

Media Release

As investors turn to AI, knowing what to trust matters more than ever

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The Australian Shareholders' Association (ASA) says the growing use of artificial intelligence in investment research creates a new challenge for Australia's expanding investor population: not simply finding information, but knowing what to trust.

The ASX Australian Investor Study 2026 found 11.5 million Australian adults now hold investments outside traditional superannuation and their primary home, representing 54% of the adult population.

Knowing which information to trust remains investors' leading investment challenge, while knowledge is the main barrier for those looking to start investing.

The study is the first in the ASX series to examine AI use in detail, finding 14% of investors aged 18 to 29 use AI tools as a source of investment information.

ASA CEO Rachel Waterhouse said AI could help investors understand unfamiliar concepts, examine company information and ask better questions, but should not replace independent research or judgement.

"AI is becoming another source in an already crowded investment information environment," Ms Waterhouse said.

"Investors draw on financial media, company reports, research platforms, brokers, and investor communities. AI can help people work through that material, compare information and identify questions for further investigation.

"But a confident answer is not proof of an accurate answer. AI can omit important context, rely on outdated information, or present an unsupported claim as fact.

"The skill investors increasingly need is not simply finding information. It is knowing how to test it by checking original sources, separating fact from interpretation and questioning assumptions."

"Investors need to ask whose interests sit behind the information they receive. AI draws on material from businesses selling investment products, and those commercial interests may not be obvious in its answers. Instead, ASA members are part of an independent community where investors can learn from each other's experiences and question what they're reading."

Ms Waterhouse said AI was most useful when it challenged an investor's thinking rather than simply reinforcing an existing view.

“It can help investors interrogate an annual report, compare company disclosures and examine the case against an investment,” she said.

“The investor must still decide whether the information is credible, relevant, and appropriate to their circumstances. Investment decisions, risk, and judgement should not be outsourced to a technology tool.”

The study also found an estimated 950,000 Australians plan to start investing within the next year. Women represent 61% of this group, the first time they have significantly outnumbered men among intending investors.

“It is encouraging to see more women looking to take that first step,” Ms Waterhouse said.

“We are seeing similar trends among newer additions to the ASA community, including more younger people and women looking for practical education and trusted information.

“Whether someone is buying their first ETF or researching individual companies, the foundations remain important: clear goals, an understanding of risk, diversification and a long-term perspective.”

ASA supports individual and self-directed investors through independent education, an investor community and advocacy for fair treatment and shareholder rights. This includes practical education to help investors use AI thoughtfully in their investment research.

The ASX Australian Investor Study 2026 surveyed almost 4,500 Australian adults and marks 40 years of ASX research into investor participation and behaviour.

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About the Australian Shareholders' Association

Australian Shareholders' Association is an independent, not-for-profit shareholder association and the voice of retail shareholders. ASA supports individual investors through education, advocacy, company monitoring and a national community that helps investors build knowledge, confidence and connection. ASA promotes transparency, accountability and fairness in Australia's capital markets.