



AORA 2026

Australian Organics
Recycling Association
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

22 - 24 April 2026
Pullman Albert Park
Melbourne, Victoria

Compost for life. Saving our soils.



PRELIMINARY PROGRAM & INVITATION TO REGISTER

Proudly supported by:



The AORA Annual Conference brings together stakeholders from across the Recycled Organics Industry to share knowledge, explore innovation, and build connections.

Delegates have the opportunity to learn from experts, create new connections, and engage in open discussions focused on practical solutions for the production and use of recycled organic materials.



INVITATION

The Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) invites you to register for the 13th AORA Annual Conference, *Compost for Life. Saving our Soils* to be held in Melbourne from 22 - 24 April 2026.

In 2026, AORA shines a spotlight on the essential role compost plays in regenerating Australia's soils, closing the loop on organics, and securing a sustainable future for generations to come. This year's theme reflects the industry's collective mission - to transform organic resources into life-giving soil solutions that nourish communities, agriculture, and the environment.

The AORA Annual Conference brings together processors, suppliers, researchers, policymakers, councils, and end users from across Australia's Recycled Organics Industry. It is the premier forum for sharing innovation, tackling practical challenges, and strengthening the industry's voice through collaboration and advocacy.

Building on insights from 2025, the 2026 program will explore the issues that matter most to our members - from policy reform and contamination management to technology innovation, compost quality, and end-market development. Delegates will hear directly from processors, agronomists, researchers, and industry leaders as we explore how compost and organics recycling can play a central role in restoring soil health, reducing waste, and driving circular economy outcomes.

Through expert presentations, technical sessions, success stories, and interactive panels, the 2026 Conference will deliver actionable insights for every part of the value chain - from community-scale composting to large-scale processing and agricultural application.

Join us in Melbourne to connect with industry peers, gain valuable insights, and contribute to shaping the policies, technologies, and markets that will define the next decade of sustainable organics management.

I look forward to welcoming you to the AORA 2026 Annual Conference.



Kurt Palmer

AORA 2026 Conference Chair

ABOUT AORA



The Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) is at the forefront of transforming organic waste into valuable resources, championing sustainability and innovation across Australia.

Leading the Charge in Organics Recycling

AORA serves as the national voice for the organics recycling industry, advocating for effective policies and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. Our mission is to create an environment where organic materials are recycled efficiently, contributing to a robust circular economy.

Turning Waste into Wealth

Each year, Australia's organics recycling industry processes approximately 7.7 million tonnes of organic waste, converting it into compost, soil conditioners, and mulches. This not only diverts waste from landfills but also enriches soils, supports agriculture, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Embracing the Circular Economy

By promoting the recycling of organic materials, AORA exemplifies the principles of the circular economy—where waste is minimized, and resources are reused and regenerated. Our Vision 2031 roadmap outlines a future where organics recycling is integral to Australia's environmental and economic strategies.

NATIONAL SPONSORS

AORA would like to acknowledge the following National Sponsors who play an active role in realising our vision:

PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



FOUNDING MEMBERS



RESEARCH PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The AORA Annual Conference is the principal conference in Australia for the recycled organics industry. Each conference is a forum for education, discussion and networking related to Organics Recycling. It is also an opportunity to celebrate outstanding achievements in the industry.

The AORA Annual Conference features workshops, presentations, social functions and an equipment demonstration day. This is an opportunity to network with industry leaders and gain insight to the latest achievements in the Organics Recycling Industry.

The first AORA conference was held in 2013 in Sydney and is now run annually, rotating the location around Australia.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

- Kurt Palmer, Pacific Materials Handling (Chair)
- Simon Humphris, Soilco
- Blake Almond, Circ Partners
- Roslyn Florie-George, Soilco
- Erin Ford, Repurpose It
- Veronica Dullens, Revolve Services
- John McKew, AORA
- Alex Hammett, AORA

PROGRAM

The 2026 AORA Annual Conference gives delegates the opportunity to learn from industry leaders, create new connections, and expand their networks.

