Rice Industry Leadership Program
2017-2020

Extended to 2021 due to COVID-19
Background Objectives

Background

The Rice Industry Leadership Program’s vision was to establish a self-replenishing cohort of rice industry leaders who are diverse in knowledge and experience, and who are skilled, confident and self-aware to take on leadership roles with organisations directly and indirectly associated with the rice industry.

A total of 163 people successfully participated in and completed a component of the Rice Industry Leadership Program. Almost 20% of these participants have since moved into leadership roles within the rice industry or supporting industries, or within local communities.

Objectives

The objectives of the Rice Industry Leadership Program were as follows:

Objective 1: Develop a self-replenishing, multi-skilled and diverse rice industry leadership cohort capable of servicing the leadership needs of the rice industry

Objective 2: Develop a knowledgeable, skilled and articulate rice industry leadership cohort

Objective 3: Develop a more unified and active rice industry leaders alumni network

Objective 4: Develop a more robust and in-depth understanding of the drivers of, and impediments to, uptake of the program and positions.

Program methodology

Methods used through the Rice Leadership Program included residential training workshops, short face-to-face workshops, online learning opportunities and social networking events.

The Ricegrowers Association of Australia, in conjunction with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation and the Rice Extension team developed and delivered residential programs. These programs focused on emerging leaders and the next generation.

The Australian Institute of Company Directors was engaged to assist with the development of established industry leaders. Members of this group have now moved into senior leadership roles within the rice industry.

Program achievements

A total of 163 people completed leadership activities as part of the Rice Industry Leadership Program.

By investing in leadership development, the industry has been able to improve its ability to pursue initiatives in the public interest and deliver direct and indirect benefits for communities. A common value reinforced throughout the program is the important role the rice industry plays economically, socially and environmentally for local businesses, communities and the broader agricultural and irrigation industries.

Because people who work in agriculture often find the job isolating, the social interactions and networking opportunities were central to the program’s success. But the success underlined the need for professional development opportunities across the rice industry, the broader agricultural sector and, in particular, in rural and regional communities. A limited number of people in the industry are willing to take on leadership roles outside their own business, and this has the potential to affect industry stakeholders because there is a risk there won’t be the right people to lead businesses and industry in the future.

It is imperative that the rice industry continues to develop and encourage future leaders through different professional development opportunities. If this is not done, there will be a shortage of leaders to take the rice industry into the future.

Through this program, the rice industry has evolved and grown its understanding of the importance of strong leadership, and has made progress towards having an industry that truly believes in its people and their ability to take it forward.

Media promotion

Online analytics collected from May 2018 to July 2021.


Facebook: More than 30 posts with a combined reach of over 15,900 people.

Instagram: Five posts with a combined reach of over 1500 people (account launched in April 2020).

Twitter: More than 30 posts with an estimated combined reach of over 20,000 people.

Newspapers: Several articles in local newspapers in rice-growing regions.

Acknowledgements

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