

Ci
2013
CREATIVE
INNOVATION.
ASIA PACIFIC

Peter Kronborg

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Peter Kronborg has been a successful Director and Leadership advisory professional since 1986.

Peter has worn many hats, including as a Senior Executive of the Myer Group (when it became the Coles Myer retail group) and Director and Deputy Chairman to the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia. One of Kronborg's current roles is with Creative Innovation Global (Ci) where he is Strategic Advisor.

Kronborg has also provided advice to both private and public organisations such as Medibank Private, BHPB, COAG Reform Council and SME's.

Given these credentials, it comes to no surprise that Tania de Jong turned to Peter Kronborg when she first envisioned Creative Innovation (Ci), a conference event that provides assistance and strategies in transforming people and to the leadership of organisations.

He describes Tania as "a dynamo of incredible energy and drive"! Peter shares his Ci journey with *New Land*.

INTERVIEWED BY APRIL TIAN

NL: According to Tania, you were the first person she turned to, to discuss the possibility of putting the Ci idea into practice. Could you tell *New Land* a bit about this story?

PK: One day in February 2010, she and I were having coffee and she introduced the concept that someone should do an innovation conference. I agreed it was a good idea. The next day she called at around 2:30pm and said, "It is a good idea and I have booked the

Melbourne Recital Centre for the conference in November!" I said to her, "Excellent Tania, but there is no program, no sponsors, no plan and no funding. Surely you're too early to be booking a hall." She said, "Well, now I've booked it we will just have to make it happen."

She went on and in a matter of months, from having done that booking (on the reliance of her own credit card for the deposit), she went forward to make it into the outstanding international event that it is now. Usually conferences of this nature

take one to two years to plan, so she had set herself a mountain to climb.

NL: It has been said the Australia is 'a follower of the United States.' Is this something that you and Tania wanted to change? What is so unique about Ci conference?

PK: Tania is the leader! She is the entrepreneur, the driver of the event, the creator and I don't want to take from her. I am the strategic advisor to it and I have helped her in various ways along the journey, but I cannot detract



From left to right, Jason Drew (South Africa), Dr Iain McGilchrist (UK), Professor Nadia Rosenthal (UK), Michael T Jones (USA), and Susan Greenfield (UK) during Ci2012 Deep Conversation session.

her from her drive and her energy to make it happen, as well as to the other people who are involved with it.

This was not about emulating the USA or anywhere else in particular. In Australia, we talk a lot about being the lucky country and even being the innovative country. But when we looked at the actual processes, activities and achievements in innovation, there seemed to be more talk but not enough doing. So the concept of Ci conference was to bring together the best minds, the most outstanding role models and the greatest degree of motivation and creativity into one room in Australia, so that people could see and learn from each other.

In addition to that, it was to be a conference of a quite different nature.

If it was to be a conference on innovation, a creativity conference (which cannot only be achieved by the format of a conventional conference, such as speakers and programs), it had to be a conference with the unique involvement of the creative arts – the musicians, poets, artists, graphic artists that not only bring some entertainment and increased energy into the conference. Importantly, this helps open the creative aspects of the brain to become more receptive to the ideas and to the generation of greater plans and possibilities than a simple sit down and learn conference.

This is a very mind engaging conference but also an emotion and energy engaging conference.

So that is how it has come to be with the dual streams of activity going through intellectual learning and creative engagement.

NL: As part of the thought leaders

advisory panel, what specifically do you do for the conference?

PK: There now is an assembled panel of leaders who provide ideas, guidance, insights and introductions to make this an even more well-thought-through conference. We come from a great diversity of sectors in Australia and overseas, so we bring considerable diversity and experience to this conference to make sure it lives up to expectations, which are way above a normal conference.

Another factor that makes the conference so successful is that it is not limited to being an industry conference about one sector of society, nor is it a functional conference for accountants or directors. Rather it is an open-sourced conference with all the diversity of speakers and attendees leading to the outstanding learning and networking. As the research from Harvard has shown, some of the most powerful innovations come from cross-fertilisation of sectors or functions or areas. The goal here is to bring together that diversity, so that ideas can be lifted from one sector and be eventually applied to another sector for the greater gain.

A lot of connecting goes on. Tania in particular puts her heart and soul into making the connections and bringing this incredible array of people together.

NL: What is your experience with Ci conferences so far?

PK: I am proud to be associated with such an incredible undertaking which delivers global learnings and motivation to all the attendees! It is a unique and diverse collection of speakers and attendees, all brought together

with the specific intention of improving themselves, their organisations and the nations they represent through personal creativity and organisational innovation. The conference needs to grow and be supported and to become more and more of the movement to a more innovative and productive and fairer society.

NL: What are your expectations for Ci2013?

PK: This year, the conference is running amazing 'hypothetical based scenarios.' These are based on scenarios that deliver incredible opportunities to our world, which are also full of considerable danger and challenges.

So hypotheticals epitomise the real world which we are facing up to – one great opportunity but also a great challenge that mankind has ever confronted. We can achieve a successful and fair future by being more creative and innovative. It's not about more work or more money or more people. It's about better ideas that are delivered more effectively in all sectors of our society. It's about better education, health services, better government services and more effective fairer and engaged companies. We are well into the new century. This conference helps to create the road map for the future.

Everyone who is a leader or a potential leader should come to this conference. They should not just come, but also participate completely in the learnings – the creativity, the connecting, the engagement along with the ease of this conference, the environment, the energy, economy, education, entrepreneurship, ethnical leadership.