



Curtin University

Curtin **Ignition**

Igniting innovation globally

Welcome to Ignition 2026!



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Robyn Collard and Tryse Rioli
Welcome to Country



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Dr Ben Thomas

Ignition Academic Lead

Faculty of Business and Law

First Nations Acknowledgement

As we gather here today, we acknowledge the traditional owners, the Whadjuk people of Noongar Nation.

The song lines that run through Curtin, Bentley:

- **Kujal Kela (Twin Dolphin)**
- **Djiridji (Zamia)**



Roadmap for Today

- Introductions and thank yous
- Mindset and journey for the week
- Timetable, Resources and Deliverables
- Let's get to know one another (more introductions and ice breaker)
- Lunch
- Keynote Presentation – Marvin Liao
- Ignition Alumni Panel
- Networking

Curtin Ignition Team



Steve Brown

Director, Executive Education



Ben Thomas

Lead Academic



Nicole Gaitan

Lead Program Coordinator



Emma Theodore

Program Coordinator



Genevieve Lawton

Communications & Marketing



Andres Gomez

Project Officer



Liezl Steyn

Program Coordinator



Nicole Hatch

Project Officer

Thank you – 2026 Ignition Sponsors



Proudly supported by



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development





Thank you to Venture X HQ for collaborating to help strengthen the participation of female entrepreneurs

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Mindset for the Week

Growth mindset: the operating system for Ignition

This week is designed to expose uncertainty, not hide it.

**Your job is not to prove your idea is good.
Your job is to make it better.**

PROVE

- Protect the idea from criticism
- Treat feedback as a verdict
- Avoid exposing gaps or uncertainty
- Measure success by being “right”



