



Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited Director Applicant Information Pack 2025



1. Hort Innovation Board composition

1.1 Current Board composition

Hort Innovation's Board is a skills-based board currently comprising nine (9) non-executive Directors.

1.2 Rotation of Directors in 2025

In 2025, two (2) Directors must retire from the Board. The two retiring directors (Julie Bird and Jan Vydra) are eligible to re-apply. Both have indicated that they will be re-applying.

2. The Director Nomination Committee

Pursuant to Rule 11.2 of Hort Innovation's Constitution, the nomination of candidates for election, re-election and appointment of Directors must be undertaken exclusively by a Director Nomination Committee (DNC) comprised of four (4) individuals:

- The Chair of Hort Innovation, except where the Chair is a candidate for re-election as a Director, in which case the other Directors must appoint one of the other Directors as member and chairperson of the DNC;
- The Secretary of the Department (or his or her nominee);
- A Levy Payer (that is not a Director) selected by the Secretary of the Department (or his or her nominee); and
- An independent eminent person selected by the Board and appointed for up to three years.

The members of the 2025 DNC are as follows:

- John Said, Deputy Chair of Hort Innovation, who has been appointed by the Board to chair the DNC pursuant to Rule 11.3(a) of the Constitution (as Julie Bird is a candidate for re-election);
- Paul Denny, Assistant Secretary, Food Policy Branch in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), the nominee of the Secretary of DAFF;
- Jane Harris, the Levy Payer selected by the Secretary (or his nominee) of DAFF; and

- Professor Robert Clark, the independent eminent person selected the Hort Innovation Board.

3. What positions are available in 2025?

As set out above, the Hort Innovation Board is a skills-based Board. Following analysis of the skills and experience across the Board as currently constituted, and the coverage across these skills without the two directors retiring in 2025, the Director Nomination Committee (DNC) has determined that the skills being sought for the two roles becoming vacant in 2025 are as follows:

3.1 Skills Description for Board Vacancy 1 – Finance

- Demonstrable senior level experience in financial reporting and corporate finance with formal qualifications in finance/accounting (including CPA or CA membership) highly desirable.
- Experience in investment analysis/venture financing in an innovation/high tech environment would be highly regarded.
- Ability to contribute to key strategic business and risk issues, assessment of projects for strategic fit, innovation and risk, business case evaluation and ongoing monitoring for performance and delivery of planned outcomes.
- Experience as a member or Chair of an Audit & Risk Committee would be highly regarded.

3.2 Skills Description for Board Vacancy 2 – Horticulture Production/Supply Chain

- Understanding of production, supply chain and sales in a horticultural context, including linkages between farm profitability and supply chain costs.
- Demonstrable experience in Stakeholder Engagement, including development and oversight of stakeholder engagement frameworks and mechanisms.
- Experience in international export and domestic market access and development.
- Experience operating as a market participant or regulator in export markets, particularly within Asian markets.
- Experience in promotion, marketing and communications from an industry perspective would be highly regarded.
- Understanding of value chains in global markets would be highly regarded.
- Formal qualifications in economics or business management would be highly regarded.

4. Time commitment required of Hort Innovation Board Directors

An indicative annual time commitment would be approximately 25 days per annum, usually comprising of 7–8 board/strategy meetings and associated preparation. Board meetings are often held in Sydney at Hort Innovation's Head Office in North Sydney, with a number of meetings held each year at locations around Australia.

In addition to the general Board meetings, a director will also sit on at least one of the following Board Committees that will meet, on average, 4–5 times per year:

- Audit & Risk Committee
- Investment Committee
- People and Performance Committee

Additionally, Hort Innovation Directors may attend associated industry events and meetings (e.g. industry forums). These events and meetings will often be held outside the Sydney area.

5. Hort Innovation's commitment to diversity

Hort Innovation is committed to providing an environment that respects and promotes diversity.

