

POSITION DESCRIPTION



Business Manager



POSITION DETAILS

Position Title	BUSINESS MANAGER
Classification	HEW 8
Position Number	7013348
School/Office	Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
Division	Provost

POSITION PURPOSE

Western is host to the Australian Plant Phenomics Network (APPN), a National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) program, supported by the Commonwealth Government. The APPN is a nationwide network of research facilities whose mission is to provide open access to advanced technologies for digital phenotyping of horticultural and agricultural crops. The APPN node at Western encompasses three primary research platforms: the National Vegetable Protected Cropping Centre; the Whole-Tree Chamber facility; and the Pastures and Climate Extremes facility.

The mission of the APPN is to provide client-focused access to advanced research facilities to support digital, high-throughput measurement of plant traits (phenotypes) to catalyze innovation in horticultural and agricultural research. The APPN node at Western seeks to host clients with research needs in protected cropping horticulture, horticultural tree crops and pasture and forage crops.

The Business Manager takes a leading role in the governance and administration of the APPN's node at Western and serves as point of contact for researchers and partners. The Business Manager is responsible for business and financial operations, business development, strategic planning, and engagement.

Working in close collaboration with the Node Director, the Business Manager will ensure the efficient operation of Western's APPN facilities, manage financial resources, monitor performance, nurture stakeholder relationships and drive initiatives to continuously improve the facility's service delivery and outputs.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Business Operations

- Manage a rigorous financial structure for the efficient operation of the facility, prepare budgets and financial statements, monitor performance against budgets, and regularly review client pricing and access policies.

- Manage a high standard of record keeping and contribute to the timely preparation of quarterly progress reports, performance reports and milestone updates.
- Manage the administration of APPN projects and activities including establishment, contracting, monitoring, and reporting.
- Ensure the facility complies with all relevant regulatory authorities.
- Seek and address client feedback and implement quality controls to maximise service delivery.
- Be responsible for providing administrative support to the Node Director as required.

2. Business Development

- In collaboration with the Node Director, pursue opportunities to increase facility usage by identifying new clients or potential projects with existing facility users.
- Develop and implement targets and measure against organisational performance indicators.
- Contribute to the preparation of funding applications to enhance plant phenomics capabilities.
- Assist in the acquisition of new technologies by preparing business proposals, risk assessments and contribute to the development of supplier agreements.
- Support the Node Director in liaising with stakeholders, including research, horticulture, agriculture, government and industry partners to enhance facility capabilities and maximise end-user benefit.

3. Strategic Planning

- Create operational plans for the node facilities to support the strategic goals of the APPN and Western Sydney University.
- Regularly evaluate and update operational plans incorporating sound business and professional practices aimed at maximising efficiency, financial performance, and long-term sustainability of the node.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

- Serve as point of contact for administration, management, communication, and outreach matters relevant to the APPN node.
- Develop and maintain positive, respectful relationships with facility users, collaborators, industry contacts, government agencies, regulatory authorities, and APPN network partners.
- Support the Node Director in preparing responses to requests for information from various stakeholders.
- Support the Node Director in preparing and implementing a communications plan in collaboration with the APPN network central office and node partners.

5. Professional Development

- Engage in training and development activities as negotiated with the Institute's Professor and Node Director of the Australian Plant Phenomics Network to ensure currency of professional skills in an advancing technological environment and demonstrating skills in initiating new and innovative ideas for consideration.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

1. A tertiary qualification with experience in research project management or equivalent training and experience in industry or government.

2. Demonstrated experience in business operations and financial management in a service environment.
3. Demonstrated ability to prepare written business and operational plans, financial and milestone reports, and briefs.
4. Demonstrated experience in business development with diverse stakeholders, including researchers, industry or government.
5. Demonstrated experience in effective leadership to improve performance, establish a harmonious working environment and maintain an outcome-based focus.
6. Prior experience in a plant science research environment and/or related industry is desirable

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

This position reports to the Professor and Node Director of the Australian Plant Phenomics Network.

This position has no supervisory responsibilities.

Success in the role will be dependent on developing and maintaining positive relationships with:

1. Professor (APPN Node Director)
2. Office of Marketing
3. Office of Research Services
4. Colleagues within the Institute, and across the University
5. Australian Plant Phenomics Network, lead organisation at the University of Adelaide and other node partners in the network.

CHALLENGES

- Balancing user expectations with facility limitations such as availability, compliance constraints, and environmental conditions.
- Aligning node operations with NCRIS and APPN governance requirements while delivering accurate, timely reporting and milestone updates
- Integrating scientific project needs with business and operational requirements to ensure budgets, schedules, and procurement decisions are aligned and achievable.
- Building sustainable client relationships in a competitive and evolving landscape.

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

The University expects that all employees are aware of, and comply with legislation and Western's policies and procedures relevant to the position, including but not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Work Health and Safety and Wellbeing Management System
- Enterprise Agreement or Award
- Anti-discrimination principles, Equal Employment Opportunity and staff and student equity.

Approved by: People and Culture Partner

Date: 8 May 2026