The three-day program starts with live equipment demonstrations, followed by keynotes, panels, case studies, and focused sessions. A trade exhibition will run throughout, serving as a hub for networking and meals.

Networking opportunities continue at the Welcome Function, Conference Dinner, and during breaks.

Full program details will be released on the conference website as they become available:

www.aoraconference.com.au.

VENUE

Pullman Albert Park
65 Queens Rd, Albert Park VIC 3004

Located near St Kilda and the Chapel Street precincts, the Pullman & Mercure Melbourne Albert Park is an upscale hotel overlooking picturesque Albert Park Lake, home to the Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix. From here, it's just moments to the top tourist attractions and activities in Melbourne.

Take advantage of Melbourne accommodation that's popular amongst both business and leisure travellers.

Located only three kilometres from the heart of the city and 26 kilometres from the Melbourne Airport, Albert Park is within an easy reach of many of Melbourne's top attractions.

LOCATION

Melbourne is set on the shores of picturesque Port Phillip Bay; a city where creativity and innovation come together to deliver great events, exciting places to explore, and globally acclaimed advancements.

Melbourne is easy to navigate, perfect on foot or via its extensive transport network, and invites delegates to discover its creative culture through food, fashion, arts, music, and events.

For those wanting to explore further, the unique natural beauty of regional Victoria is just a short trip away. Inspiring day trips await just over an hour from the city centre, featuring rugged coastlines, incredible food and boutique wineries, wellbeing experiences, and charming regional villages that make for a memorable visit.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

AORA would like to acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors and partners:

AORA GOLD SPONSOR

DEMO DAY SPONSOR

SKALA ENVIRONMENTAL



SKALA Environmental excels in the organics & recycling sectors with over a decade of experience. Skala provide equipment, design, construction, technical support, and project management, representing world-class OEMs like Eggersmann, and serving Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific with a commitment to long-term customer support

skala.com.au

CATERING SPONSOR

BEATTY HUGHES & ASSOCIATES



Beatty Hughes & Associates is a leading environment, planning and valuation law firm. Led by respected senior lawyers Andrew Beatty and Jennifer Hughes, we help the waste industry, obtain planning approvals and environmental licences, manage environment incidents, achieve compliance, and acquire and divest industrial and contaminated land.

beattyhughes.com.au

CONFERENCE DINNER SPONSOR

SPM



Sustainable Project Management Pty Ltd (SPM) is an experienced environment and planning consultancy firm working extensively with the infrastructure, industrial and utility sectors. SPM successfully delivers planning and environmental assessments and approvals for a range of clients and projects.

SPM works with government and private sector clients to scope, navigate and successfully deliver planning and environmental approvals through a project's entire life cycle.

SPM's highly qualified planning and environmental consultants bring deep expertise in environmental science, management processes, government policy and urban planning, and are recognised for leading specialist teams and building strong, trusted relationships with clients and regulators.

spm.com.au

DEMO DAY HOST

HIQ GROUP



An Australian leader in sustainable waste management, resource recovery, and energy-from-waste solutions. HiQ operates major recycling, treatment, and landfill infrastructure across Victoria, NSW, and Queensland, driving Australia's transition to a circular economy. HiQ Group looks forward to Supporting AORA's demo day in 2026 at the Eco-hub in Bulla

hiq.au

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SCHOLARSHIP SPONSOR

PURE ENVIRONMENTAL



Pure Environmental is a forward-thinking leader in the resource recovery sector, driven by a passion for innovation and sustainability. With a strong focus on empowering the next generation of professionals, we invest in emerging talent through initiatives like the AORA 2026 Annual Scholarship and Pure Environmental's cutting-edge graduate program. Our collaborative culture promotes creativity, trust, and continuous growth, encouraging our team to think outside the box to solve the industry's most challenging problems. We're shaping the future of the industry, one talented professional at a time.

purenv.com.au

LANYARDS SPONSOR

NUGROW



NuGrow, proudly Queensland-owned and operated, offers commercial and local government organic recycling services in Ipswich, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Western Downs and Gold Coast. We provide comprehensive onsite solutions, including processing, grinding, and transport services tailored to our customers operations. Our high-quality compost and soil blends support agriculture and landscaping projects, fostering the circular economy.

nugrow.com.au

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ALZBETA BOUSKOVA

Chief Technology Officer, **Ecogas (NZ)**

Alzbeta is the Chief Technology Officer at Ecogas, where she leads project delivery for the country's largest anaerobic digestion infrastructure. Building on a successful development and operations of Reporoa facility – New Zealand's first large-scale AD operation – Alzbeta oversees the development of a major 100,000 tonne per annum organics processing facility in Christchurch.