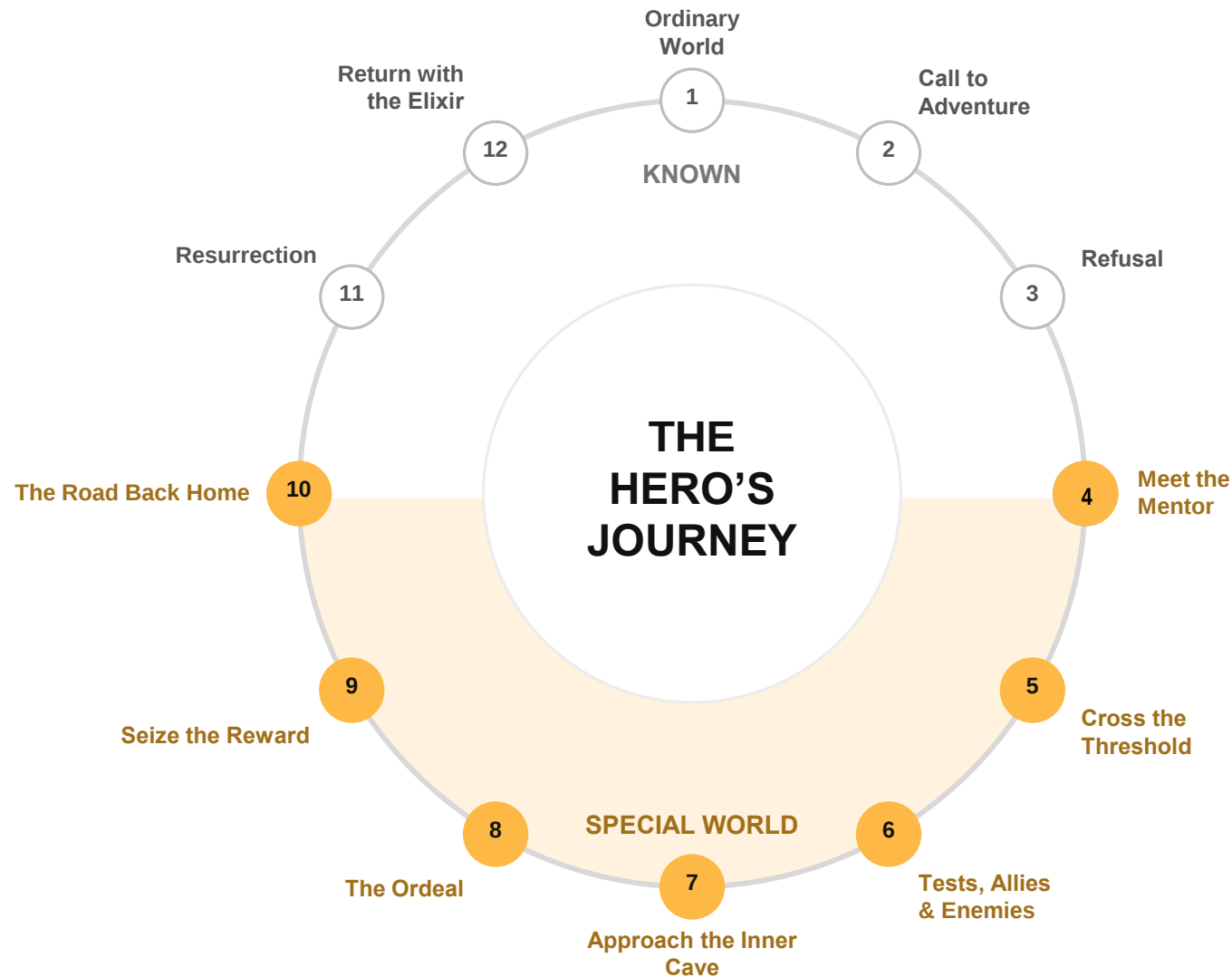
IMPROVE

- Expose assumptions early
- Treat feedback as data
- Test, learn and update the idea
- Measure success by learning faster

Feedback → information Setbacks → evidence Uncertainty → something to test

Entrepreneurship is a Hero's Journey

You leave the familiar, enter uncertainty, are tested, learn, adapt — and return changed.



ACT I Leave the known

A problem, opportunity or ambition pulls you beyond what is familiar.

ACT II Enter uncertainty

Assumptions are tested. Allies appear. Setbacks force adaptation.

ACT III Return changed

You return with new capability, evidence and a clearer next move.

You've seen this journey

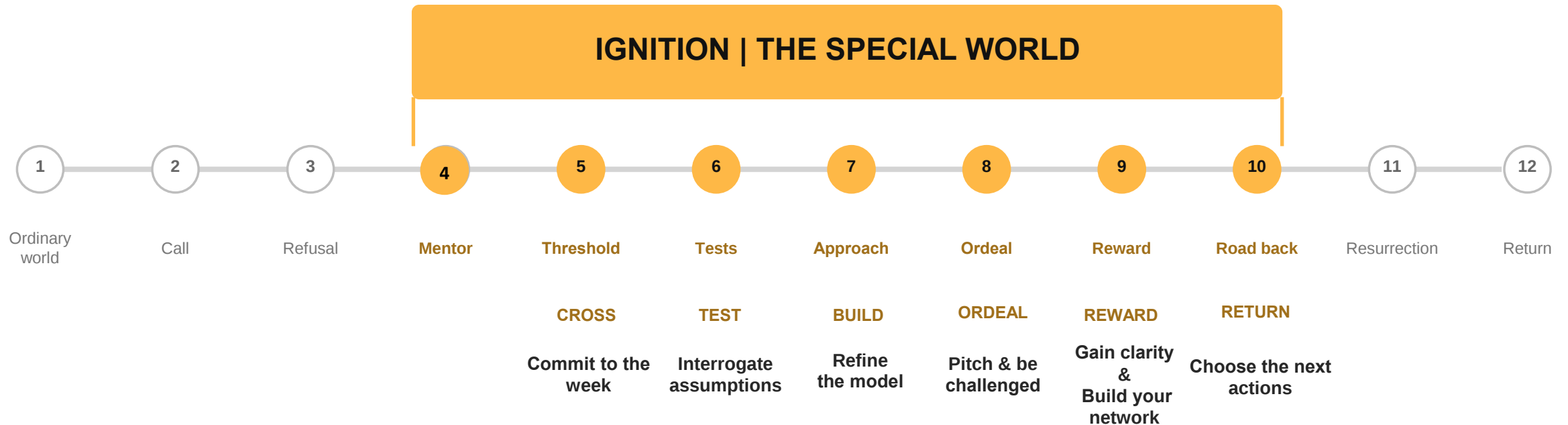


Yes... Even Bingo!



Ignition is one concentrated part of your journey

You arrive at different starting points — and the journey continues after the program.



The measure of success is not “Did my idea survive?”

It is “Did I leave with better judgement, evidence and next actions?”

We'll make the death/rebirth a little less literal



Who's who in the Ignition galaxy?

