

the brown collective

—— BIOGRAPHY · 2026

Dr Stephen Brown

Managing Director, The Brown Collective

B.A., Grad. Dip Teaching, Grad. Dip Ed. Admin, M.A, Ed. D, GAICD, FACEL, FIML

—— PROFILE

About Stephen

Dr Brown has over 40 years of experience in education, public sector and not for profit leadership roles both in Australia and internationally. He is a highly regarded expert in the areas of leadership development, organisational renewal, strategy, change leadership and capability development.

Dr Brown's career has spanned every aspect of the school sector from classroom teacher, school principal, board room, academia to system leader.

40+
years in education, public sector and not-for-profit leadership

2016
founded The Brown Collective, a global consulting company

2
books co-edited and co-authored, published by Emerald Publishing (UK)

Dr Brown undertakes consultancies across a broad range of settings and contexts within Australia and internationally, including Scotland, Nauru, Philippines, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Micronesia, South Africa and China.

Dr Brown was Hume Regional Director in North-East Victoria for four years (2006–2009), and acted in the position of Deputy Secretary, Office of Government School Education (2010). Dr Brown was Executive Director of the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (2010) in the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and a member of the departmental leadership team. In December 2010, he was appointed to the position of inaugural Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Queensland Education Leadership Institute (QELi) Ltd. Dr Brown completed his tenure as CEO of QELi in April 2016 and under his leadership developed an outstanding national and international reputation for the design and delivery of school leadership programs for all schooling sectors.

Dr Brown holds a Doctor of Education from the University of Southern Queensland, and a Master of Arts from the University of London. He was awarded the Australian Council for Educational Leaders Nganakarrawa Award in 2007 and a presidential citation from the same organisation in 2009. In 2009, Dr Brown was nominated for membership of the Global Education Leaders Program — a coalition of leading system thinkers. He was identified as a participant in the Victorian Leadership Development Centre's 2009 program for future Deputy Secretaries and Secretaries in the Victorian Public Sector. In 2013, Dr Brown was awarded by ACEL (Qld) the prestigious Miller-Grassie Award. In 2016, Stephen was appointed to the Scottish College of Educational Leadership's International Advisory Board and the Northern Territory's Charles Darwin University and Department of Education's Board of Management for the Centre for School Leadership as an external expert advisor.

Dr Brown is a Scholar-Practitioner Fellow at the Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change (APCLC), The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK), Board Director at Stuartholme School Brisbane, National and State Fellow of ACEL, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Managers and Leaders (FIML), and in 2014 graduated from the Australian Institute of Company Directors program (GAICD). He is a former external expert advisor to the Scottish College of Educational Leadership; Fellow and founding Board Director of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation (ARLF). Stephen was a Rotary Foundation Scholar to the University of London (1990–91), and Australian Institute of Management (Qld) Professional Manager of the Year (2000). Stephen graduated from Oxford University's Saïd Business School's Executive Leadership Program in 2021.

In 2021 Dr Brown was appointed by Schools Plus as their Lead Fellow to work with cohorts of Australia's finest teachers and school leaders. In September 2022, Dr Brown was appointed as Executive Board Chair and Head of Transformation for Edmund Rice Education Australia on a consultancy basis to lead EREAS' cultural transformation and implement quality governance structures and processes. In June 2023, Stephen was appointed as Non-Executive Board Chair of EREA, Deputy Chair of the Council of EREA, June 2024 and in March, 2025 he was appointed the Chair of the Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia (TEREA), then in June 2026 Dr Brown was appointed Executive Chair of TEREA.

Additional qualifications obtained are: Certified Team Diagnostic Survey Foundational Practitioner – Level 1 and Certified Team Diagnostic Survey Advanced Practitioner – Level 2 with 6 TEAM CONDITIONS, and Associate of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation and endorsed facilitator. In May 2023 Dr Brown completed the Art and Practice of Leadership Development course at Harvard's Kennedy School.

Dr Brown undertakes a portfolio career with a combination of roles and positions. These include advisor to government on school leadership and reform; directorship of a global professional services company; consultancies, academic and board appointments. In addition to these roles, he is a writer and researcher on a range of educational leadership topics. In May 2021 in partnership with colleague Emeritus Professor Patrick Duignan he co-edited the text, *Leading Education Systems*; and in October 2026 in collaboration with Andrew Fuller co-authored the publication, *Building a Positive School Culture – Connected, Protected and Respected*. Both books are available globally through Emerald Publishing (UK).

