

Expression of Interest April 2026

Position Description: Independent Chair – Dairy Animal Care Assurance Program (ACAP) Steering Committee

Context

The Australian Dairy Industry Council (ADIC) is developing an industry-led, science-based Animal Care Assurance Program (ACAP) for the Australian dairy sector. ACAP is designed to meet regulatory expectations, reflect current science, commercial practice, support ongoing improvement, and build trust across the value chain—from farmer to consumer. Development commenced in September 2025, with key stages progressing through 2026, and is supported by dairy farmers, animal welfare experts, veterinarians, processors, and key supply chain partners.

Role Purpose

ADIC seeks an independent Chair to lead the ACAP Steering Committee through the program's development phase. The Chair will provide impartial, strategic leadership to guide and facilitate the Steering Committee's deliberations in achieving the Steering Committee and ADIC goals and objectives. The Chair will foster constructive discussion and debate with the purpose of bringing diverse stakeholder views and perspectives together to deliver clear, consensus-based recommendations for ADIC's decision-making.

Key Responsibilities

- Facilitate the ACAP Steering Committee in setting its strategic objectives and plans to enable ACAP to achieve its ultimate goals
- Set agendas and priorities for Steering Committee meetings
- Facilitate focused, outcome-driven discussions and guide the Committee toward consensus-based recommendations
- Identify matters requiring escalation to ADIC and clearly articulate options, risks, and implications
- Ensure advice provided to ADIC is robust and balanced
- Support adherence to agreed governance processes, timelines, and stage-gate requirements
- Contribute to stakeholder engagement and relationship management
- Act as a spokesperson for ACAP during the development phase, as agreed with ADIC

Outcomes by End of Appointment

At the conclusion of the engagement, the independent Chair will have:

- Led the Steering Committee through the development of ACAP Version 1, resolving key strategic and technical issues and delivering a clear set of recommendations ready for ADIC endorsement
- Established effective committee ways of working that enable constructive challenge, timely progress, and stakeholder confidence
- Supported alignment across farmers, processors, veterinarians, and animal welfare experts
- Contributed to positioning ACAP as a credible, science-based, and trusted assurance framework

Authority

The independent Chair does not hold formal decision-making authority for ACAP but is empowered to shape the Committee's workplan, guide its deliberations, and ensure high-quality advice is presented to ADIC for decision.

Current governance arrangements

The development of ACAP is overseen by a Steering Committee and supported by a Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

- The Steering Committee provides strategic direction, governance, and oversight for the national Animal Care Assurance Program, leading the co-development of program standards and the assessment framework, with final approval held by ADIC; it comprises representatives from ADF, ADPF, Australian Cattle Veterinarians, independent farmers, and processors.
- The TAG provides independent, science-informed and practical technical advice for Steering Committee consideration and is made up of animal welfare and health scientists, a practicing veterinarian, a milk processor representative, and dairy producers.

Secretariat support to both committees is provided by Dairy Australia, who have commissioned ACER Consulting to provide expert technical advisory services. The independent Chair will work closely with the TAG Chair and Secretariat to ensure appropriate flow of information, clear delineation of roles, and alignment between technical advice and Steering Committee deliberations.

Australian Dairy Industry Council, and their two constituent bodies Australian Dairy Farmers and Australian Dairy Products Federation, are the owners of any future ACAP and final decision makers.

Independent Chair Role

ADIC are seeking an independent chair to lead the Steering Committee. The Chair will be responsible for guiding the Steering Committee toward clear recommendations, ensuring readiness for stage gate decisions, and supporting ADIC with balanced, evidence based advice. In addition to chairing meetings, this role will include stakeholder engagement and

may involve being a key spokesperson for an ACAP during this early development phase, where representation is required and authorised by ADIC.

Estimated days: 10 across the remainder of 2026 with possible extension into 2027.

This is a remunerated role in accordance with Dairy Australia committee sitting-fee policy. Respondents are asked to submit their reasonable expectation for a daily rate noting it is not assured this will be the rate offered.

Meetings will be held at least monthly but ad hoc meetings may be required, meetings will be a combination of face-to-face and remote.

The Chair must be independent of Dairy Australia and dairy industry representative organisations (i.e., not a current employee, Executive member or Director).

Competencies sought for the Chair include:

- Strong leadership, facilitation and stakeholder communication and engagement skills.
- Proven experience chairing committees or boards.
- Experience leading or overseeing assurance, certification, or standards based programs in regulated or high trust environments would be well regarded.
- Experience navigating community trust, social licence, or NGO scrutiny.
- Broad understanding of the agricultural supply chain.
- Strategic, innovative and solutions-focused thinking.
- Availability and commitment to the role.

Selection criteria

Along with the competencies listed above, applicants should demonstrate:

- Relevant sector expertise (dairy or agricultural supply chain).
- Strategic leadership and governance capabilities.
- Strong communication, collaboration and decision-making skills.
- Commitment to the objectives of ACAP.

An ADIC selection committee will be established to assess candidates against prescribed criteria and will make a recommendation to ADIC for ratification.

Conflicts of interest

Respondents are asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as part of their application.

How to apply

Interested parties are invited to submit:

- A brief cover letter (no more than two pages) outlining their interest and addressing the selection criteria.
- A curriculum vitae (CV).

- Expectation for a daily rate noting it is not assured this will be the rate offered.
- Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Contact details for at least two referees.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a contract for their roles with Dairy Australia.

Timeline

Closing date for applications: 8 May 2026

Role commences: 10 June 2026

Further information

For further information or to apply, please contact Andy Hancock – Dairy Australia – andrew.hancock@dairyaustralia.com.au