

ARC Seminar 2026 Closing Address by Lee Sze Yeng

As we conclude today's seminar, I would like to thank the organising committee for curating a meaningful and timely session to set the tone for the year. And to our presenters, panelists and moderator - thank you for your candid insights and perspectives.

What came through loud and clear today is: Trust is the foundation of effective governance. It is the thread that connects everything we do. But trust is not static, it evolves with the challenges and opportunities in the environment that we operate in.

At the start of today's seminar, Huey Min reminded us of the critical role we, as directors play as stewards of trust. She outlined three key elements for strengthening trust and governance: through robust financial reporting, enhancing audit quality through improved audit quality indicators, and safeguarding auditor independence.

Building on this, the panel highlighted that the trust gaps we face today extend beyond financial reporting to areas like climate disclosures, AI ethics, and cybersecurity.

And for businesses with a global footprint, trust must transcend borders and cultures. It requires boards to set expectations and maintain stakeholder confidence across jurisdictions with differing norms and standards.

In this environment, trust cannot be the responsibility of a single committee. It must be a collective endeavour. And as board members, we are uniquely positioned to lead this effort—by being the conscience of our organisations.

It starts with asking the right questions, setting the right tone and embedding trust into our corporate DNA.

Given the evolving role of the ARC, we need to acquire new competencies and learn from each other - both success stories and missteps – to ensure that we are not just reacting to challenges but anticipating them.

And perhaps most importantly, we must create and sustain a culture where trust can thrive. These are not easy tasks. But trust is built on courage and is built over time.

As we reflect on today's discussions, I encourage each of us to think about the role we play as directors. Where we bring to the table not just our technical expertise, but also our values, and our commitment to doing what is right.

By keeping trust at the core of everything we do, we can help our organisations navigate complexity with confidence and purpose, translating trust into a competitive advantage.

Thank you for joining us and have a good day ahead.