



Facilitating business between Australia and Japan

ADVISORY BOARD SERVICES

For **Japanese companies** doing business in Australia, it may be difficult to maintain continuity because of the policy of regular personnel changes. Establishing an Advisory Board of people experienced in doing business in the Australia Japan relationship would provide continuity as well as assisting to build networks, understanding local politics and business practices and generally supporting growing the business.

Rather than find individual members to serve on your Advisory Board with a separate fee for each member, KBA, with its unique team of Australian and Japanese experts can be your Advisory Board where you can get the benefit of the depth and variety of experience of the entire team for a lesser fee and still be able to consult with individual members you require.

AN ADVISORY BOARD OF SEASONED EXPERTS HAVING SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCE IN THE AUSTRALIA JAPAN RELATIONSHIP CAN ADD REAL VALUE AS FOLLOWS:

1

CONTINUITY AMID PERSONNEL CHANGES

Every company operating in a foreign market will have difficulty in finding the right people to run and staff the local office.

A well-constituted Advisory Board can assist in finding good quality people to staff the local office, while complementing the skills and experience of the existing local staff. They can also provide continuity with key stakeholders of the business while maintaining institutional knowledge.

2

LIAISON WITH HEAD OFFICE

Companies operating in a foreign country must compete with their sister companies in other markets for attention and resources from Head Office. Local management in a foreign company may have difficulties in explaining to Head Office the benefits and risks of a new business venture in order to getting the necessary approvals.

Where the CEO of the foreign subsidiary is a local employee, she or he will usually need assistance to interact effectively with Head Office.

An experienced and well-respected Advisory Board can be a valuable bridge with Head Office.

3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Australia and Japan have different language, culture, business practices and employment policies.

Managing a workforce with local employees and foreign management will always have difficulties because of these differences.

4

EXPANDED NETWORK ACCESS

Even if a foreign company has established operations in a local market, its institutional relationships will generally be limited to its chosen business sector and clients, while the personal relationships of its seconded employees are limited to previous experience in the relevant country, or result from current assignments.

Furthermore, personnel within client entities, and the company's immediate business relationships with government, business associations and universities, also change regularly.

The deep personal connections which Advisory Board members have can assist in communications with existing stakeholders.

A well-constituted Advisory Board will have well-established connections across government and industry that can complement and expand the company's existing relationships.

5

DEEP LOCAL MARKET INSIGHT

It is impossible for foreign seconded employees to really understand a local market. It's also impossible for the most experienced local businessperson to fully understand their own market.

Every major local business has a board of directors with diverse local skills, experience and market knowledge to guide senior management.

A foreign company operating in a local market can achieve the same benefits for senior management with a well-constituted Advisory Board. (See point 8).

A well-constituted Advisory Board can assist management of foreign subsidiary to better understand local economic, political and business trends, which can assist in developing business plans and recognising new business opportunities.

A well-constituted Advisory Board can assist in having the workforce and management understand each other better and work effectively to grow the business.

7

ENHANCED CREDIBILITY AND REPUTATION

Having respected people on an Advisory Board signals commitment to the market and builds trust with stakeholders—customers, regulators and communities alike—helping build credibility.

8

ADVISORY BOARD VERSUS STATUTORY BOARD

Getting senior well-respected members of the local community to serve on a formal statutory board of a local subsidiary of a foreign company is often difficult because of the onerous legal obligations, responsibilities and liabilities imposed by local laws.

A well-structured Advisory Board does not attract these obligations, responsibilities and liabilities and still provides all the benefits of having a diverse, experienced and well-connected formal board.

6

RISK MITIGATION

Local political, economic and business risks are constantly changing.

A well-constituted Advisory Board can assist management of foreign subsidiary to monitor and understand these risks, resulting in better risk management practices.