In 2020 Dr Brown developed a podcast series titled Edge with Dr. Stephen Brown that focuses on the stories of inspiring everyday Australians.

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THE DR STEPHEN BROWN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

During 2025, Dr Brown established an Education Foundation in his name to provide scholarships for school leaders from rural, regional, and remote Australia to attend institutions such as Harvard, Oxford and other leading universities to help the next generation of school leaders advance in their careers.

—— CAREER

Employment history

2016 – present	Managing Director, The Brown Collective — a global consulting company specialising in leadership formation, sustainable change and policy and strategy.
2010 – 2016	Foundation CEO, Queensland Education Leadership Institute.
2009 – 2010	Inaugural Executive Director, Victorian Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and member of the DEECD (Victoria) Executive team.
2010	Acting Deputy Secretary of Education, DEECD (Victoria).
2006 – 2009	Regional Director of Hume Region, DEECD (Victoria).

2002 – 2006	Executive Director Schools, Education Qld.
1998 – 2002	District Director Roma District, Education Qld.
Prior to 1998	Principal, Deputy Principal, Subject Master, and teacher.
1984	Commenced secondary teaching, Education Qld.

—— EDUCATION

Qualifications

2025	Completed AICD course, The Role of the Board Chair.
2023 (May)	Completed the Art and Practice of Leadership Development course at Harvard's Kennedy School.
2021	Graduated from Oxford University's Executive Leadership Program – Saïd Business School.
2014	Graduated from the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course (GAICD).
2009	Graduated *Doctor of Education* (Ed. D) University of Southern Queensland.
2007	Completed Australian New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) Executive Fellows Program.
1991	Completed a *Master of Arts* at the University of London, Institute of Education, London, England.
1987	Completed a *Graduate Diploma of Education Administration*, Darling Downs Institute of Education.
1983	Completed a *Graduate Diploma in Teaching*, Brisbane College of Advanced Education.
1982	Completed a *Bachelor of Arts*, Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education.

—— RECOGNITION

Awards and affiliations

Current	Fellow of the Australian Institute of Managers and Leaders (FIML).
1989	Awarded Rotary Foundation Scholarship (richest privately funded scholarship in the world) to study a Master of Arts Degree — University of London's Institute of Education.
2000	Awarded Australian Institute of Management (AIM) Professional Manager of the Year for the Toowoomba Region.
2000	State Finalist AIM Professional Manager of the Year.
2000	Selected as a member of Rotary District 9630 Group Study Exchange Team to Nebraska, USA.
2002	Initial recipient of The Joan Robinson Award for Educational Leadership Excellence — Roma District.
2002	Recipient of Education Queensland's Australia Day Award, Medal for Excellence in Education.
2002	Awarded Australian Rural Leadership Scholarship — Course 10.

2004	Awarded Australian Council of Educational Leaders National Fellowship for Excellence in Educational Administration (FACEL).
2004	Awarded Queensland Government Premier's Award for Leadership excellence.
2004	Graduated Australian Rural Leadership Program.
2007	Awarded ACEL Nganakarrawa Award (refers to: 'those who move about, all seeing, all knowing, knowledgeable and well regarded') presented for general excellence in educational administration and whose learning, experience, and contribution to ACEL have earned lasting respect and gratitude.
2010	Awarded Australian Council for Educational Leaders (QLD) – University of Southern Qld (USQ) award for outstanding postgraduate research in Educational Leadership and Management.
2014	Awarded ACEL (QLD) prestigious Miller-Grassie award for outstanding leadership in education.
2015 – 2016	Shortlisted for USQ Alumni of the Year.
2016	Appointed to the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) International Advisory Council.
2016	Appointed external expert advisor, Board of Management Centre for School Leadership, Charles Darwin University (CDU) and the Northern Territory Department of Education.
2016 – current	Appointed Scholar-Practitioner Fellow, Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change (APCLC), The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK).
2016 – 2022	Board Member of Stuartholme School.
2020	Appointed Associate of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation.
2021 – 2025	Lead Fellow, Australian Schools Plus.
2022	Appointed Executive Board Chair of Edmund Rice Education Australia.
2024	Life membership of Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL).
2025	Established the Dr Stephen Brown Education Foundation Limited.

Helping leaders grow, change & thrive. thebrowncollective.com.au