Combining academic expertise in anaerobic digestion with commercial leadership experience, she bridges technical operations, business strategy, and policy advocacy through her work with the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand, driving regulatory frameworks that enable integrated resource recovery models that serves both decarbonisation and circular economy objectives.



MASTER OF CEREMONIES

PETE LAZER

Pete Lazer is one of Australia's most sought-after hosts - from a top-rating dating show, to sporting crowds of over 100,000 people, from Miss Universe Finals to gala award dinners. Pete MC's many live sporting events such as the AFL Premiership Season, Australian Open Tennis, Cricket, Netball, Soccer and F1. Pete is currently filming all over Victoria, reporting for Channel 7's flagship Sunday afternoon program "The Great Weekend".





DEMONSTRATION DAY

Wednesday 22nd April 2026

SEE EQUIPMENT IN ACTION AT THE AORA DEMONSTRATION DAY

Join us for an exciting day of equipment demonstrations at the AORA Demonstration Day!

This is your chance to get up close to the equipment, compare different models, and truly understand how each piece of machinery can enhance your operations. Meet with suppliers and experts in the field, ask questions, and learn about the latest technology and innovations in the industry.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to learn more about the latest equipment in the industry.

On display will be:

- Grinders and Shredders
- Screens
- Windrow Turners
- Loaders
- Excavators
- and more...

All participants are required to wear long pants and steel capped safety boots. Hard hats and safety vests will be provided along with lunch and refreshments.

AORA Demo Day proudly sponsored by:



The Demonstration Day buses are scheduled to depart the Pullman Albert Park from 9:00 - 9:30am and will return between 4:30 - 5:00pm.

NOTE: For safety reasons, delegates may not drive themselves to the location, all delegates MUST arrive and depart via the coach from the Pullman Albert Park.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

NETWORKING FUNCTION

Join us after the Demonstration Day for an evening of drinks, canapes and networking with the exhibitors, speakers, sponsors and other attendees.

- Date:** Wednesday 22 April 2026
Time: 5:30 - 7:30pm
Venue: Trade Exhibition Area
Dress: Casual
Tickets: Included in full registrations or tickets available to purchase for \$120 + GST.



LATE NIGHT NETWORKING LOUNGE

Continue networking after the social functions on Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd April in the exclusive AORA Late Night Networking Lounge*.

- Date & Time:** Wednesday 22 April 2026: 7:30 - 11:00pm & Thursday 23 April 2025: 10:30pm - 1:30am (Friday)
Venue: Element Room (Ground Floor)
Dress: Casual

**Cash bar or bar tabs and a light food menu available*



CONFERENCE DINNER

The Conference Dinner is traditionally a highlight in the AORA Annual Conference program and provides an opportunity for the participants to relax and engage in the type of networking that is vital to furthering the recycled organics industry.

Sponsored by:



- Date:** Thursday 23 April 2026
Time: 7:00 - 10:30pm
Venue: Grand Rooms 5 & 6 Pullman Albert Park
Dress: Business/Smart Casual
Tickets: Included in full registrations or tickets available to purchase for \$190 + GST.



Are you a young professional in the organics recycling industry looking to advance your career, expand your knowledge and make valuable connections in the industry?

AORA and Pure Environmental are offering a scholarship of up to \$3,000 to support a deserving individual under 30 years of age and with less than two years of experience in the field, to attend the 2026 Annual Conference.

More information including criteria and how to apply can be found at: www.aoraconference.com.au/about/yp-scholarship.

