



# **Freeing up our politicians to act for communities:**

**What do the political donations and lobbyist registers in Australia tell us about alcohol industry activities?**

**Danica Keric**

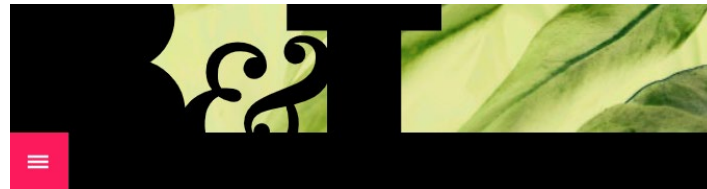
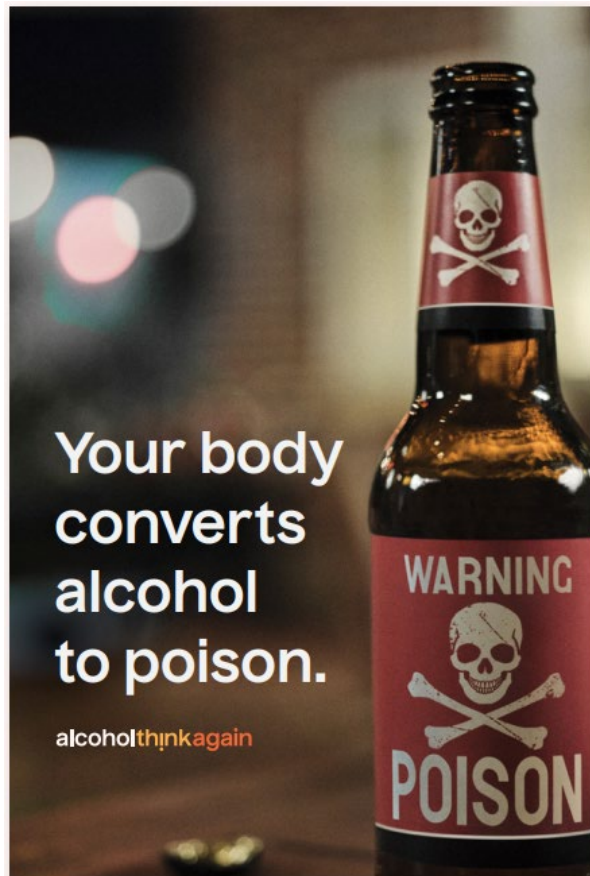
Chanelle Wilson, Keira Bury, Julia Stafford, Melissa Ledger



In the spirit of deepening relationships, Cancer Council WA acknowledge all the traditional custodians and owners of country throughout Western Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We also pay our respect to their Elders and extend that respect to all Aboriginal peoples living and working in this area.

# Cancer Council WA Alcohol Programs Team

Works to inform community discussion about alcohol issues with the aim of reducing the impact of alcohol on the WA community, including as a cause of cancer.



### CANCER COUNCIL CRITICISES ALCOHOL BEVERAGES ADVERTISING CODE SCHEME FOR ALCOHOL ADVERTISING DURING PANDEMIC



### Click to drink: It's never been easier to buy alcohol in WA.

Alcohol delivery is booming, but what do we know about the new liquor landscape? In 2022, Cancer Council WA investigated the industry practices and community perspectives of the online sale and delivery of alcohol in WA. Here's what we found...



# Lobbying and Donations

Preventing harmful industry interference in public health policy development is a priority among leading health organisations.

Relationship-building with government and political officials is a well-established practice by harmful industries.



**Aim:** to understand the alcohol industry's level of access to and influence on State and Federal decision-makers.



# Our research

## Political donations

- Period of 3 financial years, from 2019-2022.
- Donations, gifts, and other incomes collected from
  - Australian Electoral Commission Transparency Register, and
  - Western Australian Electoral Commission website.
- Political party and donor declarations were looked at due to discrepancies between the declarations.



## Lobbyist data

- Client data from the Western Australian Register of Lobbyists and the Australian Government Lobbyist Register.
- 4 time points between October 2021 and November 2022.

