

LEADERSHIP + HUMANITY





The recent Tasmanian Leaders' **Leadership + Humanity Symposium** proved to be an impactful event, focusing on the challenges of today's workplaces, increasingly shaped by rapid technological change, fast-paced environments, and disruptions.

The Symposium sought to explore how leaders can adopt a more human-centred approach within their organisations, particularly considering new work health and safety laws around managing psycho-social hazards.

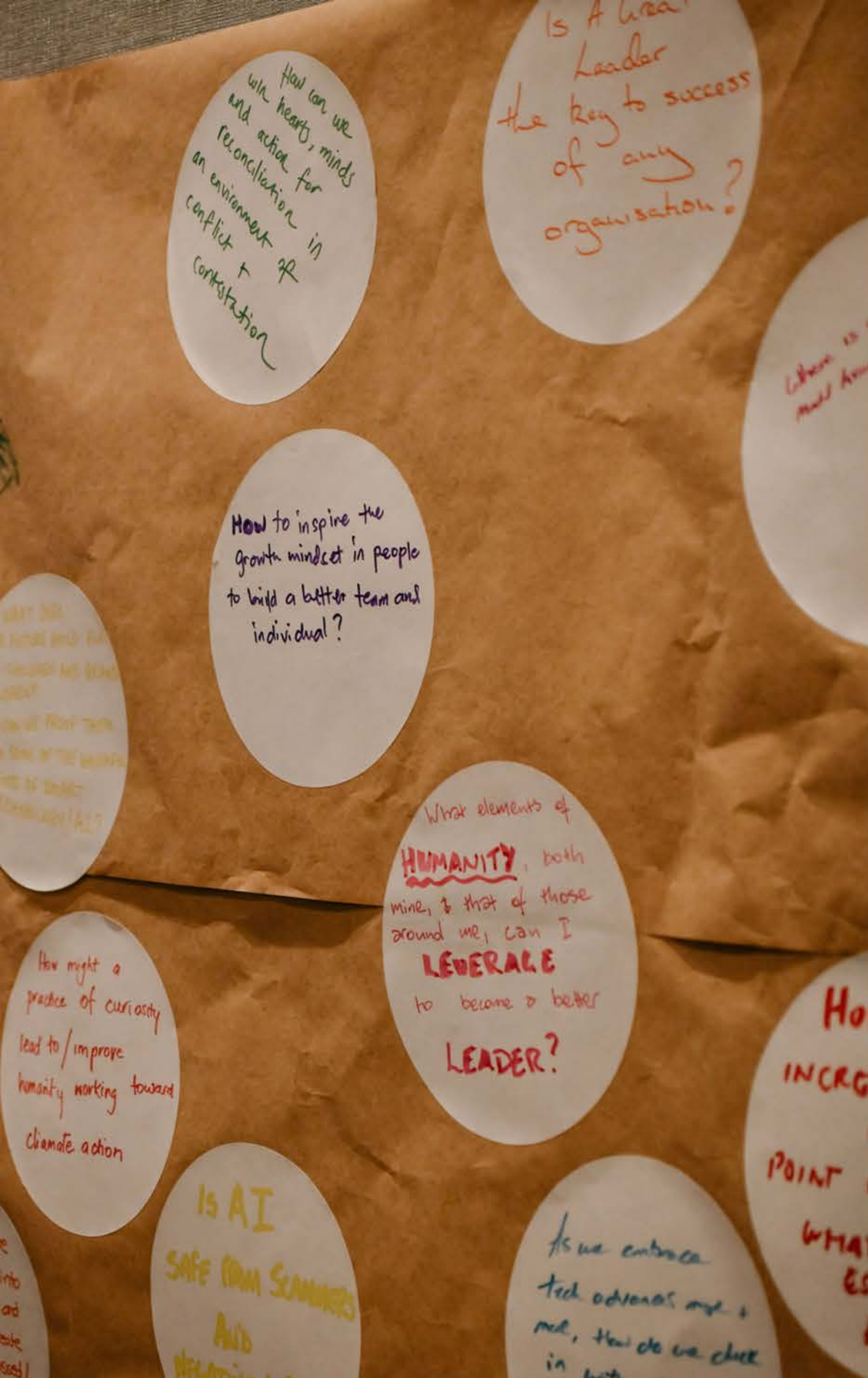


A key theme of the day was curiosity.