Applications close @ 5pm Thu 12 Mar 2026.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Thursday 23rd April 2026

0800 Registration, tea and coffee

Opening Plenary

0830 **Welcome and housekeeping**
John McKew, NEO - Australian Organics Recycling Association & **Pete Lazer**, Master of Ceremonies

0840 **Official welcome**
Kali Martin, Chair - Australian Organics Recycling Association

0850 **Opening address**
To be advised

0900 **INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTE: Closing the Loop Twice: How anaerobic digestion delivers renewable energy and soil regeneration**
Alzbeta Bouskova, Ecogas (NZ)
Lessons from New Zealand's first large-scale anaerobic digestion facility, highlighting policy, regulatory and commercial insights that support integrated organics processing, renewable energy recovery, and improved soil health outcomes.

0930 **AUSTRALIAN KEYNOTE**
To be advised

1000 **Questions and discussion**

1030 Morning tea break

Circular Economy in Action

1100 **The Circular Vintage: Creating Australia's first circular economy wine**
Olympia Yarger, Goterra
The Circular Vintage traces a complete circular economy journey - from Sydney food scraps to Canberra vineyard soil to bottled wine - offering a tangible, commercially viable model for the organics sector.

1120 **Clear Regulation → Clean Compost - A German example**
Jan Dübbelde, REMONDIS International
Contamination remains the industry's greatest challenge. This presentation examines the limits of decontamination technologies and highlights how strict regulatory controls in Germany have driven unexpected improvements in compost quality.

1140 **Dynamic Planning in the Circular Economy: A town planner's perspective**
David Schumacher, SOILCO
In a rapidly evolving sector, see how town planners are navigating approvals, regulation, community expectations and change to deliver compliant, resilient and sustainable resource recovery facilities.

1200 **Questions and discussion**

1230 Lunch

Soil Health & Regeneration

1330 **Compost is Great for Agricultural Soil...Why don't farmers know about it?**
Michael Bonanno, Cleanaway
While research shows compost improves agricultural soils, knowledge gaps remain among farmers. This presentation explores how the industry can better communicate expected benefits and drive adoption.

1350 **A Soil Probiotic: The potential of digestate in improving soil health**
Stephanie Salinas, Yarra Valley Water/ReWaste
Digestate quality varies with feedstocks and biogas conditions. This presentation explores how understanding the digestate microbiome is key to predicting impacts on soil health and crop quality.

1410 **Know Your Product (& Soil): Where & why urban composts work agronomically**
Bill Grant, Federation University
An overview of woody urban composts compared with other soil amendments, focusing on agronomic value, soil constraints, yield potential and opportunities for value-added compost products in agricultural and horticultural markets.

1430 **Questions and discussion**

1500 Afternoon tea break

Technology Showcase

1530 **Combining composting and biogas technology**
Aurel Lübke, Compost Systems
Biogas and composting can work powerfully together, but success relies on good design and awareness of technical, operational and integration risks.

1540 **Dry Anaerobic Digestion: Making Australia's FOGO mandates bankable**
Max Bergomi, OREZ
This session explains how dry high-solids anaerobic digestion outperforms wet systems for FOGO, enabling contamination tolerance, stronger economics and bankable biomethane.

1550 **Evolution of FOGO delivery models across Europe and staged growth of facilities**
Dr Rolf Liebenhemier, Eggersmann Anlagenbau
Drawing on European experience, this session examines alternative delivery and procurement models addressing contamination, staged capacity growth and evolving composting technologies.

1600 **Small is Beautiful - Lessons from regional FOGO organics processing**
Dr Sarah King, Gaia Envirotech
Learn from regional case studies demonstrating practical FOGO processing solutions for smaller volumes and high transport costs beyond large urban infrastructure models.

1610 **Pilot-Scale PFAS Extraction from Biosolids: Results and industry pathways**
Lance McKay, The Environmental Group
Pilot-scale PFAS extraction trials show treatment performance, reliability and scalability, outlining a practical pathway for biosolids reuse through industry–university collaboration.

