

Zoos Victoria

Head of Digital, Technology and Data

Candidate briefing

October 2026

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About Zoos Victoria

An organisation of national and global significance

Zoos Victoria is Australia's oldest wildlife conservation organisation and one of the most recognised zoological institutions in the world. Operating four world-class facilities - Melbourne Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary, Werribee Open Range Zoo, and Kyabram Fauna Park - the organisation welcomes over three million visitors each year and manages one of the most complex, multi-site animal care and conservation operations in the Southern Hemisphere.

What distinguishes Zoos Victoria from many peer institutions is the breadth and seriousness of its conservation mandate. The organisation does not simply exhibit wildlife - it leads recovery programs for threatened species, conducts internationally recognised scientific research, and actively shapes global standards in animal welfare and biodiversity conservation. Its reach extends well beyond the boundaries of its four sites, encompassing field programs, breeding and reintroduction initiatives, and a growing network of scientific and institutional partnerships across the region and internationally.

Zoos Victoria operates as a statutory authority of the Victorian Government, established and mandated under the Zoological Parks and Gardens Act 1995, meaning it carries both a public benefit mission and a responsibility to perform commercially. The organisation delivers approximately \$350 million per annum in economic benefit to Victoria's visitor economy, operates a significant retail operation, and is the State's largest paid membership-based organisation, with over 390,000 members. It functions as a major leisure and cultural destination as well as a conservation institution. This dual identity – mission-driven and commercially active - is central to understanding the organisation's complexity and its leadership requirements.

A new operating model

The organisation has moved from a hybrid model, in which property-based directorates operated alongside corporate directorates, to a functional structure. This is a period of new ways of working and culture building, supported by a high-performing cohort of newly appointed Heads. Teams have achieved a great deal over the years, and the new structure is designed to build on that work through greater consistency and collaboration.

Why this role exists

Under a previous structure a Director oversaw digital, marketing and communications. Under that Director sat two separate teams: the IT team and the digital transformation team. This Director role no longer exists and technology has been moved into the Chief Financial Officer expanded portfolio (CFO, Corporate Planning and IT). The Head of Digital Technology is the single leader of a merged IT and digital transformation team. There is an aspiration to move from two silos to "a way of working that is much more holistic and strategic", with both vision and structured execution. Underlying drivers and themes include generative AI opportunities, cyber risk from large online transaction volumes, ageing legacy systems, and tight budgets alongside strong board and executive commitment to digital transformation.



HEAD OF DIGITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND DATA

- Lead Digital and AI strategy
- Four properties, 5,500+ animals
- Supporting the fight against extinction.



Zoos Victoria is a world-leading conservation organisation and Victorian Government statutory authority operating Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary and Kyabram Fauna Park. Welcoming more than three million visitors annually, a paid membership base of over 390,000 and caring for over 5,500 animals, the organisation combines a powerful conservation mission with significant commercial scale and community impact. With ambitious plans for growth and a commitment to creating a future rich in wildlife, Zoos Victoria is enhancing its conservation outcomes, visitor experiences and long-term sustainability

Based at the Parkville corporate office and reporting to the Chief Finance Officer, the Head of Digital, Technology and Data sets the strategic direction, architecture and delivery of Zoos Victoria's technology, digital systems, business applications and data functions. The Head will develop and maintain the Digital and AI Strategy and is accountable for the Information and Data Protection Framework, cybersecurity, and the reliability of internal and external applications. This includes developing data governance policies, a centralised data management framework, and data literacy across key functional areas to support evidence-based decision making. The Head will also lead business application projects with effective change management, manage functional budgets, and lead a team of 12 (five direct reports) across all four properties. Key to success will be securing ownership of the strategy from the Board, Senior Executive and staff, and making sure initiatives are delivered in a coordinated way with minimal disruption.

Ideally holding graduate ICT qualifications, along with project management certification or equivalent experience, you are a senior digital and technology leader with extensive experience developing and implementing digital strategies in complex stakeholder environments. You have led the strategy and implementation of internal and external customer-facing business applications, and overseen complex project delivery amid ambiguity. You have led accomplished digital and/or IT teams, coached managers to influence stakeholders, and driven organisational change without creating silos. Your background in data analytics, performance reporting and performance measurement supports both operational objectives and the monitoring of strategy. You bring high emotional intelligence, excellent communication and troubleshooting skills, and the ability to influence senior stakeholders on systems and process change.

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Position description



1. Position Details

Role Title:	<i>Head of Digital, Technology and Data</i>		POS NO.	
Function:	<i>Finance, Corporate Planning & IT</i>	Department:	Digital, Technology and Data	
Location:	<i>Zoos Victoria Corporate Office, Parkville</i>	Reports to:	<i>Chief Finance Officer</i>	
EBA:	ZV SSA	Tenure:	<i>Ongoing</i>	
EBA Band:	7	Employment Type:	<i>Full time</i>	

MORAL PURPOSE

Fighting Extinction and creating a future rich in wildlife

2. Context

Zoos Victoria is a not-for-profit, State Government statutory authority which is established and mandated under the Zoological Parks and Gardens Act 1995. We proudly operate Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary and Kyabram Fauna Park and have over 5,500 animals in our care. We are committed to ensuring no Victorian terrestrial animals goes extinct on our watch.

