

Strategic Leadership in the Public Sector

Accelerate your transition to strategic, system-level leadership

In 10 weeks, Strategic Leadership in the Public Sector (SLPS) will shift you from a high-performing operational expert to a leader trusted to shape direction, influence decisions, and drive change across systems. From week one, you'll start applying this shift to real work – building not just capability, but the credibility, authority and visibility that position you for your next step. SLPS is a high-intensity digital accelerator that combines practitioner-led workshops with structured peer learning between sessions. Each week builds on the last through a sprint-based curriculum, directly connected to a live challenge in your agency – so you're not just learning, you're delivering.

You'll work alongside senior peers across jurisdictions, expanding your perspective and building a powerful network that extends well beyond the program. At the core of SLPS is a faculty-guided executive capstone: a Strategic Intervention Plan grounded in your organisation's priorities. You'll develop, test and refine it throughout the program – leaving with an executive-ready plan your senior leaders can confidently act on.



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Why choose Strategic Leadership in the Public Sector?

Develop capability to progress system-level work where agency pressures and accountabilities vary. Gain the confidence to navigate political friction and competing priorities.

Get exclusive access to public-sector experts, for frank discussions of current issues and discover what senior leadership really involves.

First Nations faculty ensures the integration of First Nations perspectives across the program.

Build your confidence and step into strategy-shaping work while remaining grounded in operational realities.

Become comfortable delivering complex, high-stakes work in complex and uncertain environments.

Make system-aligned decisions under uncertainty and navigate emerging risks with confidence.

Ideal for

Primarily designed for established public sector leaders (EL2 or high-performing EL1 leaders, or equivalent). Leaders transitioning from operational management to system-level strategic leadership. Sample roles: Project Directors, Program Managers, Area Managers, Strategy Managers.

Format

10 weekly sessions, with two-hours online synchronous learning per week plus rich asynchronous content. 60 hours total.

Dates

10-week digital experience, 6 October – 11 December 2026

Location

Online

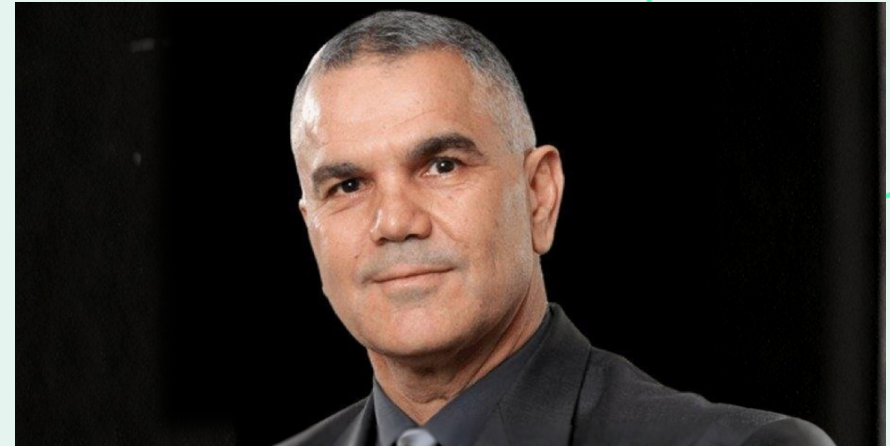
Cost

\$19,600 (inc. GST)



Dr Chris Sarra

Former Queensland public service Director-General, Founder and CEO of the Stronger Smarter Institute



Dr Chris Sarra is a Gurang Gurang/Taribelang Bunda man and the founder and CEO of the Stronger Smarter Institute. His career spans more than 30 years in education and public sector roles, with a focus on positive education reform for Indigenous students based on the Stronger Smarter Philosophy.

Prior to returning to the role of Stronger Smarter Institute CEO in 2025, he was Director General of numerous Queensland Government Departments including the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Dr Sarra's other roles have included being a Professor of Education with the University of Canberra, Co-Chair of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Committee and a National Rugby League (NRL) Commissioner.

Dr Sarra is a highly sought-after advisor on Education, Indigenous policy reform and strategy and is well respected in First Nations communities across Australia. Throughout his career he has received numerous honours including NAIDOC Person of the Year 2016, Queenslander of the Year, and Australian of the Year finalist.