1620 **FOGO and the Increased Challenges of Contamination - How do we decontaminate?**
Matthew Brady, CEMAC Technologies
This session explores how effective FOGO decontamination can address contamination challenges and unlock long-term value for the organics recycling industry.

1630 **Questions and discussion**

1700 Close Day 2

1900 Conference Dinner

Friday 24th April 2026

0800 Registration, tea and coffee

Innovation & Research

0845 Enabling Australia's RNG industry
Blake Almond, Circ Partners
Insights from North American renewable natural gas projects highlight regulatory changes needed to unlock Australia's RNG potential and the role organics processors can play in supporting policy reform and market development.

0905 Composting biosecurity
Ben Carr, Carr Enviro
Organic waste processing presents biosecurity challenges but also opportunities. This session highlights how processors can better recognise risks and contribute to biosecurity solutions across Australia.

0925 Pathways for transforming low value FOGO rejects into viable resources
Yvette Barrs, Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation & **Angus Johnston**, New Resource Solutions
FOGO rejects can comprise up to 40% of composting outputs, creating stockpiles and landfill costs. Learn about cost-effective strategies to avoid, reduce and recover rejects from organics processing.

0945 Modelling GHG Benefits from FOGO: A regional assessment using a universal tool
Piya Nyunt, Blue Environment
An Excel-based tool developed for Victorian councils quantifies greenhouse gas reductions from FOGO, enabling transparent comparison of climate outcomes and shows weekly collections and mandatory FOGO deliver maximum emissions savings.

1005 Questions and discussion

1030 Morning tea break

Compost Quality & Standards

1100 PFAS in Compost: Towards a practical testing solution for the industry
Dr Attila Tottszer, ALS Environmental
This session explores Australia's evolving PFAS regulatory landscape and tests whether a simple pre-purchase analytical testing kit could offer a practical compliance solution for industry stakeholders.

1120 Contamination Hotspots: AI, behavioural science, and FOGO
Minette Anthonisz, NSW Environment Protection Authority
Behavioural drivers of FOGO contamination were identified by the NSW EPA's Contamination Hotspots project, using AI and social research. Explore targeting interventions that measurably reduced contamination at its source.

1140 Emerging Contaminants in Composts - Where are we now?
Alexandra Morris, Loop Organics
An overview of emerging contaminant controls in the organics sector, examining current and proposed state and national policies, regulatory alignment, and forthcoming reforms aimed at protecting compost quality and market confidence.

1200 CPack: Innovations, standards, practical solutions for contamination in composting
Martine Poulain, Australasian Bioplastics Association
Learn how compostable packaging innovation and certification reduce contamination, improve compost quality, and support circular economy goals through practical operator strategies and collaboration between industry and policymakers.

1220 Questions and discussion

1300 Lunch

Procurement & Engagement

1400 Food and garden organics material flows and markets in SA and next steps
Jessica Wundke, Green Industries SA
Research mapping food and garden organics flows in South Australia outlines current pathways, stakeholder insights, system challenges and opportunities, alongside actions under the Waste Strategy 2025–2030 to strengthen organics recovery and circular economy outcomes.

1420 Community engagement in the FOGO stream through the Living with Purpose program
Thomas Fox, Repurpose it
Living with Purpose has expanded significantly since 2023, using mainstream media, digital content, community support and face-to-face education to broaden understanding of the circular economy beyond the resource recovery sector.

1440 Engaging a Capital City: Behaviour change and education for Brisbane's green bins
Michele Smith, Brisbane City Council
Brisbane City Council's rollout of 150,000 green bins was supported by a large-scale, data-driven behaviour change campaign, with contamination insights now guiding targeted education for cleaner organics streams.

1500 Market-aligned procurement for the next generation of organics facilities
Ken Baumli, Sphere Infrastructure
This presentation shows how strategic procurement can unlock investable organics infrastructure, strengthen market confidence and support circular economy outcomes through outcome-based contracts, risk alignment and early industry engagement.

1520 Questions and discussion

1550 Conference wrap up and closing remarks
Kali Martin, Chair - Australian Organics Recycling Association

1600 Conference Close

It's all about organics

AORA works with all stakeholders to facilitate an operating environment which maximises the recycling and reuse of organic materials whilst promoting the benefits of compost, soil conditioners and mulches across the Australian community and business.



