community collaboration, cultural vibrancy, and economic vitality.

4. Dr Rob Stokes

### Industry Professor - Environment and Sustainability at Macquarie University Law School

The former NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and Minister for Cities, Rob's commitment to placemaking values influenced both policy and public perceptions around the value of quality public spaces in NSW, championing green, inclusive, and people-centric urban environments.



4



Immerse yourself in a one-of-a-kind learning experience at the Place Leaders Urban Leaders' Summit, set against the stunning backdrop of the Darwin Waterfront Precinct.

Register on-line now and stay up-to-date at:  
[www.placeleaders.com/2025summit](http://www.placeleaders.com/2025summit)

Discount delegate accommodation is available.  
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DARWIN **WATERFRONT**  
2025 Summit Partner



**Place Leaders**  
Asia Pacific