AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

National Executive Officer: Expressions of Interest

COMMENCEMENT

October 2026 or by mutual agreement

FTE

Full-time (part-time arrangements may be considered)

LOCATION

Flexible within Australia

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Australian Association of Christian Schools

The Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) was established in 1985 to represent, strengthen and support Christian schools across Australia. AACS seeks to help Christian schools speak with a united voice in the public arena, advocate for their interests and protect their freedom to provide authentic Christ-centred education.

AACS serves a diverse network of Christian schools across Australia and seeks to foster collaboration, mutual support and shared advocacy among its members.

The Board expresses its sincere gratitude to Vanessa Cheng, who has recently resigned, for her leadership and service as Executive Officer over the past six years. During this period, AACS strengthened its profile and influence nationally, developed strong relationships with education stakeholders and political leaders across the spectrum, fostered collaborative advocacy initiatives with other Christian school organisations, and promoted constructive engagement between Christian schools, governments, educational authorities and faith-based organisations.

The Board is now seeking an outstanding leader who can build on this strong foundation and lead AACS into its next phase of development, strengthening its influence, advocacy and service on behalf of Christian schools across Australia.

As Australian society, education policy and regulatory environments continue to evolve, Christian schools face both significant opportunities and increasing challenges. The successful candidate will help member schools navigate these changing circumstances while remaining faithful to their mission of providing Christ-centred education.

The National Executive Officer serves as the principal representative of AACS in the public arena and provides strategic leadership to advance the Association's mission and priorities. The role requires the ability to engage effectively with governments, educational authorities, Christian school leaders and other stakeholders, while providing practical support, advocacy and strategic direction for member schools.

The role calls for a leader who can advocate clearly and courageously for Christian schools while engaging respectfully, thoughtfully and constructively with those who hold differing perspectives. The National Executive Officer will seek to build understanding, trust and productive relationships through principled, gracious and persuasive advocacy.

The successful candidate will strengthen the voice of Christian schools in the public sphere, build effective connections across the education sector, and support member schools in responding to legislative, regulatory and cultural developments that impact their mission and operations.

This is a unique opportunity for a leader who is passionate about Christian education to contribute to the future of Christian schooling in Australia. Working closely with school leaders, governments, sector partners and the Board, the National Executive Officer will play a significant role in supporting the flourishing of Christian schools and preserving their capacity to provide authentic Christ-centred education for future generations.

The position will commence from October 2026, or at a mutually agreed time.

The Board's preference is for a full-time appointment; however, part-time arrangements may be considered for an exceptional candidate where suitable support structures can be established.

While AACS maintains an office in Springwood, New South Wales, the National Executive Officer may work from any Australian state or territory. Interstate travel will be required, and administrative support arrangements will be tailored to the successful applicant's location and operational needs.

Applications

Expressions of interest should be submitted to:

Mr John Metcalfe
Chair, AACS Board of Directors
john@aacs.net.au

Applicants should include:

- A brief covering letter.
- A current curriculum vitae.
- A response of no more than three pages addressing the Selection Criteria and outlining their experience, suitability and commitment to the mission and values of AACS.

The AACS Board reserves the right to appoint by invitation.

Applications close Monday 7 September 2026.

Attachments

1. Position Summary and Selection Criteria

2. AACS Constitution, including Statement of Faith

Yours faithfully,
John Metcalfe
Chair
Australian Association of Christian Schools Ltd

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Position Summary and Selection Criteria

POSITION TITLE

National Executive Officer

SALARY

$160,000-$180,000 per annum, commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus superannuation.

POSITION SUMMARY

The National Executive Officer provides strategic leadership for the Australian Association of Christian Schools and serves as its principal representative in the public arena.

The National Executive Officer advances the mission of AACS by strengthening the influence and effectiveness of Christian schools, representing their interests to governments and other stakeholders, supporting member schools through emerging challenges, and promoting the ongoing sustainability and effectiveness of the Association.

Working closely with the Board, the National Executive Officer contributes to the development and implementation of strategic priorities that support the flourishing of Christian schools throughout Australia.

