

POSITION DESCRIPTION



Position Title	Program Manager, Sustainability R&D
Career Level	5
Location	Brisbane, North Sydney, Armidale, Perth
Position Type	Full time
Business Unit	Research Development and Adoption
Reports To	Group Manager – Sustainability
No. of Direct Reports	2
Date:	Feb, 2025

About MLA

MLA works in partnership with the red meat industry and the Australian Government to deliver marketing, research and development products and services to cattle, sheep and goat producers.

Our vision:

Enduring prosperity for the Australian red meat and livestock industry.

Our purpose:

To deliver world leading outcomes that fuel global competitiveness, sustainability and producer profitability.

Our values:

- Integrity at heart
- Stronger together
- Future focused

Position Purpose

- To lead the Sustainability R&D Program
- To develop strategy for and deliver research, development and adoption (RD&A) activities nationally for sustainability of sheep and beef production.
- Through targeted RD&A deliver impact to position Australian beef and sheep industries as a world leader in sustainability according to priorities identified and supported by industry consultation.
- To align sustainability RD&A activities with cross sectional RD&A programs within MLA.
- To develop and implement national and international collaborative partnerships that deliver against MLA investment plan program areas and provide key industry leadership for MLA with industry RD&A committees.

Key Accountabilities

- Consultation with Cattle Australia, Sheep Producers Australia, Australian Lot Feeders' Association, Regional Research Committees, Red Meat Panel and the Beef and Sheep Sustainability Frameworks on RD&A priorities for sustainability.
- Development of short-term and long-term strategic plans, implementation and investment strategies that drive improved beef and sheep industry sustainability and profitability. Alignment of MLA strategic plans, implementation and investment strategies with industry strategic plans and direction
- Development and management of budgets for the strategies. Manage program expenditure relative to approved budgets.
- Oversee the prioritisation, review and selection process for projects aligned to beef and sheep industry strategies.
- Development of Terms of Reference based on priorities identified through consultation with the Red Meat Panel, Cattle Australia, Sheep Producers Australia or the Australian Beef or Sheep Sustainability Frameworks prior to submitting to the MLA procurement and project approval process.
- Develop and lead opportunities to leverage RD&A consortia in aligned areas that underpin major strategic investments to improve delivery of industry outcomes
- Research service provider procurement in accordance with MLA Policy.
- Negotiation and execution of contracts for research in accordance with MLA guidelines to ensure that intellectual property is adequately protected.
- Project Management of R&D projects with MLA procedures in order to achieve outcomes within specified time limits and budget. The Program manager is to share project management workload with the project manager, and it is expected that an equitable numbers of projects will be managed by both the Project and Program manager in each team.
- At the request of MLA management attend industry forums, workshops, seminars and conferences.
- Participation in MLA business and annual investment plan development.
- Provide quarterly reports as required on program and project performance to MLA management and update peak industry bodies.
- Regular travel (up to 40% of time) for project management, industry consultation and innovation finding purposes.
- Liaison with industry Peak Councils and other industry groups, including Australian Lot Feeders Association (ALFA), Cattle Australia (CA), Sheep Producers Australia, Goat Industry Council of Australia (GICA), Regional research councils, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), government and research organisations as necessary to ensure agreed program/project outcomes and report progress and outcomes of R&D program.
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge and expertise in, beef cattle and sheep production and value chains; including a network of appropriate professional contacts within relevant industry and professional associations, and knowledge of research groups and consultants who have skills required by MLA.
- In collaboration with RDA adoption team support timely and effective communication, extension and/or commercialisation of R&D outcomes.
- Comply with MLA's policies and procedures in workplace health and safety as applicable to self, other Workers and all activities within area of responsibility and control
- Development and approval of communications programs for research outcomes.
- Collaboration with other MLA staff to develop RD&A projects including but not limited to environmental credential system development, land condition, sheep and goat production, beef

production, adoption & extension, feedbase, feedlot production, ag-tech and grazing best practice management.

- Provide leadership and supervision to MLA Project Managers on the development and management of their respective programs.
- Technical management and oversight of the MLA carbon calculator platform in accordance with domestic and international standards.

Major Challenges and Complexities

- Identification of best partners and innovation ideas for RD&A investment and industry impact.
- Developing project management frameworks for research projects at university and commercial beef and sheep supply chains that keep research on track, according to agreed schedules and expected outcomes.
- Developing and maintaining positive internal and external relationships with colleagues, stakeholders and R&D suppliers.
- Integration of MLA extension and communication activities with R&D to ensure that R&D has appropriate pathways to market through innovation and adoption programs
- Projects and program run to schedule and budget
- Ability to analyse complex information and translate it into practical messages for industry
- Communicating and engaging with stakeholders to drive practice change
- Working across and with multiple MLA business units

Key Relationships

Internal

- RDA General Manager
- RDA Group Manager – Sustainability
- RDA Group Manager – Productivity and Wellbeing
- RDA Group Manager – Science & Innovation
- RDA Group Manager – Adoption
- RDA Program Manager – Sustainability Credentials
- MLA Legal Counsel
- Other MLA Managers as appropriate

External

- Peak industry bodies
- Beef Supply chains and producers
- Collaborating R&D providers
- Industry service providers
- Associated industry organisations
- State and Federal Governments

Other (i.e. travel required, on call)

Frequent regional and interstate travel

Authority

What does the person have the authority to do?

Lead and negotiate development of Investment Priorities

Develop project schedules and contracts for approval as per MLA procurement, delegations of authority, and contract and work approval process policies.

Approve technical content of research projects and payments of milestones

What does the person need to seek approval for?

- All travel
- All association memberships, requests for presentations, and conferences planned
- Any change to agreed business processes and protocols

Essential Qualifications / Skills / Experience / Competencies

- Extensive experience (>10 years) in R&D program management involving Beef cattle and Sheep in feedlot and/or grazing systems.
- Extensive experience and demonstrated achievement in delivering outcomes that improve the sustainability and profitability of industry
- Strong knowledge of sustainability principals, climate change, soil science and agro-forestry.
- Strong knowledge of statistics and experimental design
- Strong knowledge of cost-benefit analysis for capital and operational expenses in agricultural enterprises.
- Strong knowledge and understanding of key drivers of profitability and sustainability of the feedlot and grazing industry, and knowledge of the priorities and issues affecting these industries.
- Graduate and Post Graduate training (or appropriate industry experience) in science, animal science, or related disciplines.
- High quality written and verbal communication skills, including the capacity to prepare and deliver papers and briefings at Board and Senior Management level, and to prepare and present information to public and stakeholder audiences
- Ability to provide leadership to project managers and stakeholders and deal effectively with conflict.
- Strong interpersonal skills, good time management and prioritisation skills.
- Passion and enthusiasm to achieve outstanding results for MLA stakeholders.