

## **Citation-Honorary Doctor of Laws - Eda Ritchie AM**

Eda Ritchie AM has enjoyed a distinguished career with a strong record of commitment to the arts, education, government, health and the environment over a period of almost five decades. In 2010 her contributions to the community were recognised with an appointment as a Member in the Order of Australia.

Ritchie was educated at Clyde School in Woodend and received an Associate in Music (AMEB), and later a Graduate Diploma of Business (Agribusiness) at Monash University. She conducted a career in farming and business, also working in natural resource management and coastal strategic planning, while giving tirelessly through philanthropic and community activities. From 1997 to 2018 she was a Trustee of the Ross Trust, including Chair for five annual rotations. Since its inception in 1970 the Trust has distributed 110 million dollars for charitable purposes in Victoria, focusing on biodiversity conservation and educational equity for children for disadvantaged backgrounds.

Ritchie has a long history of engagement with the University. She has been Chair of the Victorian College of the Arts Foundation since 2011 and a member of the University's Foundation and Trusts Committee since 2018. She was a member of University Council from 2004 to 2014. She has also been a Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art (2005 – 2014), a Director of Melbourne University Publishing (2006 – 2013) and a Director of the Howard Florey Institute (1993 – 2000).

Ritchie has shown a strong commitment to her local community and to improving the lives of regional Victorians generally. She was the founding Chair of the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival for the decade from 1990, the inaugural Chair of Rural Ambulance Victoria (1999 – 2002); Chair of the Western Coastal Board (1996 – 2000); State President of the Victorian Liberal party (1984 – 1987); Chair of Commissioners Moyne Shire Council and a board member of Moyne Health Services, the Rural Finance Corporation, Trust for Nature, and the Wool and Rural Industries Skills Training Institute. She was instrumental in the establishment of Marine National Parks and regional protected areas through membership of the Environment Conservation Council and the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council. She was a member of the Australian National Maritime Museum board (2002 – 2007) and she has been a Board member of the Melbourne Recital Centre since 2014.

Ms Ritchie is nominated for the Doctor of Laws (*honoris causa*) in recognition of her long history of distinguished public service in several sectors, and particularly for her contributions to the arts at the University, in Melbourne and in rural Victoria.