KEY OUTCOMES

The National Executive Officer will:

- Provide strategic leadership that advances the mission, sustainability and influence of AACS.
- Maintain a positive and credible public profile for Christian schools and the Association.
- Effectively represent the priorities and concerns of member schools to governments, educational authorities and key stakeholders.
- Support member schools to remain faithful to their vision for Christ-centred education amidst legislative, regulatory and cultural challenges.
- Foster collaboration, networking and mutual support among member schools.
- Promote the long-term sustainability, effectiveness and influence of AACS as a national organisation.

Main Functions and Responsibilities

FAITH AND MISSION

- Uphold and promote the Statement of Faith and the Principles and Commitments of AACS.
- Represent Christian education through a Biblically informed worldview and a commitment to the mission of the Association.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

- Implement Board policies, directions and strategic priorities.
- Serve as the principal adviser to the Board on strategic, policy and emerging issues.
- Lead strategic planning processes and contribute to organisational goals, priorities and annual budgets.
- Ensure effective organisational systems, processes and accountability practices.

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ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

- Serve as the principal spokesperson for AACS except where the Board authorises another representative.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with parliamentarians, government departments, educational authorities and sector leaders.
- Monitor and communicate emerging political, legislative and cultural developments affecting Christian schools.
- Advocate on behalf of member schools in matters relating to educational policy, funding, religious freedom, governance and regulatory requirements.

RELATIONSHIPS AND MEMBER SUPPORT

- Build collaborative relationships across the Christian school movement and the broader independent school sector.
- Foster strong connections among member schools and encourage mutual support and shared learning.
- Maintain regular communication with member schools and provide advice regarding relevant policy, legislative and compliance matters.
- Represent and support member schools facing significant challenges affecting their operations or Christian distinctives.

FINANCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Ensure sound financial stewardship of the Association.
- Contribute to long-term organisational sustainability and planning.
- Maintain appropriate records, reporting and accountability processes.

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Selection Criteria

Applicants should provide a concise response addressing the following four criteria.

1. Christian Commitment and Alignment

- A mature Christian whose beliefs and practice align with the Statement of Faith, Objects, and Principles and Commitments of AACS.
- Capacity to analyse complex issues and represent Christian education thoughtfully, graciously and confidently from a Biblically informed perspective.

2. Leadership and Strategic Capacity

- Significant leadership experience and demonstrated success in strategic leadership, organisational development and achieving positive outcomes.
- Sound judgement, integrity, resilience and the ability to lead effectively through complexity, change and challenge.

3. Advocacy and Relationship Management

- Demonstrated ability to build trusted relationships and engage constructively with governments, educational authorities and key stakeholders, influencing outcomes in complex environments.
- Strong communication, negotiation and relationship-building skills, with the ability to represent AACS with credibility, wisdom, professionalism and grace.

4. Professional Knowledge and Organisational Effectiveness

- Understanding of the opportunities, challenges and regulatory environment affecting Christian schools, including governance, compliance and public policy.
- Demonstrated organisational, financial and strategic management capability, with the ability to identify emerging issues and respond effectively in an independent national leadership role.

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Experience the Board Would Particularly Value

Candidates may be able to demonstrate experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Senior leadership within Christian schooling or Christian education organisations.
- Advocacy and engagement with State, Territory and Commonwealth governments.
- Public policy development, analysis or political engagement.
- Executive leadership of a member-based association, not-for-profit organisation or peak body.
- School governance, registration, accreditation and compliance.
- Building strategic relationships across diverse stakeholder groups.
- Media engagement, public speaking and representation in public forums.
- Leading organisations through significant legislative, cultural or strategic change.

Personal Attributes

The successful candidate will be:

- A person of integrity, wisdom, courage and humility.
- A relational leader who builds trust across diverse Christian communities.
- Able to communicate clearly and graciously in contested public environments.
- Resilient, discerning and prayerful in the face of complexity and pressure.
- Committed to serving and strengthening member schools.

The successful candidate will demonstrate a heart for Christian education and a commitment to helping Christian schools flourish as they pursue their mission of Christ-centred education throughout Australia.