Trent Alston; B.Build (Hons, UNSW); GMQ (AGSM); AMP (INSEAD); GAICD

✉ trent.alston@kokusai.com.au

☎ +61 (0)416 099 679

Trent Alston has a commercial and robust level of expertise combined with an ability to forge capital partnerships, work cross cultures, interpret complex data and use it for commercial advantage. This experience has been gained as an executive with over 30 years in the construction, development, real estate investment and funds management industries during his time at Lendlease, Colonial First State Global Asset Management and Challenger Limited.

More recently Trent has taken on a non-executive career with directorships at ASX listed Abacus Property Group and the New South Wales government's state-owned corporation Landcom. He also works as a retained advisor to several groups.

Trent also has over 15 years' experience with Japanese inbound and outbound investment including joint ventures with MUFG, MS&AD and Kenedix as well as the establishment of Challenger's fully licenced real estate platform in Japan. This included development of strategy, business relationships, investment and funds management together with full operational responsibilities.

Trent's experience covers logistics, office, retail, residential and mixed-use assets plus real estate lending and involved establishing capital partnerships with leading sovereign funds and global institutions. This included delivery of complex projects with \$1B+ budgets and responsibility for the investment and business strategy +\$10bn real estate business platforms across Australia and Japan.

Trent's areas of expertise include:

- Strategy design and implementation
- Complex negotiations & projects
- Business & investment management
- Capital markets and M&A
- Cross border/cultural joint ventures
- Establishing and managing global business partnerships
- People leadership
- Regulated management companies and subsidiary boards & investment committee.



Professor Jenny Corbett; BA (ANU, Hons); MA (Oxon); PhD (Michigan); FASSA

✉ jenny.corbett@kokusai.com.au

For over 30 years Jenny Corbett has been a professor and researcher of the Japanese economy. She has consulted for the Asian Development Bank, the OECD, the World Bank and the European Commission on a range of macro-economic and financial issues relating to Japan.

Jenny has held executive leadership and educational positions including Distinguished Professor of Economics, Director of the Japan Institute and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) at the Australian National University and Fellow of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies at Oxford University. She has also been a Board director in the not-for-profit sector. In 2014 Jenny was awarded the “Order of the Rising Sun Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon” for services to the Australia-Japan relationship.

Jenny’s areas of expertise include:

- Current macro-economic and financial policy issues in Japan
- Regional financial integration
- Trade in financial services
- Policy responses to financial crisis
- Financial system design.

Currently Jenny is:

- Emeritus Distinguished Professor, Australian National University (ANU)
- Adjunct Professor, Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University
- Associate at Tokyo College, University of Tokyo
- Emeritus Fellow St Antony’s College and Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, University of Oxford
- Fellowship holder at research centres in the UK and the USA
- Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.



Yasuyuki Otsu

✉ yasuyuki.otsu@kokusai.com.au

☎ +81(0)90 5569 2852

Yasuyuki Otsu was with Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group organization for 38 years. He has a broad network in the Japanese financial and real estate industries. Many years of cross-cultural exposure including US and Asia-Pacific countries including Australia. He spent 8 years in NY having engaged in mergers and acquisitions, capital markets, credit work-out, and corporate lending. Also, he served as Chairman and CEO of Mitsubishi UFJ Securities Hong Kong to manage the broker-dealer operation including fixed income, equity and greater China focus private equity businesses, and liaising with MUS's alliance relationship with Kim Eng, a Singaporean broker-dealer. After returning from HK, he served as a board member at Morgan Stanley's Japanese operation. He has a deep understanding about what it takes to work and communicate in a multi-cultural environment.

Yasuyuki's expertise includes:

- Capital markets
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Governance
- Portfolio management
- Private equity
- Real estate investment
- Structured finance
- Work-out/corporate restructuring.

Currently he is:

- Representative director of EG Japan (a subsidiary of EG Funds Management in Australia)
- Director at RIO Holdings
- Director at Wesley Zaidan.



