







# Facilitating business between Australia and Japan

## ABOUT

The Principals of Kokusai Business Advisory (KBA) have been involved in the Australia-Japan business relationship for many decades in various capacities (see our Team) and established KBA to fulfill their long and enduring commitment to see the bi-lateral business relationship grow through successful business dealings whether by direct investment, joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions or otherwise.

The unequalled depth and variety of experience of our Team enables KBA to advise and support you in matters critical to your long-term business success including: effective cross-cultural communication; developing meaningful relationships; understanding government and government policy; understanding differing business practices; and optimizing human capital management.



# Specialists in your industry

## 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 experienced Australians would provide continuity and support regular personnel changes as well as assisting to build networks, understanding local politics and business practices and generally supporting sustainable growth.

For **Australian companies** doing business with Japanese companies or doing business in Japan, establishing an Advisory Board of people with deep experience in the bi-lateral business relationship will assist in market entry strategies, building and maintaining key relationships; understanding differing business practices; and generally assist in building a sustainable business.

Rather than find individual members to serve on your Advisory Board with a separate fee for each member, KBA can be your Advisory Board where you can get the benefit of the depth and variety of experience of the entire team or select members as you require.



## GENERAL ADVISORY SERVICES

### If you are:

- A Japanese company doing business in Australia;
- An Australian company doing business in Japan;
- A joint venture between an Australian and a Japanese company;
- An Australian company wholly or partially owned by a Japanese company(ies); or
- A Japanese company wholly or partially owned by an Australian company(ies).

KBA will be your trusted confidential advisor committed to your sustainable long-term business success, while at the same time ensuring that short-term opportunities and risks do not go unnoticed.

### KBA will assist you, where appropriate and relevant, to:

- Identify and build relationships with key people in Australia and Japan;
- Strengthen the relationship with your Australian or Japanese business partner(s); Strengthen your corporate governance to ensure that you can appropriately exert influence commensurate with your monetary and non-monetary investment;
- Identify and facilitate new business opportunities and evaluate and mitigate competitive risks;
- Identify and mitigate other business risks (e.g. regulatory, compliance, operational, reputation, culture/conduct etc);
- Identify and build recognition and relationships within key industries;
- Hire, retain and fully engage the right mix of expatriate and local staff;
- Successfully integrate Australian and Japanese business cultures; and
- Continually refine your market entry and on-going strategy.

## WORKING WITH KBA

When you engage KBA you can choose to work with a nominated principal or principals, however, regardless of how you choose to work with KBA, you will enjoy the benefits of access to the entire team at no additional cost. To preserve confidentiality, KBA will not work for your designated competitors.

Fees will be tailored to reflect the services required.


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

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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.