Led by **Scott Ko**, the concept was introduced with the provocation: Curiosity is not about asking **more** questions; that instead it can be used to identify the boundaries and configurations of what we think we know.

Scott started by asking delegates to reflect on a single 'burning question' they held at the start of the symposium. These questions were collected and stuck on our **Wonder Wall**, which represented the collective starting point of what delegates wanted to explore at the start of the Symposium.

These questions would then be revisited at the end of the day to see how they had evolved, before delegates met again over breakfast the following day to transmute their curiosity into practical, actionable experiments.



Based on the analysis of the **Wonder Wall**, several interesting themes and sentiments emerged. First, let's look at a keyword breakdown:

- **Human/Humanity:** Appears repeatedly (15+ mentions), indicating a strong focus on human-centred leadership, maintaining human values, and balancing humanity with other concerns like technology and disruption.
- **Leadership through complexity:** Frequently referenced (20+ mentions), often in questions about the nature of good leadership in complex and future-facing environments.
- **AI/Technology:** Mentioned frequently but usually in conjunction with questions about how to balance technological advancement with humanistic values.
- **Well-being/Safety:** Terms related to mental health, psychological safety, and staff well-being are consistent, often linked to leadership in disruptive environments.
- **Change/Disruption:** Concerns about navigating change, particularly technological and societal disruptions, are common.
- **Curiosity/Innovation:** Found in various questions, reflecting a significant interest in how curiosity drives leadership, growth, and adaptation.



In terms of the sentiment of delegates, this is what we identified:

- **Concern:** Many questions express concern or caution about the future, particularly regarding how technology (AI) might impact humanity, leadership, and well-being. For instance, questions like “How do we maintain humanism as AI develops?” reflect worry about losing core human values.
- **Optimism in Leadership:** While there’s caution, there’s also hopefulness about leadership's ability to adapt and lead through future changes. Questions like “How can I influence others to lead with humanity?” show a belief in leadership's power to address these challenges.
- **Resilience and Adaptation:** Delegates appear interested in resilience—both individually and organisationally. They seek to know how to thrive amid complexity, uncertainty, and disruption, as seen in questions about leading during times of change and promoting psychological safety.

Looking between the words, we identified 6 broad themes:

1. Human-Centred Leadership and Empathy

A major theme revolves around maintaining humanity, empathy, and ethical decision-making in leadership. Delegates are focused on how to be compassionate leaders, addressing well-being and fostering environments that prioritise people, even amid challenges.

Examples: “How do we rediscover our humanity?” and “How do we make sure we help people through their journey, not just at the intended outcome?”

2. Leadership in a Changing World

This theme covers how leadership must evolve to meet future challenges, including shifting organisational structures, evolving workplace dynamics, and societal change. There is an emphasis on preparing leaders for complexity and uncertainty, as well as future-proofing leadership for coming generations.

Examples: “What does a ‘Future’ leader look like?” and What are the individual and collective leadership capabilities required to navigate 21st century complexity?

3. AI and Technology

Delegates are concerned about the role of AI and other technologies in leadership, questioning how to integrate AI into the workplace while preserving human values. There's also a curiosity about how AI will impact industries such as healthcare, education, and aged care.

Examples: “How will AI model be helpful for leadership and humanity in the future?” and “How do we maintain the human aspect as AI develops?”

4. Well-being, Mental Health, and Psychological Safety

Well-being is a strong concern, with questions focused on how leaders can balance the demands of the workplace with staff mental health, creating psychologically safe environments, and ensuring teams feel supported during times of change.