Our vision is to be a world leading zoo-based conservation organisation supported by our moral vision, our values and our five focus areas: - Working for Wildlife, Living with Wildlife, Creating Special Places, Thriving Ethical Business and Valuing our People. Our important work includes conservation, breeding and recovery programs, emergency wildlife response and we've built partnerships and capacity with local communities, fellow conservationists, like-minded organisations and several sister zoos — close to home, interstate and internationally.

Our 2030 Strategy and Corporate Plans guide everything we do, and our Development and Growth Plan focuses on expanding our already significant contribution to the Victorian economy, maximising our size, reach and core capabilities, strengthening our ability to deliver on our core purpose of fighting extinction, and ensuring the organisation's long-term financial sustainability.

3. Role Purpose/Statement

The Head of Digital, Technology and Data is a senior leadership position responsible for the strategic direction, architecture, and delivery of Zoos Victoria's integrated technology, digital systems, business applications, and data functions.

This role leads the development of the Digital and AI Strategy to drive innovation, operational efficiency, and engagement, while ensuring robust data governance, cybersecurity, information protection, and the reliability of all critical business systems and infrastructure.

Working closely with cross-functional stakeholders, the Head of Digital, Technical and Data ensures digital, technical and data initiatives are strategically scoped, prioritised and delivered in a coordinated and effective manner, enhancing operational performance while minimising disruption and enabling informed, data-driven decision making.

This functional role is responsible for fostering collaborative networks and delivering consistent service and support across all Zoos Victoria properties.

4. Reporting Lines & Key Stakeholders

Number of Direct Reports:	5	Total Workforce Accountability:	12
Key Internal Stakeholders:	• CEO • CFO • Director Visitor Experience • Director Assets and Presentation • Head of Visitor Growth • Head of Commercial • Head of Visitor Experience	Key External Stakeholders :	• ISAG – Dept Government Services • VAGO

5. Accountabilities

Accountabilities & decision making relating to

Strategy	• Develop and maintain Zoos Victoria's Digital and AI Strategy to achieve successful digital engagement, efficiency and productivity with Zoos Victoria internal and external audiences • Ensure sufficient stakeholder ownership of strategy, including the Board, Senior Executive and staff • Accountable for the Information and Data Protection Framework and ensure Zoos Victoria meets our regulatory and legal responsibilities in regards to privacy and handling customer data • Accountable for the reliability of internal and external applications
Operational	Data • Develop data governance policies and procedures • Develop a centralised data management framework that supports the organisations decision making and measurement of performance of the organisation against strategy • Increase data literacy of key functional areas to increase evidence based decision making across the business • Responsibility for the cybersecurity and data protection practices of Zoos Victoria ensuring our systems, procedures and security measures remain robust and best practice Project Management • Initiates, champions and stewards projects that are value drivers in the technology, new media and data space • Lead high impact business application projects with effective change management • Manage key stakeholders, including senior management across all properties • Develop project plans which include scope, risk, schedule, budget, communications, resources and success criteria • Liaise with other parties which will impact, or be impacted by, technical projects • Manage and deliver projects according to agreed plans • Raise and escalate issues and risks with potential to impact delivery of projects • Ensure that new technology, systems and processes are handed over for effective business as usual. Innovation • Research and advise on new technologies that achieve ZV's conservation and commercial outcomes and seek out innovators capable of delivering quality outcomes • Generate the ideas that lead to system enhancements that impact functional areas to achieve their business plans and strategy • Champion new technology and education stakeholders on innovations that achieve Zoos Victoria's conservation outcomes

Accountabilities & decision making relating to	
	- Seek out and encourage innovators who have the capability to deliver quality outcomes - Present to management and staff on new technology and practices - Undertake any other reasonable duties, tasks or responsibilities within the scope and capability of the role's classification band, as requested from time to time to support organisational priorities.
Stakeholder Management	- Influence key stakeholders, and senior management decision making by acting as a trusted advisor for new and ongoing initiatives across all properties - Create the forums to engage stakeholder groups, including property leadership teams and the Senior Executive Team in identifying emerging technology requirements and updating them on the technology roadmap - Provides advice and assist stakeholders to maximise processes, the use of systems and data analytics to support their business and strategic outcomes - Liaise and consult with external stakeholders as appropriate
People and Culture	- Lead, support, coach and mentor direct reports, ensuring compliance with industrial, workplace, and organisational requirements - Lead and develop the digital, technology and data team and support roles - Foster a culture of accountability, safety and delivery discipline - Ensure all staff have eZepps (performance and development plans) to effectively manage staff and achieve business results - Actively collaborate with colleagues to achieve planned outcomes - Provide complex, strategic and critical advice in relation to issues for organisation wide decision making - Demonstrate conduct and decision making consistent with Zoos Victoria's Code of Conduct, organisational values and behaviours at all times
Financial	- Manage functional budgets, ensuring effective cost control and forecasting - Monitor financial performance of projects and programs, identifying risks and opportunities - Ensure value for money in innovation and delivery approaches
Safety	- Work within the Safety Circle - Ensure that staff are coached to work within the Safety Circle - Encourage a speak up culture - Report incidents within 24 hours of occurrence - Actively monitor workplace to identify hazards and take appropriate action to rectify if hazards found
Other: ie. Capital Development, Project, Specialist	Continuous Improvement Use lean tools to continuously improve Zoos Victoria operations

Other Reasonable Management Direction - In addition to the duties outlined above, you are also required to perform such other duties as may be directed by your manager provided these are within your competency or training.

