

David Charles

Curriculum vitae



Director

Insight Economics Pty Ltd

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Expertise

Since entering into a consulting career in 1993, David Charles has built up a strong practice in economics and public policy issues related to industry development, research and innovation, life sciences and health and program reviews. At the outset David was one of the three founding directors of the Allen Consulting Group and was for a time its Co-Chairman. In 2006 David and Jon Stanford together with three other consultants left to form Insight Economics – he was the Founding Chairman. From 2006-09 David helped to establish a new economics practice at Deloitte.

David has been a member of a number of Boards such as Austrade, the Australian Industry Development Corporation and the Business School at Melbourne University. He is currently Chair of the Automotive Industry Innovation Council, a member of the Board of the Advanced Manufacturing CRC and the Australian Advisory Board of TUV Rheinland. He is President of the Australian German Association.

Before becoming a consultant David Charles held a series of senior positions in the Australian Public Service concerned with economic policy, industry development, innovation, trade policy and employment. From 1985-1990 he was Secretary of the Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce and from 1990-1993 Australian Consul General in Berlin and Special Trade Representative in Central Europe.

Consulting career

Industry development

While in government, David was directly involved in the development of policy towards manufacturing industry and the historic trend to open Australian industry to international competition, while seeking to build capability in emerging areas and in particular research and innovation. Since

becoming a consultant, David has worked for Commonwealth and State governments, industry associations and corporations in projects concerned with industry development issues. David was the lead facilitator for the December 2005 Manufacturing Industry Summit.

A special point of focus has been on the automotive industry which is at the forefront of the introduction of new technology and is currently facing many challenges including meeting the needs of environmental sustainability.

The development of the research based pharmaceutical industry faced as it is by very considerable government regulation has been another area of consulting interest. David has led studies for government on new policy development for the sector.

Other sectors in which David has been involved include the defence industries, advanced manufacturing and medical devices.

David has taken a close interest in inward investment attraction policies being followed by the Commonwealth and State governments and has consulted to both levels of government on policies to strengthen investment attraction.

Research and innovation

David worked closely with the then Chief Scientist in his Review of Australia's Scientific Capability which became influential in the establishment of the Backing Australia's Ability in 2001.

With the considerable investment of Commonwealth and State government resources in the research base, governments have sought to better understand and document the return that the community is getting from this investment. David has led a number of groundbreaking studies into estimating the return on research investment for bodies such as the ARC, the Victorian government and some research agencies. He has helped prepare business cases for CRC bids and was one of the three facilitators for the Innovation Summit in 2000.

David also was commissioned by the New Zealand government to prepare a report on Australia's innovation policies which was an input into that government's development of a national innovation policy.

Health and life sciences

Growing out of a strong interest in the development of the pharmaceutical industry, David has led studies into programs to support the industry in Australia. He has also reviewed government policy establishing the framework for the national immunisation program. Most recently, David has worked on performance measures for public hospitals and the implications of emerging genetic technologies for the development and targeting of new often high cost treatments.

Program reviews

Reflecting the areas of consulting focus, David has led program reviews of Commonwealth and State policies of industry development, support for science, technology and innovation and inward investment attraction. He has also worked closely with government agencies needing to respond to major changes in their operating environments. Because of his experience at the senior levels of public administration David takes a close interest in public sector governance and reform.

Public Service career

After joining the then Tariff Board in late 1972 from an appointment with the UN agency UNCTAD in Geneva, David was promoted to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and subsequently worked in a number of senior positions in the Australian Public Service in the fields of economic policy, industry development, trade policy and education and industrial relations.

Upon becoming Secretary of the Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce in 1985, David worked closely with Senator John Button who was the industry Minister and responsible for far reaching reforms in Australian industry and the national innovation system.

Reflecting a strong interest in international and trade relations, David was one of the initial members of the Department of Special Trade Negotiations which had a focus on Australia's trade with the EU. David later became the Special Trade Representative in Central Europe immediately after the Berlin Wall fell.

Professional and academic qualifications

1. PhD (Economics) London University
2. B. Econs (1st Class Honours) Monash University