

Wade Noonan

Former Victorian Politician, Mental Health Keynote Speaker

Wade Noonan is the Executive Director of the West of Melbourne Economic Alliance (WOMEDA) and Associate Director, Social Enterprise and Investment in the Policy, Strategy and Impact portfolio at RMIT. Wade is also principal of his own advisory service, specialising in strategic public affairs, public policy, government relations and stakeholder engagement.



Prior to accepting appointments with WOMEDA and RMIT, Wade spent a decade in leadership with the Victorian Government, serving as the Minister for Police and Corrections (2014-2016) and the Minister for Industry, Employment and Resources (2016-2017).

A strategic thinker and leader who is passionate about hard work and delivering results, Wade's list of achievements are enviable. Wade is highly respected for his significant successful career across government, the not-for-profit and private sectors, and despite being responsible for some of the most challenging areas of State Government administration, is known for having never lost sight of his core values - integrity, respect and compassion.

Wade Noonan suffered a mental illness in 2016 and took time out from parliament, eventually announcing he would not re-contest his seat. He sought professional counselling and today, as an engaging keynote speaker, shares his story about the challenges of mental health openly and with honesty.

More about Wade Noonan:

Wade was at the centre of Victorian Politics during a time of great change in Victoria's history. Through more than a decade of public service, he grappled with the challenges of record population and jobs growth, booming infrastructure program, dramatic shifts in industry, a volatile period for community safety and building a progressive social agenda.

Between 2014 and 2017, Wade served the Victorian Cabinet with honour and distinction, first as Minister for Police and Corrections, and more recently as Minister for Industry, Employment and Resources.

The closure of the automotive industry was one of the greatest challenges for the Victorian economy in recent times and Wade worked tirelessly to manage the transition and ensure auto

workers were supported to retrain and find new jobs.

Wade was also instrumental in delivering the nation's first ever worker transfer scheme for power workers in the Latrobe Valley and worked hand in hand with local communities to deliver a legislated ban on fracking to protect our vital agriculture industry.

As Minister for Police and Corrections, Wade delivered on the State Government's commitment to employ 400 Police Custody Officers to get frontline police back on the beat and introduced stronger gun laws to crack down on illegal firearms.

During his time in Opposition, Wade worked tirelessly to support paramedics and the families of those who lost loved ones during the ambulance crisis. His advocacy and empathy helped bring about vital changes to our health system which have saved many lives.

In 2017, Wade Noonan announced he would take time out to address a stress-related illness, citing 'vicarious trauma' the symptoms of which include anxiety, depression, increased irritability, low self-esteem, no time for others, disrupted sleep, isolation and hypersensitivity to violence and other forms of abuse. Through professional counselling, he realised the origins of his condition went back a number of years to the height of the ambulance crisis. Time away from his job helped restore much goodness to his life. He rediscovered the people who were important to him, took up new hobbies and concentrated on his physical wellbeing. He later announced that he would not re-contest his seat in 2018.

Having stepped away from politics, Wade Noonan was appointed the Executive Director of the West of Melbourne Economic Alliance (WOMEDA). The Alliance's primary focus is to strengthen economic development in Melbourne's rapidly growing western suburbs, and to support the achievement of broader social engagement and health outcomes in the region.

He was also appointed to a new role with RMIT as an Associate Director, Social Enterprise and Investment in the Policy, Strategy and Impact portfolio, focusing on the development of the social economy across Australia.

Additionally, Wade is principal of his own advisory service, specialising in strategic public affairs, public policy, government relations and stakeholder engagement.

Wade Noonan's appointments have also included as Non-Executive Director - TDT (now Logistics Training Council); Alternate Director- TWU Industry Superannuation Fund; and Chair - YMCA Bridge Project. He has been an Ambassador of the Indigenous Marathon Foundation.

Wade holds graduate qualifications in human resources from Swinburne University and is a Fellow of Leadership Victoria's prestigious Williamson program.

He is the number one ticket holder of the Williamstown Football Club, a member of the Western Bulldogs, a regular marathon runner, and an Ambassador for the Indigenous Marathon Foundation.

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