Hort Innovation recognises that a workforce which represents a diverse range of backgrounds, age, ethnicity and gender will enable Hort Innovation to provide optimal service to its stakeholders.

6. Eligibility to apply

The Hort Innovation Constitution provides¹ that the following people are not eligible for nomination or appointment- as a Director in 2025:

- A current officer or employee of an Industry Representative Body**
- A current officer or employee of an entity that is not eligible under Sub-Rules 6.3(b) or (c) of the Constitution to be a Member of the Company; or a Related Body Corporate such an entity.

An example of a person or entity that would be ineligible under those provisions is a person or entity that derives the majority of its income from Hort Innovation (or body corporate related to that entity).

*** It is important to note that current officers or employees of an Industry Representative Body may apply to become a Director of Hort Innovation. However, a condition of candidature (should their application be successful), is that before their nomination to stand as a Director is made known to members, they are required to provide a written commitment to immediately stand down from their role as an officer or employee of an Industry Representative Body.*

(The definition of Industry Representative Body in the Hort Innovation Constitution includes 'peak industry bodies', and bodies who carry out agri-political activities on behalf of the whole or part of the Australian horticulture industry. For the full definition, please refer to the definition in the Hort Innovation Constitution available at www.horticulture.com.au.)

7. The Director recruitment process

7.1 Recruitment

The Hort Innovation Board has engaged Rimfire Resources to support the Director recruitment process. Rimfire Resources is a specialist agribusiness search and recruitment business and has again been appointed in 2025 to assist Hort Innovation source candidates for election to the Hort Innovation Board and manage the selection process. As part of this process, national advertisements are placed in print and online media seeking applications, and a targeted search process occurs simultaneously. Applications are received via an online application and applicants will receive an automatically generated response to confirm receipt of their application.

Following the conclusion of the advertisement and search processes, the DNC will meet to agree on a shortlist of candidates for interviews, with **interviews to be held in Sydney on Wednesday 10 September and Thursday 11 September 2025**. All applicants should diarise these dates so as to be available if included on the short list. You should expect to hear about the progress of your application no earlier than late August. Should the location of interviews change, you will be notified.

7.2 Interview Format

Interviews will be approximately 45 minutes to one (1) hour in duration and will be a panel interview with the full DNC. During the interview, candidates will be expected to present their credentials for inclusion on the Board (how they meet the criteria and how they can

¹ Rule 11.1(d)

contribute to the Board, their ideas on Hort Innovation's contribution to the horticulture industry, their thoughts on industry issues, etc.) and the Committee will ask a series of questions. There will also be an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions.

7.3 Board Skills Matrix 2025

The skills and experience sought year to year in director candidates are determined by the skills requirements of the Board. The Board of Hort Innovation has formulated its current skills requirements for the Board in the form of a Board Skills Matrix (Matrix) (see Attachment A).

As set out above, following analysis of the coverage of the current Board against the 2025 Board Skills Matrix, and also without the two directors retiring in 2025, the DNC has determined that the skills and experience required of the two vacant roles are as follows:

HORTICULTURE INNOVATION AUSTRALIA LIMITED

BOARD SKILLS MATRIX 2025

SKILL/KNOWLEDGE AREA		DESCRIPTION
1.	Governance, Risk & Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Directors must have demonstrated experience in applying corporate governance principles in commercial, not-for-profit or regulated environments, evidenced by formal qualifications (e.g. GAICD equivalent) or commitment to achieve these qualifications in the first term). Experience in implementing, managing or overseeing risk management, compliance and regulatory frameworks. Understanding of risks affecting/potentially affecting any aspect of the Australian horticulture industry.
2.	Finance, Accounting & Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to understand corporate accounts, financial materials and financial reporting requirements and their implications for risks and opportunities. At least one Director must have senior level experience in auditing or accounting, or relevant financial qualifications, with expertise in financial reporting and corporate finance.
3.	Strategy, Leadership & Business Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior level leadership experience including responsibilities for people management, successful implementation of change, managing transitions, and adapting to market or regulatory shifts. Demonstrated ability to identify strategic opportunities and threats, and develop, implement and monitor strategic priorities and achievement of business objectives. Demonstrated ability to apply broad business insights and transfer leadership skills across different industries or within complex supply chains.
4.	Horticulture Production / Supply Chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in horticultural production, processing, logistics, wholesaling and/or retailing. Horticultural business management with knowledge of the drivers of profitability and productivity in diverse farming systems.
5.	Research & Development and Applied Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in, or a thorough understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deriving strategic priorities for research, development and extension (RD&E) through industry engagement; RD&E processes as they apply to maximising impact for commercial horticulture or agrifood enterprises; and the management of a portfolio of R&D (innovation) investments towards strategic objectives. A demonstrable understanding of the Australian or international R&D and agtech ecosystems relevant to Australian horticulture.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the connection between research and commercial viability, and the ability to identify and support R&D that delivers tangible, on farm impact.
6.	Investment Evaluation & Funds Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced understanding of techniques and methods for assessing and evaluating investment returns and performance, including quantitative and qualitative measures. • Expertise in practical application of investment analysis, funds management and/or venture financing.
7.	Promotion, Marketing & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive understanding of marketing fresh produce, with emphasis on commercial sales, customer experience, knowledge of market trends, consumer behaviour, branding and product differentiation. • Experience in practical application of information technology in communications and marketing (including social media platforms) to deliver growth.
8.	Export, Market Development & Market Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience operating as a market participant or regulator in export markets, particularly within Asian markets. • Understanding of the key economic and political influences on international trade. • Experience in International/export and domestic market access and development.
9.	Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly developed skills in managing relationships with, and understanding expectations of, a diverse range of external stakeholders e.g. growers, members, government, industry representative bodies, research providers and investors. • Experience in developing and overseeing stakeholder engagement frameworks.
10.	People & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise in developing strategies for succession planning, leadership development, and talent retention. • Demonstrated ability to design and implement initiatives that promote Workplace Health & Safety (WHS), wellbeing and inclusivity. • Proven experience in setting organisational culture and tone from the top to drive improved outcomes for people and performance. • Experience in setting management performance goals and establishing effective remuneration frameworks that align with business objectives.
11.	Technology & Digital Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working knowledge of the enabling role technology plays in business activities and experience in leading/overseeing projects implementing innovative business practices. • Experience in managing change generated by technology/digital disruption or transformation.
12.	Public Policy & Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of Australian public policy, policy making and the drivers of governmental decision making.

7.4 Format of applications

Applications should include:

- A **short cover letter** outlining the skills and experience the candidate brings to the Board;
- A **full resume** (maximum 3 pages) detailing work history, relevant experience and qualifications. Please remember to include your full contact details; and
- The **Board Skills Matrix self-assessment**, using the self-assessment template and guide enclosed.

Note: All candidates will be assessed against the Board Skills Matrix by Rimfire Resources and the DNC. To assist in this process, please note that the Matrix self-assessment forms an essential part of the application.

Applications should be completed online via Rimfire Resources' website at www.rimfireresources.com.au and should be received **no later than Friday 1 August 2025**. For further information, please contact Mick Hay or Katrina Conlon at Rimfire Resources on 1300 380 701.

On receipt of your application, you will receive an automated email acknowledgement.

7.5 Confidentiality / Privacy

Applications will be received and reviewed by Rimfire Resources, who will then provide the applications to the DNC and the Hort Innovation Company Secretary. Information contained in applications and assessments conducted by the DNC may also be presented to the Hort Innovation Board.

Applicant information will not be otherwise shared, and all assessments conducted of applications received are treated as confidential information in accordance with usual recruitment practices.

All applicants will be responded to via email around late August, once the DNC has developed a shortlist of candidates for interview.

Attachments:

- Attachment A – 2025 Hort Innovation Board Skills Matrix
- Attachment B - The Board Skills Matrix self-assessment template and guide