Manuel Panagiotopoulos, MBA, BA

✉ mpanagiotopoulos@kokusai.com.au

☎ +61 (0)418 203 124

Since the 1980s Manuel Panagiotopoulos has been an authority, academic, consultant and advisor on the Australia-Japan economic relationship. He is the owner and Managing Director of Australian and Japanese Economic Intelligence - a think tank specialising in Australia-Japan relations.

Manuel is the founder and Managing Director of the Australia-Japan Roundtable, which began in 2001. These are high level business events in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Tokyo.

In 2015 Manuel was awarded the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation in recognition of his contribution to the Australia-Japan relationship.

In 2020 Manuel was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette by the Emperor of Japan for his sustained development of business ties between Australia and Japan.

Manuel's areas of expertise include:

- Bilateral and international relations
- Foreign direct investment
- Macroeconomics
- Trade
- Geopolitics
- Cross cultural communications and facilitation
- Australian-Japan relations
- Political analysis.

A well-known and respected economist, Manuel facilitates opportunities between prominent Australian and Japanese government officials, industry representatives and research institutions. He has been involved in policy development and written influential reports on trade, investment and geopolitics for Austrade and the Australia-Japan Foundation.

Manuel is currently a:

- Convenor of the Australia-Japan Roundtable
- Consultant to the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO)
- Managing Director of Australian and Japanese Economic Intelligence.



Bob Seidler, AM

✉ bob.seidler@kokusai.com.au

☎ +61 (0)407 895 020

Bob Seidler's 40-year career has been focused on strengthening the Japanese-Australian business relationship. He was the first Australian licensed to practice law in Japan and while living in Tokyo was appointed to represent Australia and New Zealand on the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry Import Board.

A lawyer by profession, Bob has served on the boards of many companies owned by Australians, Japanese and other nationalities operating in a wide variety of industries, including banking and other financial services, funds management, property, property development, hotels etc.

Bob is a former Chairman of Leighton Asia and Leighton Properties, and former member of the Australian Chamber of Commerce in Japan Executive Committee and the Federal Government's Corporations and Markets Advisory Committee.

Currently Bob acts as a:

- Director Hitachi Australia Pty, Ltd
- Member of Board for CIMIC Group Limited (formerly Leighton Holdings Limited)
- APAC Senior Regional Executive Strategic Management Office Hitachi Asia
- Vice-President of the Australia-Japan Business Co-Operation Committee.

Bob was awarded the Order of Australia in 2011 for services to the international business community and development of Australia-Japan bilateral commercial relations.

In 2016 Bob was honoured to receive the "Order of the Rising Sun Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon" presented by the Emperor of Japan in recognition of his contribution to strengthening economic relations between Japan and Australia.



Arlene Tansey, OAM

✉ amtansey@kokusai.com.au

☎ +61 (0)412 820 341

Arlene is Chairman of the Serco Asia Pacific Advisory Board and a Non-Executive Director of Aristocrat Leisure Limited, McMillan Shakespeare Group, La Trobe Financial, and University of Wollongong Global Enterprises. Arlene Chairs the Audit Committees of Aristocrat and the National Maritime Museum.

Arlene is a former Director of Lendlease Investment Management (2010 - 2025), TPG Telecom (2020 - 2024), Wisetech Global (2020 - 2022), Infrastructure NSW (2014 - 2022) and former member of the Board of Advice of the University of Sydney Business School (2017 - 2023).

Before becoming a Non-Executive Director, Arlene worked in commercial and investment banking in Australia (ANZ Banking Group and Macquarie Bank) and in investment banking and law in the United States. She holds a Juris Doctor from University of Southern California Law Centre and an MBA from New York University. She is a member of Chief Executive Women, the International Women's Forum and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

In 2025, Arlene was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to business through a range of board roles.

Arlene is originally from New York and has lived and worked in the United States, South America and Europe. She has lived in Australia for the past 30 years and is an Australian, US and Irish citizen.