



COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT  
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION

*The CASE Asia-Pacific Distinguished Service Award recognises inspirational advancement professionals whose accomplishments have made a significant and lasting impact on institutional advancement and whose life and character have earned the respect and admiration of fellow colleagues. Overall, nominees must demonstrate leadership in their profession, embrace best practice and innovation in institutional advancement, and volunteer their service to the CASE Asia-Pacific community of practice.*

## **Citation for 2021 CASE Asia-Pacific Distinguished Service Award Recipient**

**Nick Blinco, Vice-President (Advancement), The University of Melbourne**

Nick Blinco joined The University of Melbourne in September 2015, after the completion of the first phase of The Believe Campaign. The university had rolled quickly into the second phase of the campaign, which set an audacious goal of raising \$1 billion in philanthropic income and engage 100,000 alumni for the first time in the life of the university. This target was the largest for any fundraising campaign in Australia and the addition of an engagement target had never been seen before in an Australian campaign.

Blinco stepped up to the challenge of reviewing the organisational structure and building an enhanced professional function capable of supporting the university to achieve these goals. As a result, the annual targets have been exceeded every year since he arrived to lead the team. These results are a testimony to the work of Blinco and his team to identify and build compelling cases for donors about the impact they can affect, for causes they are passionate about, through The University of Melbourne.

Blinco has a truly collaborative style: he set up the Senior Advancement Leadership Team (SALT) to take a collective approach to the leadership of advancement. Every strategic opportunity or challenge, whether internal or external, is brought to SALT for discussion and a collective view is formed. Once this view is formed, the team then speaks with one voice, ensuring they remain unified and united. This is a most empowering approach to leadership.

He provides space for each member of SALT to lead their own areas, trusting in their wisdom and experience to implement and run programs, offering support and advice when needed, and always ensuring that the team keeps its goals and vision in view. His leadership has enabled the advancement team to successfully exceed both targets and complete The Believe Campaign.

He is an exemplary leader who has built strong and supportive relationships with his senior colleagues and encourages his team to do the same.

Blinco remains an active fundraiser and loves working with potential donors. He takes delight in seeing the donors he is working with fulfil their philanthropic goals and the impact that these gifts will have on the university, students, and society.

Blinco is an inspiration in the sector. He has chaired the Group of Eight Advancement Leaders Group for the last two years and is a frequent contributor to CASE programs. He is regularly asked to speak at conferences and seminars on advancement practice, ethics in advancement, how to run successful campaigns, and working with principal gift donors. He has contributed to the Asia-Pacific Institute of Educational Fundraising (APIEF) for many years because he wants to inspire those new to the profession and encourage them to pursue a career in advancement, and has received a CASE Crystal Apple Award for Teaching Excellence.

In recognition of his inspiring leadership and the development of a strong culture of advancement at The University of Melbourne, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education proudly presents Nick Blinco with the CASE Asia-Pacific Distinguished Service Award.