

# Audette Exel's Adara Partners attracts help from David Gonski and others



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Damon Kitney, Victorian Business Editor, Melbourne



Catherine Brenner with Audette Exel. "It is a really exciting initiative," Brenner says. *Source: News Corp Australia*

**The Adara Group is rolling out the heavy artillery to help raise money for the poor. Gun businessmen of the calibre of ANZ chairman David Gonski, UBS Australia chief executive Matthew Grounds, Greenhill chairman Peter Hunt and company director Catherine Brenner, are among those arming Adara with their skills.**

Founded by Suncorp director Audette Exel in 1998, the company has just launched Adara Partners to work pro bono on investment deals that will generate funds for people living in poverty across the world.

The panel members, including those listed above, will offer corporate clients what Ms Exel calls "wise counsel" with an emphasis on general strategic advice, second opinions and mediation services.

Adara has also partnered with financial services firms, including Ansarada, Deloitte, Minter Ellison and Thoughtworks, to provide pro bono support.

Founding panel members also include company director Ilana Atlas, investment banker Guy Fowler, AMP chairman Peter Mason, lawyer Diccon Loxton and investment banker Steven Skala. Other senior business people are also expected to join.

Adara Partners is bankrolled by some of the nation's leading entrepreneurs and leading families, including Seek co-founder Paul Bassat, fund manager Peter Cooper, businesswoman Tracey Ryan, and Melbourne investors Suzi and Barry Carp, and the Liberman and the Werdiger families.

"This is a really simple but clever idea, and a great opportunity for some of us who don't usually work together to come together for a good cause," says Grounds.

In such a competitive industry it took an independent figure such as Exel to come up with a concept that would be supported by everyone.

"It is a really exciting initiative and complementary to other service providers," says Brenner, a former investment banker at ABN Amro, who is on the boards of Coca-Cola Amatil, Boral and AMP.

"We're hoping it will get some traction when there is a big transaction being undertaken, and a board wants a wise set of eyes that aren't in the trenches and caught by deal fever."

Adara will also assist private companies and families looking for advice on their family investments and family business.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/the-deal-magazine/audette-exels-adara-partners-attracts-help-from-david-gonski-and-others/story-e6frgabx-1227440133259>