Examples: “How do you look after staff well-being while keeping pace with a changing world?” and “How do we create safe spaces for radical candour at work?”

5. Team Dynamics, Collaboration, and Growth

Many questions focus on how to lead teams effectively through change, encourage collaboration, and promote positive team dynamics. Delegates are interested in fostering high-performing teams while maintaining a sense of humanity and openness to change.

Examples: “How do I lead high performers in a disruptive world?” and “How to inspire a growth mindset in people to build a better team?”

6. Curiosity and Adaptation

Curiosity emerges as a key driver for leadership, problem-solving, and adaptation. Delegates are keen to explore how curiosity can inspire innovation, foster growth, and help leaders and teams tackle complex challenges, from climate change to technological shifts.

Examples: “How might a practice of curiosity improve humanity?” and “How can I encourage my team to be curious?”



At the end of the day, Scott returned to lead a reflective session with delegates, asking them to consider the initial burning questions on the ***Wonder Wall*** and reflect: What's changed? Were the initial questions still appropriate? What were they curious about ***next***?

1. From Concern to Action

Initially, delegates were uncertain about how to navigate rapid change, especially with AI and societal disruption. Over time, this concern has shifted to a more action-oriented approach. Delegates became focused on experimenting with practical solutions, moving from hesitation to proactive exploration.

3. From Personal Reflection to Collective Action

Delegates initially focused on personal development and individual leadership. This has shifted toward collective action, with more emphasis on fostering collaboration, supporting team growth, and making a broader impact within organisations and communities.

2. From Caution to Optimism

While early reflections were cautious, particularly around new technologies and the future, the tone has evolved into one of optimism. Delegates now view challenges as opportunities, confident in their ability to embrace change and find solutions through experimentation.

4. From Theory to Practice

Early reflections were largely theoretical, exploring broad ideas about leadership and the future. This thinking has become more practical, with delegates focused on taking specific, actionable steps within their teams and organisations to address real-world challenges.