Ben and Nicole... and the Ignition team



Your Mentor, Facilitators and Clinicians



Your Pitch Panel



Just Kidding



Your mentor group and peers



The Ignition Program – Your Vehicle



Don't defend your idea. Develop it.

The hero grows by entering uncertainty



LISTEN

Seek perspectives you do not already have.



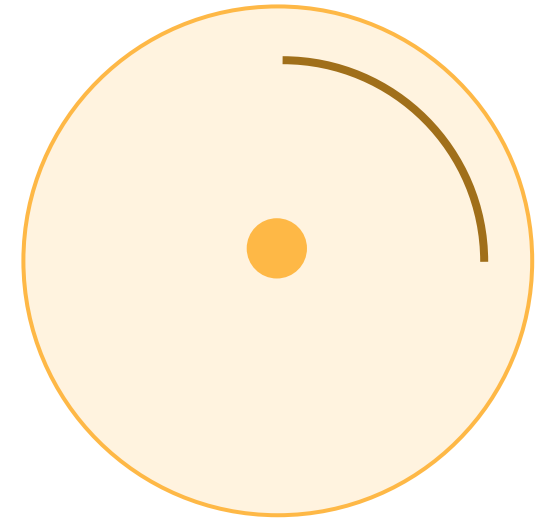
TEST

Turn assumptions into questions and evidence.



UPDATE

Change the idea when the evidence earns it.



ENTER UNCERTAINTY

...and come out with
better judgement
and an
alliance of allies.



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Timetable
Resources
Deliverables

Ignition Timetable



IGNITION 2026 Timetable	Saturday 15-Aug WELCOME	Monday 17-Aug BUSINESS MODELS, MARKETS & MESSAGING	Tuesday 18-Aug INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, AI, SOFTWARE	Wednesday 19-Aug FINANCE, INVESTMENT & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	Thursday 20-Aug STRATEGIC PLANNING, PITCHING & LAUNCHING YOUR IDEA	Friday 21-Aug CLINICIANS & PITCH PRESENTATIONS
8:00am	Coffee & Tea					
8:30am - 10:00am	Seated for 8:30am sharp start					
Session 1		Business Models, Value Chains and the Lean Canvas Matt MacFarlane	Understanding IP: Supporting Your Commercial Objectives Bindhu Holavanahalli & Michael Pasquale	Financing Strategy and Raising Equity Funds Derek Gerrard	Strategic Positioning for Investment and Growth Greg Riebe	9:00am - 10:30am Clinician Sessions
10:00am - 10:30am		Morning Tea				
10:30am - 11:30am	10:30am Arrival and Registration	Marketing Foundations for Business Startups Megan Del Borrello	Leveraging AI in Your Business Michael Borck	How to Prepare the Financials & Management Accounts Lacey Filipich	Creating & Delivering a Winning Pitch Josephine Muir	Morning Tea
Session 2						11:00am - 12:00pm Clinician Sessions
11:30am - 11:40am	11:00am Welcome Session Program Expectations	Stretch break (10 Min)				
11:40am - 12:40pm		Customer Profiling, Market Research & Validation Ben Sandhu	How to Build a Software Solution Daniel Foster	Having Difficult Conversations Di Murray	A Founder Story Jason Fogg	Lunch
Session 3	Meet your Mentor Icebreaker Activity				12:30pm Group Photo	
12:40pm - 1:30pm	12:30pm	Lunch				
1:30pm - 2:30pm	Networking Lunch	Business Models, Buyer Types, Market Research, and Validation Mentor Team	IP / Brand Strategy, Digital Marketing / Branding, and Building Your Pitch Deck Mentor Team	Funding Your Business Panel Moderator: Danelle Cross	Go To Market Strategy / Pitch Preparation Mentor Team	1:00pm - 4:30pm Pitch Presentations
Session 4	1:15pm Keynote by SV Expert Marvin Liao					
Session 5 Mentor Groups	2:30pm Alumni Panel Moderator: Ben Sandhu			Developing the Financial Model Mentor Team		
	3:30pm Nibbles and Drinks					4:45pm - 6:15pm Showcasing 3 Pitches & Wrap Up Session
	4:30pm Finish		5pm - Taco Tuesday and Clinician Signups		5pm Pizza Night	6:15pm - 7:30pm Program Celebration
		6:00pm Finish	7:00pm Finish	7:00pm Finish	9:00pm Finish	

'Spirit of Ignition'



'Spirit of Ignition'

- Mutual respect
- Mobile phone – **OFF or silent!**
- Laptops key clicks on silent
- Attend all sessions – unless unwell
- Keep **ON TIME**
- Daily Session Feedback at 5pm
- Ask questions but please look after our speakers
- Majority of Ignition supporters are **under NDA** – we will tell you if we have external guests attending sessions that are not under NDA
- Bring a water bottle
- There are plenty of options for coffee and food if you need more (refer to the Key Information slide deck for catering provided this week).