AORA is the leading industry organisation and the peak industry body for the Recycled Organics Industry in Australia. It represents a modern, proactive association within the wider resource recovery and organics management industry.



**Benefit from the support and advocacy that
AORA provides on behalf of its membership**

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

PO Box 585
Hove SA 5048
0434 625 472
compost@aora.org.au
www.aora.org.au

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOW TO REGISTER

Registration can be completed through the online form available at aoraconference.com.au.

On receipt of your completed form, you will receive a confirmation email and tax invoice. Please note, registrations are not confirmed until payment is received in full.

AORA Members: You must be logged in to access member pricing.

Conference registrations cannot be shared. Strictly one delegate per registration only.

CANCELLATIONS

Cancellation of your registration must be advised in writing to conference@ora.org.au. Cancellations received on or before 20 March 2026 will receive a full refund less a \$220 administration fee, cancellations received after this date will not receive a refund, however, we will accept delegate name changes at any time leading up to the event.

DRESS CODE

The dress standard for the event is business/smart casual including sessions and evening functions.

DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to present all the information contained in this brochure as accurately as possible. The organisers reserve the right to change, without notice, any or all of these details.

PRIVACY

In registering for this event relevant details may be incorporated into a delegate list for the benefit of all delegates (name, organisation and title) and may be made available to parties directly related to the event including AORA and sponsors (subject to conditions). If you do not wish to be included in the delegate list, please email conference@ora.org.au.

REGISTRATION PACKAGES & FEES

*All amounts are excluding GST

Early	Up to 27 February 2026
Standard	28 Feb - 14 Apr 2026
Late	15 - 17 April 2026

BOOKINGS CLOSE FRI 17 APRIL 2026

Full Registration

Includes:

- 1 x Demo. Day Ticket (Wed 22 Apr)
- 1 x Welcome Function Ticket (Wed 22 Apr)
- Day Registration (Thu 23 Apr)
- 1 x Conference Dinner Ticket (Thu 23 Apr)
- Day Registration (Fri 24 Apr)
- Access to conference papers

	MEMBER	NON MEMBER
Early	\$1,280	\$1,680
Standard	\$1,380	\$1,780
Late	\$1,680	\$2,080

Day Registration - Thursday

Includes:

- Day Registration (Thu 23 Apr)
- Access to conference papers

	MEMBER	NON MEMBER
Early	\$425	\$825
Standard	\$525	\$925
Late	\$825	\$1,225

Day Registration - Friday

Includes:

- Day Registration (Fri 24 Apr)
- Access to conference papers

	MEMBER	NON MEMBER
Early	\$375	\$775
Standard	\$475	\$875
Late	\$775	\$1,175

Optional Tickets

- **DEMONSTRATION DAY** Ticket
Wed 22 Apr 2026 - \$170 each
- **WELCOME FUNCTION** Ticket
Wed 22 Apr 2026 - \$120 each
- **CONFERENCE DINNER** Ticket
Thu 23 Apr 2026 - \$190 each

ACCOMMODATION

Discounted rates have been negotiated for conference delegates at the Pullman and Mercure Albert Park.

View the rates and booking instructions at <https://www.aoraconference.com.au/register/accommodation/>

PARKING

Convenient, secure undercover casual parking is available at the Pullman Albert Park. The carpark access is via Lorne Street.

For further details and pricing please visit: <https://www.pullmanalbertpark.com.au/car-parking>.

PHOTOGRAPHY/RECORDING

By registering for the AORA 2026 Annual Conference you consent and grant permission to AORA, its agents and others working under its authority, to take and to have full and free use of video/photographs containing your image/likeness. These images and recordings may be used for promotional, news, online/multimedia, research and/or educational purposes by and for AORA. Copies of the event photographs will be made available to the attendees after the event.

CONTACT

If you have any questions about the event or registration please contact the conference secretariat:

Revolve Services
T: 1300 421 065
E: conference@ora.org.au