**Alcohol industry** = alcohol producers, retailers, peak bodies representing the interests of alcohol companies, hospitality.

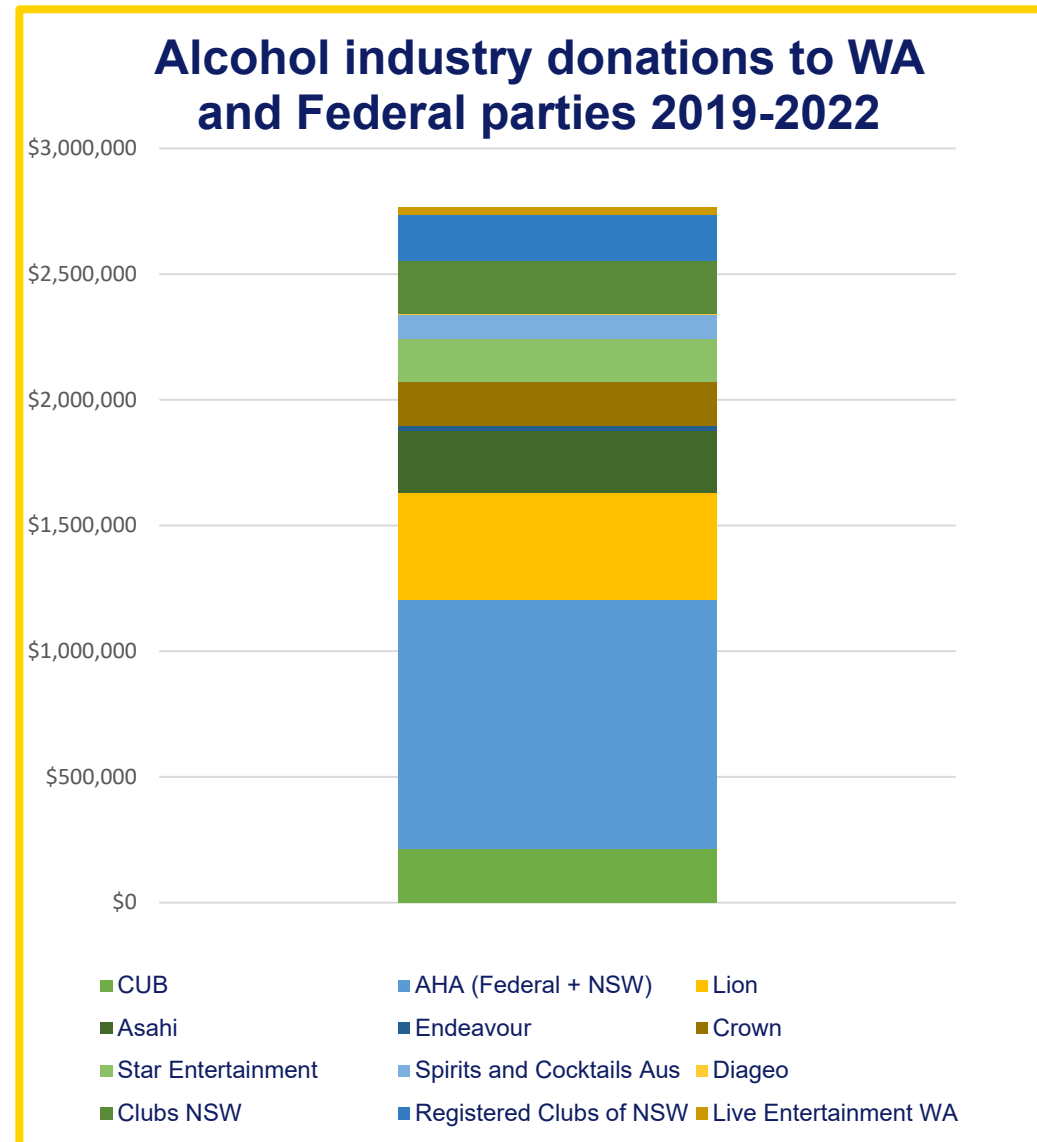
**Supermarkets** = some of the largest alcohol retailers in Australia.