Mentor Groups

- **9 x Mentor Groups – colour coded**
 - Identifies mentor, facilitator, peers and your mentoring room
- **Grouped by**
 - Industry Sector, stage of business
 - 8-9 businesses/concepts per mentor group
- **Intros in first mentor session – 3 minutes max per person**
 - Who you are
 - Your Gaddie (elevator) pitch
 - 3 things you want to achieve this week

Resources

- **In the Bag**
 - [Manual](#) - Please bring your Ignition Manual **every day**
- **Online Resources found on the webpage**
 - [Contributors Directory](#)
 - Pitch decks and videos
 - Speaker slides
 - Cash Flow Templates
 - Presentation Templates
 - Business plan template
 - Business Model Canvas
 - Wi-Fi details
- **Any additional resources will be included under the Resources file on the webpage.**



Friday AM

Clinician Sessions



- Each of you has 2 sessions (25 minutes each session)
- Chosen by you, guided by AI and your mentor
- First come, first served
- Sign up sheets
 - Up on Tuesday at **5pm**
 - Removed on Tuesday at **6pm**
- Details in Contributor's Directory
 - Electronic version online

Please note that some Clinicians may cancel at the last-minute. We will do our best to ensure you can meet them (even if it is after the program).



Friday PM

Pitch Presentations

- **10-minutes pitch**
- **10-minutes of verbal feedback**
 - Tell the panel the feedback you seek
- **You are allocated to a panel**
 - In private rooms
- **3-4 experts per panel**
- **Take your presentation on a USB**
 - PowerPoint or PDF
 - Timing is strictly controlled
 - There is no time to 'play' with technology



Monday Task



**Deliver your first
Gaddie Pitch**

+

Goal for the week

2026 Mentors



**Adam
Clune**



Adil Khokhar



**Anna
Lane**



**Arnold
Stroobach**



**Ben
Sandhu**



**Carly
Hardy**



Danielle Riebe



**Hayley
McGillivray**



Lacey Filipich



**Megan Del
Borrello**

2026 MBA Facilitators



**Amanda
Warner**



**Ben
Stangoni**



**Cameron
Goodchild**



**Janelle
Cherry**



**Kevin
Ashwood**



**Lauren
Greay**



**Paris
Champion**



**Tim
Wilkins**

2026 Facilitators



**AJ
Strydom**



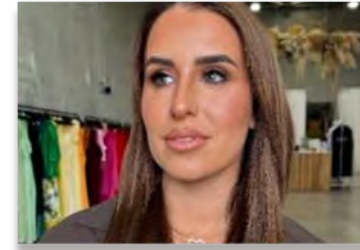
**Alastair
Milne**



**Belinda
Shine**



**Aaron
Norrish**



**Illy
Capitani**



**Joe
Saraceni**



**Keith
Hutchings**



**Luca
Sanna**



**Lynn
Whyatt**



**Petra
Trinke**



**Glenn
Tobin**



**Sarah
Kahle**

Keep an eye out for the Curtin Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship team



Rohan McDougall
Executive Director,
Commercialisation



Dr Tom Hammond
Commercialisation Lead



Hen Shahar
Business Development and
Commercialisation Manager



Adil Kahokhar
Business Development and
Commercialisation Manager



Daphne Lakhiani
Business Development and
Commercialisation Manager



Ben Burridge
Business Development and
Commercialisation Manager



Danelle Cross
Director,
Entrepreneurship



Sarah Kahle
Manager, Entrepreneurship
(Programs, Events & Community)



