

17th August 2026

Mari Lee honoured as CSCE Fellow for advancing professional capability, knowledge and social impact.

The Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence (CSCE) proudly recognises Mari Lee as its newest CSCE Fellow, honouring her sustained contribution to professional development, communication knowledge and the use of strategic communication to create measurable organisational and social impact.

A respected strategic communication leader, educator and adviser, Mari has more than 25 years of consulting experience across corporate, development and public-sector environments. Through DevCom and Mari Lee Consulting, she has designed and implemented communication and development programs across Africa, helping organisations connect strategic objectives with stakeholder needs, sustainable value and meaningful social outcomes.



Mari's contribution to developing others is exceptional. She has mentored and developed more than 200 communication professionals, delivered more than 1,000 workshops, seminars and structured learning interventions, and helped 419 junior professionals transition into the communication industry. Her DevCom Inspire Intern Bootcamp created a practical pathway for emerging professionals, while her university guest lecturing and industry advisory roles have helped strengthen the connection between academic learning and workplace expectations.

She has also made an extensive contribution to the profession's body of knowledge, translating research, theory and applied African practice into publications, case studies, learning programs and practical tools. Mari has led more than 200 action-research studies, presented at more than 50 conferences and professional events, and contributed to academic and professional publications on stakeholder engagement, social impact communication, reputation, risk management and strategic communication. Her DevCom How-to-School of Strategic Communication is a strong example of turning professional methodology into practical capability.

Mari has consistently used communication as a force for positive change. Her work has addressed youth development and employment, community capacity building, health and animal health, women and child protection, enterprise development and stakeholder engagement. Through participatory and research-informed approaches, she has helped organisations and communities co-create solutions, measure progress and align business objectives with sustainable social impact.

Adrian Cropley OAM, FRSA, IABC Fellow, GCSCE, SCMP, Co-Founder of the Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence, said:

“Mari Lee represents the very best of our profession: a deeply strategic communication professional who combines intellectual rigour with humanity, practical action and measurable results. What distinguishes Mari is not simply the excellence of her own work, but the contribution she has made to others. She has developed hundreds of emerging professionals, translated research and global standards into practical capability, and demonstrated across Africa and beyond that communication can create both sustainable business value and meaningful social impact. Mari strengthens our profession, advances its knowledge and expands its possibilities. She is exceptionally deserving of recognition as a CSCE Fellow.”

Sia Papageorgiou FRSA, FCSCE, SCMP, Co-Founder of the Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence, added:

“What stands out most about Mari is the way she has woven together strategic communication, education and social impact. She has never viewed communication as an end in itself, but as a way to strengthen organisations, create opportunities for others and improve communities. Equally impressive is the generosity with which she has shared her knowledge, investing in the next generation of communication professionals while helping organisations tackle complex business and societal challenges. The impact of her leadership extends beyond the programs she has delivered or the professionals she has mentored. It is reflected in the capability she has built, the standards she has helped elevate and the lasting legacy she continues to create across Africa. Mari embodies the spirit of a CSCE Fellow, and I am delighted to recognise the profound influence she has had on our profession.”

Mari joins a distinguished group of CSCE Fellows who exemplify the best of our profession — leaders whose work demonstrates the value of communication in creating stronger organisations, communities and societies.

About the Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence

The Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence (CSCE) is a global leader in strategic communication management. Headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, with senior faculty members found on six continents, we build communication capability in organisations by:

1. Developing strategic communication professionals.
2. Building the communication capability of leaders.
3. Building the communication skills of employees.

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Notes to Editors:

Mari Lee, FCSCE, ABC, SCMP, is available for interviews.

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