

# 2026 AARES Distinguished Life Member

## Professor John Rolfe AM



John Rolfe is a resource economist who is Professor of Regional Economic Development in the School of Business and Law at CQUniversity at Rockhampton, Australia.

John specialises in environmental, resource and agricultural economic issues, environmental scorecards, regional development, agricultural adoption, and economic impact assessment in regional areas. He has more than 200 refereed publications in the form of journal articles, book chapters, book reviews and conference papers, and a further 250 non-refereed journal articles, conference papers and research reports.

John has been involved in more than 125 major research projects over the past 25 years for a total funding value of more than \$20M, leading more than 80 of them. He is currently one of the leaders of the Rural Economies Centre of Excellence in Queensland. His research has been funded through a number of sources, including the Australian Research Council grants, Australian and State Governments, Research and Development Corporations and industry grants. He has supervised over 20 PhD and Masters students to completion and been an external examiner for more than 30 research higher degree students.

John has been an ARC Assessor for several years, has reviewed extensively for international journals, and has been an invited speaker at national and international conferences. He is currently Chair of the Independent Science Panel for the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership, Acting Chair of the Great Barrier Reef Independent Science Panel and a member of the Great Barrier Reef Independent Expert Panel. He was one of the leaders of the 2013 and 2017 Great Barrier Reef Science Consensus Statements, and on the Editorial Board of the 2022 Science Consensus Statement.

John was appointed as a Fellow of the Australian Social Sciences Academy in 2017. He was Editor-in-Chief of the Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics from 2013-17 and President of the Australasian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society in 2019. He has held a number of roles for AARES including Book Review Editor, Chair of the Investment Committee and member of the Editorial Board as well as organising annual conferences in Cairns and Brisbane. Many of John's students have become active contributors to AARES, reflecting his active promotion of the society.

In 2026, John was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM), recognising his significant service to regional economic development as an economist and author.