

MEDIA RELEASE

Michelle Bannister marks 30 years of service at La Trobe Financial

Three decades of backing brokers, borrowers and the people beside her

MELBOURNE, 19 August 2026 – Michelle Bannister, Director, Head of Distribution at La Trobe Financial, has marked 30 years with the business, a length of service that is increasingly rare in the mortgage industry.

Michelle began her career at La Trobe Financial and has since worked across the full lending lifecycle, from origination and credit assessment through to approval, settlement and distribution. Today she oversees the distribution strategy for the Group's Real Estate Credit Division, leading a national sales team of 40 business development managers and the Signature Club and Platinum Partner broker programs.

Brokers who first dealt with Michelle in the 1990s are still dealing with her today. Ask them why and the answer rarely changes: she answers the phone, she gives a straight answer, and she does what she says she will do.

"One of the reasons I've stayed for so long is that La Trobe Financial has always been a business willing to back people, give them opportunities and help them grow," Michelle Bannister said. "I've seen a lot of change over three decades, but the constant has always been the quality of the people and the culture that encourages you to be better."

That standard of service extends beyond the broker to the borrower at the end of every file. Michelle reminds her team that behind each scenario is a family buying a home, a small business owner managing cash flow, or a self-employed borrower who simply needs someone to take the time to understand their circumstances.

Within La Trobe Financial, that thinking has a name: "others before self". It means putting the broker, the borrower and the colleague at the next desk ahead of personal interest, and it is the standard Michelle has set for three decades.

"I've always believed that talent is important, but consistency, hard work and treating people well can take you a very long way," she said.

Michelle's contribution has been recognised widely across the industry, including the Mortgage & Finance Association of Australia's Excellence Award for Business Development Manager of the Year, several aggregator awards for Best Lender BDM, and inclusion in MPA's Elite Women on multiple occasions. Through property cycles, funding cycles and successive waves of regulatory change, brokers have found her standard of service unchanged.

Michelle is also a committed member of the Women of La Trobe leadership group, where she mentors emerging leaders and helps build long-term career pathways across the organisation. It is work she values because of the chances she was given early on.

"Some of the greatest opportunities I've had came from leaders who believed in me before I was ready to believe in myself," Bannister said. "The milestone might say 30 years, but the real story is one of opportunity, hard work, great mentors and a business that has always believed in bringing out the best in its people."

"Few people have contributed more to La Trobe Financial's broker relationships than Michelle Bannister," La Trobe Financial's Chief Executive Officer, Chris Andrews, said. "For three decades, she has built genuine partnerships based on responsiveness, integrity and a commitment to helping brokers serve their clients."

"Michelle has also built a high-performing BDM team around those same principles: do what you say you will do, take ownership, support each other and never lose sight of the customer. Those values have helped shape one of the most respected distribution teams in the industry."

"Her 30-year milestone reflects the trust, credibility and leadership she has built with brokers and colleagues over many years, and we are proud to celebrate it."

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About Michelle Bannister: Michelle Bannister is Director, Head of Distribution for La Trobe Financial's Real Estate Credit Division, where she leads a national team of 40 business development managers and oversees the Signature Club and Platinum Partner broker programs. In three decades with the business she has worked across origination, credit assessment, approval, settlement and distribution, and is recognised for her expertise in broker engagement, business development and people leadership.

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Today, La Trobe Financial manages assets on behalf of more than 130,000 investors[^], including some of the world's largest financial institutions, and is supported by 5,500 financial advisers.

La Trobe Financial's retail asset management business is spearheaded by the c.\$14bn La Trobe Australian Credit Fund, the largest retail credit fund in Australia. Its flagship 12 Month Investment Account has been recognised as "Best Credit Fund – Mortgages" for 17 consecutive years by Money magazine, and is consistently ranked by Rainmaker among Australia's fastest-growing funds in the wealth management industry*.

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