6. Selection Criteria

6.1 Essential Qualifications

- Graduate ICT qualifications preferred
- Certification in Project Management or equivalent experience

6.2 Essential Experience

- Extensive experience developing and implementing digital strategies with complex stakeholder management
- Extensive experience leading strategy and implementation of internal and external customer facing business applications
- Demonstrated experience in effectively leading diverse teams of staff, strong leadership skills, able to develop a unified team spirit without creating a silo effect and be an agent for organisational change
- Extensive experience leading accomplished teams in digital and/or IT
- Extensive experience coaching and mentoring managers to effectively influence stakeholders and achieve outcomes
- Experience in overseeing complex project delivery, managing ambiguity, and ensuring that project outcomes are achieved through collaboration
- Experience managing senior stakeholders in a complex organisation
- Extensive experience in data analytics that support both operational objectives and the monitoring of key drives of the organisation's strategy

6.3 Essential Skills, Knowledge & Attributes

High emotional intelligence and confidence managing teams in a complex environment

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- High level of understanding of technology business systems
- Strong analytical skills and experience in performance reporting and developing performance measurements
- Ability to build strong working relationships with key stakeholders and influence key personnel on processes and systems change and in embedding change
- Excellent trouble shooting skills

6.5 Other requirements

- Working With Children Check is required
- National Police Check is required
- A Victorian Drivers Licence is required

7. Inherent Requirements

Employees are expected to take ownership and pride in maintaining presentation standards that meet Zoos Victoria expectations, and to proactively report any areas where these standards are not being achieved. Zoos Victoria endeavours to provide a safe working environment for all staff. The below describes the critical inherent requirements associated with this job.

7.1 Physical

- **Multi-Site Operational Mobility:** Ability to travel independently between the four organisational sites (Melbourne, Werribee, Healesville, and Kyabram) to conduct site-based inspections and team briefings
- **Environmental Resilience:** Capacity to navigate diverse and challenging zoo environments as required, including uneven outdoor terrain, restricted "behind-the-scenes" spaces, and areas with exposure to noise, odours, and potential allergens
- **Operational Readiness:** Availability for occasional overnight stays and after-hours response to meet site-specific operational demands or emergencies
- **Active Safety Stewardship:** Maintaining up-to-date vaccinations (as required) and proactively managing personal and team fatigue in compliance with WHS legislation and safe driving protocols

7.2 Cognitive & Psychological

- **Tactical Problem-Solving:** Ability to maintain sustained concentration to resolve complex functional issues, managing multiple time-sensitive projects simultaneously in a fast-paced environment
- **Change Implementation:** Psychological resilience to lead teams through large-scale organisational change, translating Executive-level strategy into clear, functional workflows
- **Operational Adaptability:** High levels of flexibility to adjust functional priorities rapidly in response to changing site needs, animal welfare requirements, or visitor safety incidents
- **Decision-Making Under Pressure:** Capacity to make sound, data-driven decisions regarding asset risks and resource allocation while balancing competing operational demands

Emergency Response and Safety Responsibilities

This role may include responsibilities and duties in accordance with Zoos Victoria's Properties Emergency Response Plan and applicable safety standards. As a senior leader within the organisation, the incumbent is required to maintain a strong awareness of these requirements and ensure they are carried out with diligence and authority, either directly or through appropriate delegation, while ensuring full compliance with all relevant safety and regulatory standards.

Contact

Zoos Victoria is partnering with SHK on this key appointment and has appointed SHK, **Partner, Brian Barry** to lead this search.



Brian Barry is a **Partner** at SHK. Brian joined SHK Asia Pacific in 2017 having worked with an Asia-Pacific executive search and board appointments firm for the prior eleven years, focusing on senior appointments in the information technology and human resources disciplines.

In a consulting career spanning over 25 years, he has worked with many of Australasia's premier corporations. He has enjoyed success in finding truly business-engaged executives for a range of ASX-listed corporates, as well as for privately held entities and government organisations.

Brian thrives in working with companies looking to build high-performing and collaborative leadership teams. He has sourced Chief Information Officers and technology executives for organisations across a wide range of industries. He attributes his success to his knowledge of the sector, his ethical approach, well-

developed relationship skills and an unwavering commitment to delivery.

Tertiary qualified from The University of Melbourne, Brian has lectured at Swinburne University, spoken at the Australian Computer Society and is regularly sought out for professional career guidance by both seasoned performers and emerging talent. Brian is skilled in identifying executives who are highly regarded for both their commercial orientation and values-based leadership.

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