

# We, the Gatekeepers

10 - 11 August 2023, Sydney

## About the program

The National Judicial College of Australia is delighted to announce our new two-day program, *We, the Gatekeepers*.

In recent decades, the treatment of expert evidence, particularly in criminal trials, has attracted unprecedented attention. Much of the attention, especially from scientists, has been critical of the way lawyers and courts use (and misuse) forensic science and medicine evidence. This intensive program is designed to raise the awareness of judicial officers to modern scientific perspectives bearing on the admission, use and evaluation of expert evidence. Why are factors such as validity, reliability, demonstrable ability, error, cognitive bias, limitations and uncertainties, fundamental to understanding and evaluating opinions in adversarial proceedings?

Participants will engage in two case studies and a series of target short presentations directly oriented toward issues raised by the case studies. The gradual exposure to scientific research and recommendations provide benchmarks that will help participants recognise potential misunderstandings and misuses of evidence, as well as serious threats to the fairness of proceedings. The use of case studies will reinforce the

kinds of information that are required to enable judges to more readily recognise “junk science” for what it is and make informed admissibility rulings. To that end, the program will take a much deeper dive into the substantive law.

## Keynote Address:

The Honourable Chris Maxwell, former President Victorian Court of Appeal.

## Cost: \$2,850

The program fee will include:

- 2 nights' accommodation, including breakfast;
- course materials;
- catering each day; and
- a 3 course dinner on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August.

Note: As travel is *not included*, the NJCA request that participants make their own arrangements.