

**Concurrent Session L**  
**Wednesday 2 September**  
**1.55pm – 2.45pm**



**Session 7**  
**G20 Brisbane Meetings – International Engagement for Universities**  
**Melanie O'Toole**  
*Griffith University*

*Melanie O'Toole is an international trade and equity strategist with senior management experiences gained in five different countries across universities, government and industry. She was the former Australia-Singapore Young Business Ambassador and a foundation member of Austrade's Women in Global Business Network. She has represented business and the NGO sector on numerous policy and trade discussions focused on trade liberation, barriers to entry for international trade faced by women and minority groups through the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Small Business and Women's Leaders Network. She is currently assisting Griffith University with Faculty Administration Management and equity initiatives. Melanie holds an undergraduate degree in Asian studies and economics and a Masters in International Business from the University of Melbourne.*

The G20 grouping and meetings play an important role in setting and strengthening the economic agenda of the world economy. Universities are centres of knowledge and research, and can play an important supportive role in contributing to economic and strategic debate in such international forums.

Australia was chair of the G20 meetings in 2014 with Brisbane allocated the role as hosting city to the leaders of the 20 major economies of the world. Griffith University took the opportunity to showcase its research and teaching excellence alongside the G20 activities. Moreover it was a key partner in the hosting of the inaugural G20 Women's Forum; a landmark forum to tackle global employment inequality and progression of women in business and in the workplace.

Griffith University is a landmark employer as recognised by the Federal Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) for its continued work as an Employer of Choice for Women for over 13 years, as confirmed by its Human Resources Department. The forum was an opportunity to connect with leading international academic, industry, government and community leaders on equal employment, investment attraction and trade. This poster presentation will illustrate the benefits of aligning university activities with international forums to build reputational and strategic value.