“Leading at a high-level in the modern public sector requires a deeper understanding of systems, and the ability to bring people together and exercise influence across boundaries where you don’t necessarily have authority. It comes down to commitment and courage, and having the confidence and skills, to be a leader who can inspire change.”

Why was SLPS created?

Across our programs, we focus on practical development that fits alongside the reality of public sector work – combining real-world application with digitally enabled learning and strong peer connection.

SLPS is designed for experienced operational leaders stepping into system-level work. It supports them to shape strategy, work across boundaries and make trade-off decisions in complex environments.

Participants apply their learning to a live challenge from their own context, building skills they can use immediately. The program not only develops individual capability – it strengthens the pipeline of leaders ready for senior executive roles and delivers immediate impact for their organisations.

What's unique about Strategic Leadership in the Public Sector

First Nations leadership: Led by Gurang Gurang/Taribelang Bunda man Chris Sarra. SLPS focuses on the integration of First Nations perspectives on leadership and the work of the public sector, as well as how public servants can build trust and respect-based partnerships with First Nations and Māori communities to achieve shared goals.

Capstone intervention: You'll apply what you learn to a real challenge in your agency – producing a faculty-vetted Strategic Intervention Plan that demonstrates senior executive credibility and delivers immediate, practical value. The plan integrates your diagnosis, decisions and action steps into a single document your senior leaders can read and act on.

Outputs might include:

- system and stakeholder map
- identification of key constraints and dependencies
- clear articulation of priority issues
- defined decision points and trade-offs

Access to senior public servants: Open and frank discussions with senior public servants allows you to learn from the experience of others, share your own problems, and understand the practical barriers to leading across systems.

Digital-first design: Designed for minimal disruption, with no time away from critical roles, enabling immediate application to real-world challenges. Ten weekly online sessions combine live practice with structured peer learning between sessions. A sprint-based curriculum develops capability progressively, while the digital format fosters enduring connections among senior leaders beyond the program. High-engagement, digitally enabled social learning connects participants across jurisdictions, building a career-long peer network.



What you gain from the program

The curriculum is built around 'capability sprints' designed to be integrated flexibly across the following themes:

Diagnosing complexity

- Mapping systems, stakeholders and interdependencies
- Identifying patterns, constraints and root causes
- Prioritising in environments with competing demands and incomplete information

Making and communicating decisions

- Making defensible trade-offs under pressure
- Deciding with incomplete or ambiguous information
- Communicating rationale clearly to stakeholders and senior leaders

Mobilising progress across stakeholders

- Influencing without formal authority
- Aligning competing priorities across teams and agencies
- Maintaining momentum and managing resistance

Who we are

Public good in action. Leadership at the Centre.

At ANZSOG, we believe good public governance changes lives. It strengthens communities, builds lasting trust, and shapes the future we all share.

Created by governments and universities, we sit at the intersection of ideas and action. Our work is driven by evidence and shaped by the realities of public service across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Today, we're more than a school of government - we're a school of thought. A place where government and academia meet, and where leadership and learning come together.

We build leadership capacity and restore trust in governance through lifelong learning for public sector leaders. Learning that gives everyone from aspiring leaders to experienced executives the insight, capability and confidence they need to lead with impact.

We bring together diverse perspectives, trusted networks and global thinking to connect people across roles, systems and countries - building a stronger, more adaptable and more confident public sector that generates lasting public value.

Because we know that when public leaders are supported to lead boldly and wisely, entire systems shift. Communities thrive. Trust is restored.

Ready to join the program?

Your leadership journey starts with one step.

Submit an application at anzsog.edu.au/slps outlining your leadership experience and motivation for joining the program.

Applications are reviewed promptly, and you'll receive confirmation within two business days.

Prefer to start with a conversation?

Talk directly with our Client Engagement team about the SLPS experience, learning outcomes, and how it fits your career or organisational needs.

- Email: engage@anzsog.edu.au
- Call 1300 ANZSOG
- Book a one-on-one online consultation anzsog.edu.au/consult



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