

The International River Foundation

River Patrons



International
River
Foundation

www.riverfoundation.org.au

You're invited to join the IRF's River Patrons

Message from the Chair of the River Patrons Group

Join us. Champion rivers. Shape the future.

It is my pleasure to extend an invitation to join a passionate group of respected leaders united by a shared vision: to restore and protect the lifeblood of our planet for generations to come.

Your investment enables the IRF to deliver high-impact programs that drive on-ground action, spark collaboration across sectors, and scale solutions that build a sustainable future for our rivers and the communities, economies and ecosystems that they support.

I look forward to welcoming you as part of our growing network committed to strengthening the future of our rivers and waterways.



Peter Varghese AO

Chair, International River Foundation River Patrons Group

Message from our Inaugural River Patron

I am proud that Brisbane, as a River City, is protecting our fantastic quality of life and our rivers and waterways. I am delighted to be the first River Patron and look forward to the opportunities that this will present.



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner

Inaugural River Patron and Director, International River Foundation

Your commitment

\$25,000 P/A

River Patrons pay AUD \$25,000 annually to be a member of the group which is comprised of a \$20,000 tax-deductible donation to IRF operations and river projects, with the remainder covering the cost of membership which includes exclusive networking opportunities.

The purpose of these events is to provide a forum for business leaders to directly engage with scientists, academia, government and community changemakers.

Why Become a River Patron?

Your Benefits

- Recognition of your environmental stewardship on IRF's website, annual report and relevant marketing collateral
- Join a respected group of community leaders, chief executives and Chairs from Australian and global organisations who support the restoration, protection and resilience of our rivers
- VIP access to exclusive networking events designed to foster meaningful dialogue and new alliances
- Invitations to the International River Symposium and the opportunity to present or take part in a plenary panel discussion, providing you with the opportunity to share knowledge and spearhead thought leadership
- VIP table (10 guests) to the Gala Dinner and Thiess International River Prize Awards
- Empower the development of youth programs, leadership pathways, innovation, and global capacity building
- Opportunity to engage on river projects to give back to the communities, economies and ecosystems in which you operate
- Drive practical action for our waterways by supporting IRF's programs to accelerate and improve freshwater ecosystems, build climate resilience and uplift river communities

Our River Patrons



Peter Varghese AO

Chair, River Patrons Group and Chancellor, The University of Queensland



Michael Wright

Chair, International River Foundation and Executive Chair and CEO, Thiess



Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Adrian Schrinner

Director, International River Foundation



Mayor Chris Cherry

Mayor, Tweed Shire Council



Dr Jane Wilson AO

Director, Rugby Australia



Neil Stephens

Chief Executive Officer, Port of Brisbane



Steve Richards

Managing Director Australia and New Zealand, AmaWaterways



Why the International River

Our Purpose

To champion the protection, restoration and sustainable management of the world's rivers for future generations.

Who We Are

The International River Foundation (IRF) is a global, not-for-profit organisation championing river resilience to create a legacy of healthy rivers that benefit ecosystems, communities and economies.

Rivers are the lifeblood of our planet. They are vital for both people and nature, providing fresh water, supporting livelihoods, and underpinning diverse ecosystems.

Now, in the face of the triple planetary crises of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss, our work has never been more urgent. Protecting our rivers is protecting our future; it is our collective obligation, as individuals and organisations, to take responsibility and accelerate meaningful change.

Now more than ever, we need passionate changemakers like yourself to step up for our waterways and help safeguard these vital ecosystems.

This is your invitation to join us - together, we can ensure that the local and global rivers that sustain us continue to do so for generations to come.

Our Board and team



Michael Wright
Chair



Lord Mayor,
Adrian Schinnerer
Director



Minister Andrew
Powell MP,
Director



Philip Weller
Director



Sarah Zeljko
Director



Prof. Bill Dennison
Director



Dr. Stuart Orr
Director



Lauren Cocking,
Company
Secretary



Anthea Gargett,
Company
Secretary



Jodie Bignall
Chief Executive
Officer



Dr Eva Abal
Strategic
Advisor



Olivia Wallace
Branding and
Marketing Officer

People + Ideas = Impact



The Global River
Network



The International
River Symposium



Thiess International
River Prize, Grants,
and On-Ground
Action



The Resilient Rivers
Blueprint and Hub

Our Impact

21 **International River Prizes awarded**

The Thiess International River Prize is the world's most prestigious environmental award for river restoration, management and protection. Winners include the Mersey River (UK), Alexander River (Israel), Sha River (China), Danube River (Europe), and Lake Eyre Basin (Australia).

14 **Twinning Projects**

Our Twinning program pairs River Prize champions with communities who benefit from their knowledge and expertise in sustainable river management. This program has achieved outcomes in river basin management, community development, education and WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Health).

24 **Scholarships Awarded**

The Vera Thiess Fellowship for Women, Ken Thiess Memorial Scholarship for Masters students and the Emerging River Leaders Award have provided 24 students with the opportunity to learn in Australia.

26

International River Symposiums

The International River Symposium (IRS) is the only international forum for sharing knowledge and inspiring best practice in river and watershed management. Returning to Brisbane in 2025, the 26th IRS will unite leaders across diverse sectors to fast-track solutions and collaborate towards practical action, accelerating the world's transition to healthy and resilient rivers for future generations.

1 **Resilient Rivers Blueprint**

The Resilient Rivers Blueprint is a global platform that provides the vision, effective tools and key connections to achieve river resilience. The Brisbane River (Australia) and Tuul River (Mongolia) are examples of rivers that have engaged the platform to enable their journeys towards river

22 **Regional River Prizes awarded**

Regional River Prizes celebrate and reward best-practice in river restoration and management, enabling recipients to continue their life-changing work. These include the Australian, Asian, European and North American River

97 **Emerging Water Professionals Supported**

The Emerging Water Professionals Program fosters education and innovation in water management by supporting the professional and personal development of future water leaders. This program promotes inter-disciplinary and cross-generational collaboration.

9 **Voices for Rivers Videos**

The Voices for Rivers video series showcases the critical messages of global voices championing our world's rivers. So far, nine videos have been created as part of this series, amplifying the voices of rivers to global audiences.



Collaborating for impact

For World Rivers Day 2024, the IRF collaborated with the Council of Mayors (SEQ), Resilient Rivers South East Queensland, the Lockyer Valley Regional Council and Thiess to plant trees and stabilise river banks in the Lockyer Valley.



Local schoolchildren in Lambing Village, Indonesia, celebrate their new sanitation facilities, an IRF initiative in partnership with Thieiss.

For more information on the IRF River Patrons, please contact:

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The International River Foundation is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