Ben Sandhu
Manager, Entrepreneurship
Programs



Anna Lee
Coordinator,
Entrepreneurship Curious



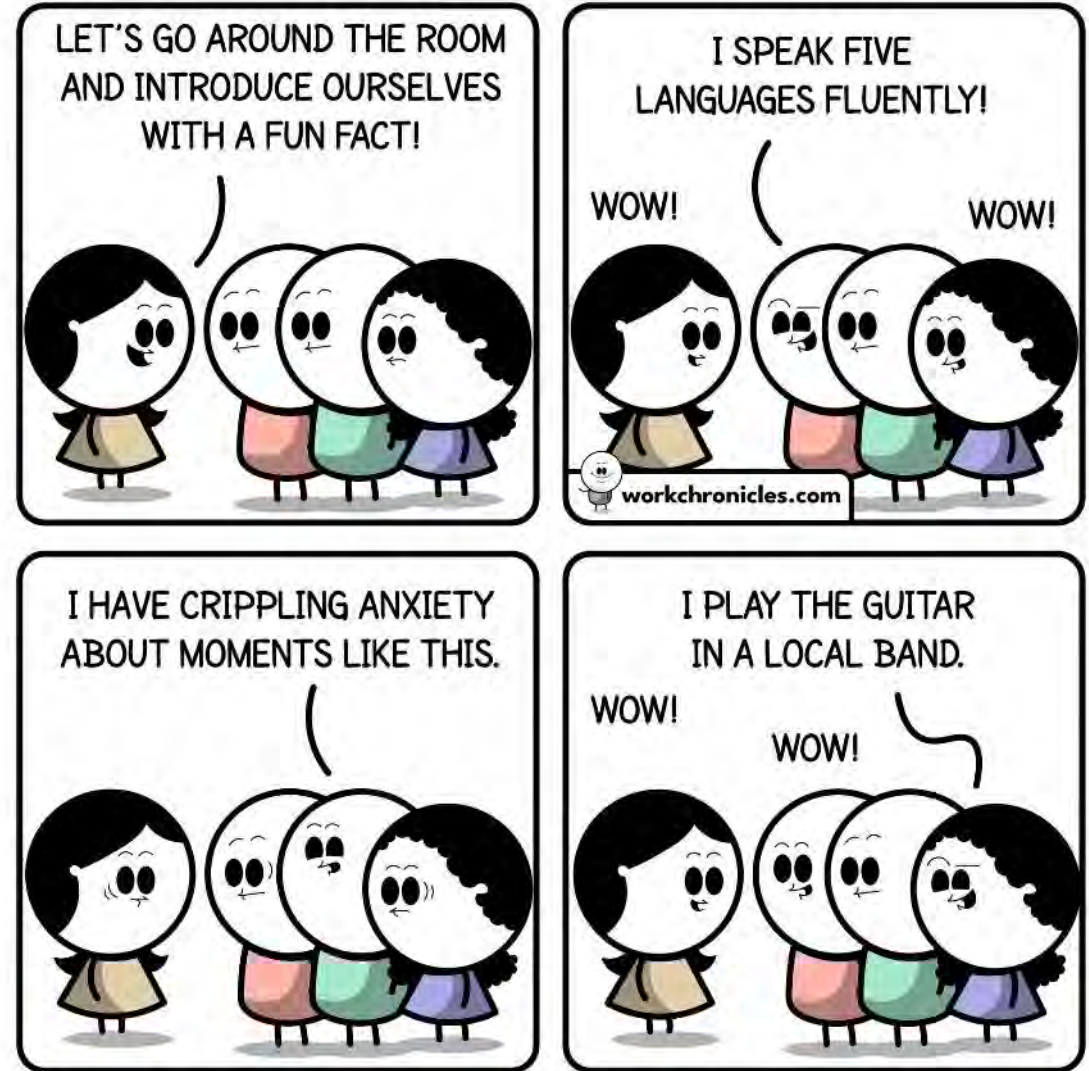
Courtney Banks
Marketing and
Communications Consultant



Cameron Thorn
Director, Young Entrepreneurs
Academy of WA (YEAWA)

Icebreaker

- Get together in your mentor groups
 - Introduce yourselves
 - What is one interesting fun fact about yourself?
- When we come back together as a group
 - Someone will introduce your group based on your fun facts
- You have 20 minutes



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Keynote by Marvin Liao
From the Silicon Valley



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Alumni Panel

Alumni Panel



Moderator

Ben Sandhu
Curtin University



2025 Alumna

Tiffany Harman
*Ngeebril
Seadragon
Consultancy Pty
Ltd*



2024 Alumna

Louise Mansell
Tedology



2020 Alumnus

Zac Farrow
Omni Biotech



2016 Alumnus

Tom Young
uDrew



2015 Alumnus

Chris Tistrand
Dinner Twist

One last Star Wars reference



Networking Time!