# Key findings: Political donations.

Between 2019 and 2022:

Alcohol industry donations  
= AUD \$2.8 million

Supermarket donations  
= AUD \$3.5 million



# Key findings: Lobbying.

Prominent alcohol brands and retailers, major supermarkets, restaurants, alcohol suppliers, and hospitality companies are engaging third party lobbyists at national and state levels.



ALDI  
Lion  
Endeavour Drinks Group  
Coca-Cola South Pacific  
Coles  
Wesfarmers  
Beam Suntory  
Diageo



Beam Suntory  
Treasury Wine Estates  
DrinkWise  
Alcohol Beverages Australia  
The Brewers Association (AU)  
Spirits and Cocktails Australia  
Australian Hotels Association  
Independent Brewers Association

# Implications

Laws governing political donations are weak.

Well-connected lobbyists and their clients have easy access to politicians & there is no transparency.

## Reforms needed include:

- Exclusion of donations from the alcohol industry.
- Exclusion of alcohol companies from development of public health policy.
- Increased transparency of interactions between Government and alcohol industry representatives.

Human  
Rights  
Law  
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#OurDemocracy

## Selling Out:

How powerful industries corrupt our democracy

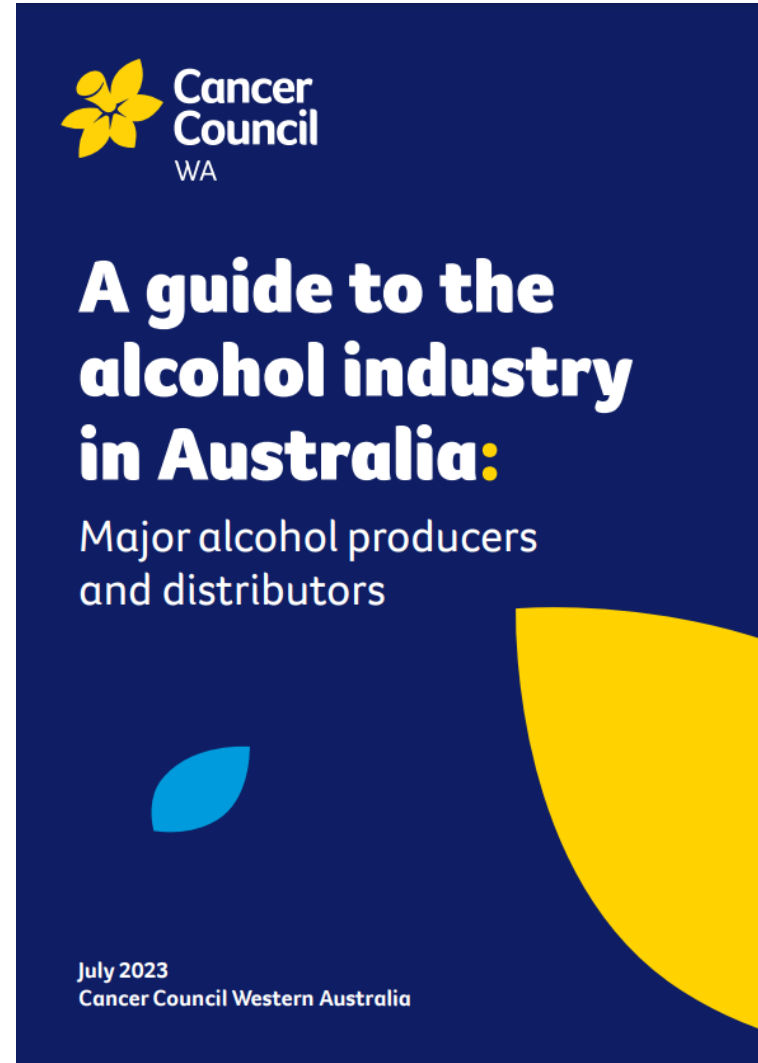


*“Australia is lagging well behind almost all other advanced democracies when it comes to regulating corporate influence over our politicians. What is considered illegal and corrupt influence overseas is business as usual in Canberra.”*



# Our other work that might be of interest

Download the guide





# Thank you.



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