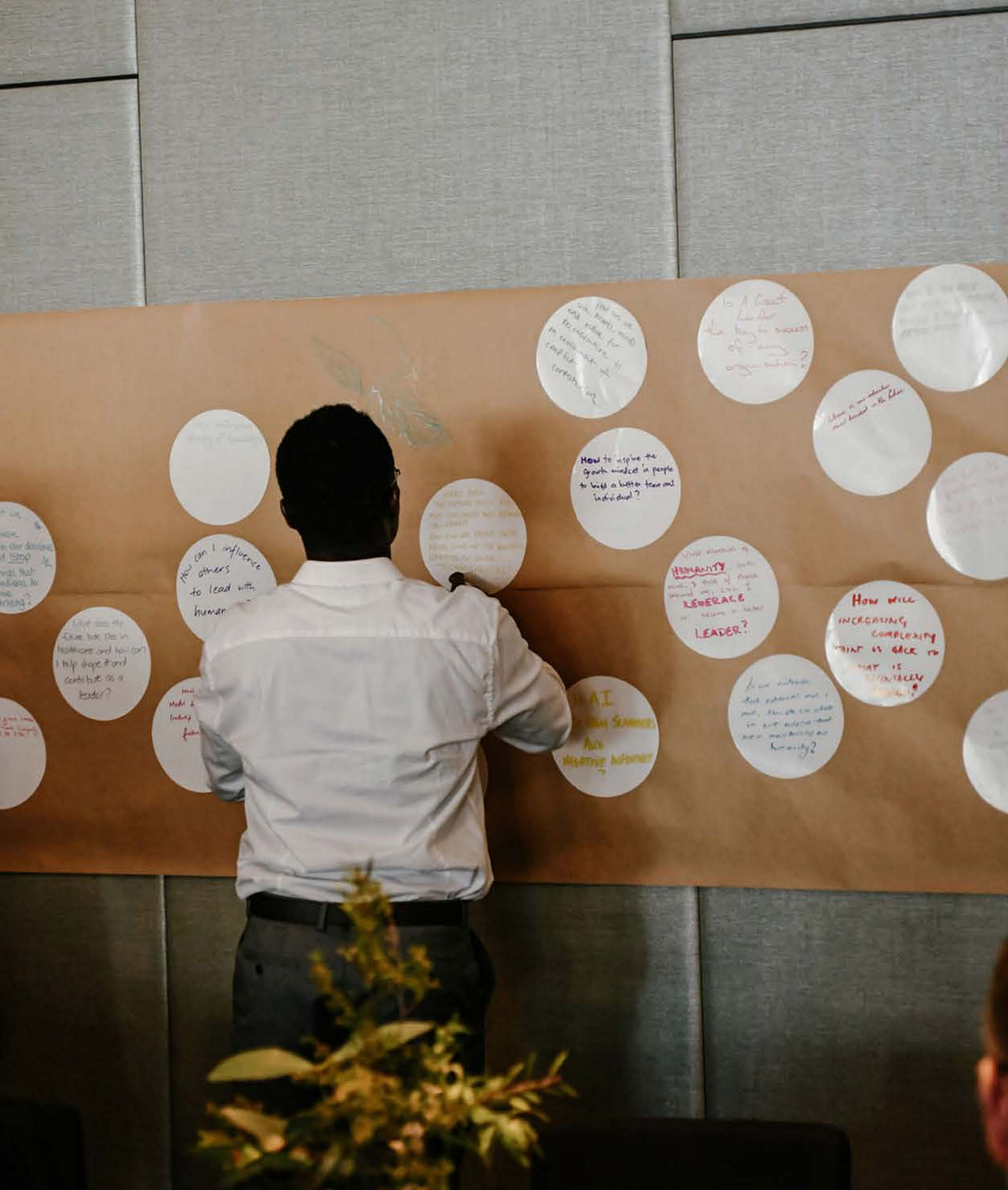
At breakfast the following day, Scott put on his entrepreneurial hat and took the remaining delegates through a session on startup thinking. The objective was to encourage delegates to think about what we can do to act on the insights gathered at the Symposium.

Delegates were asked to frame their actions around short-term **experiments** that could be attempted within the next 6 months (by the end of February 2025). Importantly, Scott set an expectation that we shouldn't expect that all of our experiments would succeed; that the more important outcome was **what we could learn and share with the collective group**.

In doing so, we are actively contributing to the group's collective knowledge and understanding.

These were some of the experiments we identified:

- Create social media content that can be used for windy days for the bogan platypus landcare group.
- Create safe accessible spaces & guidance for people to shift from climate grief to adaptation.
- Facilitated sessions for team to better understand themselves (i.e. their own personhood) so they can be their authentic self at work.
- Plan for mobile international field logistics hub for East Antarctica.
- Take my team to an art exhibition as part of our leadership and challenge planning as time to reflect and think.
- Each team member's SAFETY dimensions to be explored together to gain understanding and awareness of each other, to facilitate safety and radical candor at work.
- Create an event and space to get men talking. Where curiosity and vulnerability are fostered and leadership learnings are shared.
- Equality employment cafe in ochre medical centres.
- Relocate my fortnightly team meeting to kunanyi once a month, to encourage more "big picture" thinking and prioritisation.
- Provide support for people living vulnerably with pets to find suitable housing.



In February 2025, Tasmanian Leaders will be touching base with those who submitted an *Experiment* to see what was achieved and what was learned.

We will publish the results of the experiments and share them with everyone. Importantly, they will be an input into the next Symposium.

For all the delegates who couldn't join us at the breakfast, would you also like to submit an experiment that you'd like to run by February 2025?

If so, please drop us a line at info@tasmanianleaders.org.au and we will add it to our list.



Tasmanian Leaders would like to thank all of our speakers and our delegates for attending this Symposium.

You made this possible.

SYMPOSIUM PARTNERS:



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