

## Australian Sex Party launches

Written by The Australian | Lucy Bennett  
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### **SEX sells, and the newly formed Australian Sex Party knows it.**

That's why, even with what seem to be sensible policies rooted in a desire to make sexuality and discussions about it less touchy subjects, the party has chosen a name that stands out from the traditional ballot paper line-up.

The party, with the slogan "we're serious about sex", launches at Melbourne Sexpo on November 20th and party convenor Fiona Patten is confident it will gain the 500 members required to register and contest state Upper House and Senate seats.

Ms Patten, who is also the chief executive of the Eros Association - representing the adult retail and entertainment industry, said she and others were concerned about the Government's proposed internet filter, which is being tested over summer on about 10,000 sites to block "unwanted content".

"This really came out of 20 years of lobbying on sex and censorship and then... the latest being the compulsory internet filter, which will ... prohibit and blacklist adult material that is currently legal in magazines, books and film," she said.

"When we started talking about the Australian Sex Party, we realised that sex is a lot broader than just censorship and a lot of the policies are a lot broader."

Also on the party's list of policies, to be announced at the launch, is a national sex education school curriculum.

"With the internet and the fear that children are being sexualised at an early age, the first key action on that will be sex education," Ms Patten said.

"Other countries such as the UK are introducing a national curriculum and we think we should follow that."

The party would also look to overturn rules under which overseas aid was not given to health clinics that were pro-choice, she said.

The party's provocative and potentially alienating name was a decision the group wrestled with, Ms Patten said.

"We felt that - sex in a crowded room - now we've got your attention. It's half the problem with politicians, because they still giggle when they say the word sex, and that's why we have such idiotic policies at state and federal levels," she said.

"Let's try and own that word on most government forms."

Ms Patten said there had already been a lot of interest from potential members.

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"We'll probably have our 500 members by the time we launch on Thursday. But there's four million customers of adult shops in Australia."

She also hoped the 1000 or so adult shops around the country would become Sex Party branches.

"Hopefully we'll get their attention with the word but then we may be able to help influence some reasonably sensible policies."

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