Australian Government

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research





Job information pack

General Manager, Corporate

Make a difference in the world. Work at ACIAR

Position Number:	0073
Classification:	SES Band 1
Branch:	Corporate
Location:	Forrest, ACT
Employment Type:	Non-ongoing specified term for up to 5 years

Support us to grow food efficiently, improve human nutrition, empower women and girls, reduce poverty, and manage natural resources sustainably.

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) is a globally unique organisation operating in a dynamic and complex environment under the *Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Act 1982*. ACIAR is a statutory (non-corporate) agency within the Australian Government's Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio. Our headquarters are in Forrest (Canberra). Further information on our current projects, programs and priorities can be found at https://www.aciar.gov.au/.

ACIAR fosters international agricultural research-for-development partnerships between researchers, governments, civil society and the private sector. These partnerships aim to improve food security, reduce poverty and enhance environmental sustainability in partner countries.

ACIAR-supported research and capacity development programs contribute significantly to Australia's International Development Policy, enhancing the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, building community resilience and increasing science and policy skills of individuals and organisations in partner countries and in Australia.

ACIAR is currently refreshing its 10-year Strategy ACIAR 10-Year Strategy 2018–27. This process is expected to be completed by early 2027.

About this exciting opportunity

The General Manager, Corporate (GMC) is a member of ACIAR's Executive team, reporting to the CEO. The role offers the opportunity to lead corporate transformation in a small, internationally focused Australian Government agency whose people and programs operate across diverse countries, institutions and regulatory environments.

The role leads agency-wide operational effectiveness, integrating corporate services, governance, legal risk management and organisational capability to translate strategy into clear priorities, accountabilities and measurable delivery.

The GMC connects ACIAR's corporate operations with its international development purpose. Working with research, partnership and country teams, the role ensures that systems, resources and investment processes support effective research delivery and capacity development across diverse operating environments, while maintaining sound stewardship of public funds and accountability for development outcomes.

The GMC provides integrated executive oversight of finance, people and culture, ICT and digital services, procurement and contracting, property, security, risk and assurance. The role establishes the operating

frameworks, service standards and proportionate controls that enable these functions to work together and support program delivery.

The GMC leads a business partnering approach that embeds corporate expertise in agency planning, investment governance and decision-making from the outset. This includes coordinating support for overseas staff and activities, aligning financial, procurement, contracting, ICT and security arrangements with delivery needs, and managing cross-agency risks and dependencies without displacing program or country-level accountabilities.

The GMC is a principal adviser to the CEO on operational, governance and legal risk, ensuring specialist advice is translated into practical action. The role supports effective governance and accountability arrangements, coordinates high-quality advice and reporting for the Commission for International Agricultural Research and relevant governance committees, and brings together performance, assurance and investment information to support informed decisions and statutory reporting. The GMC also leads cross-agency improvement and represents ACIAR with partner agencies and key stakeholders on operational, governance and corporate matters.

DUTIES INCLUDE

1. Provide enterprise-wide operational leadership as a member of the Executive team, advising the CEO on delivery priorities, organisational capability, resource allocation and emerging operational, governance and legal risks; exercise sound judgement, uphold APS Values and integrity, and represent ACIAR in negotiations and cross-agency forums.
2. Lead integrated corporate governance and compliance arrangements across finance, employment, ICT, procurement, contracting, security and property, ensuring clear responsibilities, effective delegations, proportionate controls and timely escalation of material issues.
3. Translate ACIAR's strategy into integrated operating and investment arrangements, partnering with Research and Partnership leaders to align corporate services, resources and end-to-end delivery with agreed priorities, service standards and measurable outcomes without displacing program accountabilities.
4. Lead organisational reform and modernisation of ACIAR's corporate operating model business processes and digital and systems, simplifying arrangements where possible and ensuring change delivers demonstrable improvements in workforce capability, service quality and program delivery.
5. Oversee enterprise risk, internal assurance, audit follow-up and business continuity arrangements, providing the CEO and relevant governance committees with clear reporting on performance, control effectiveness and emerging exposures.
6. Lead legal services coordination and legal risk management, including obtaining specialist advice, overseeing external legal providers, and ensuring advice informs decisions, contracts and the management of disputes and sensitive matters.
7. Provide executive oversight of financial sustainability, budgeting, procurement and contract management, working with the CFO and specialist officers to support sound investment decisions, value for money and appropriate stewardship of public resources.
8. Lead multidisciplinary corporate teams and specialist service providers, setting clear priorities and accountabilities, resolving operational dependencies, and building a safe, inclusive and collaborative workplace with strong leadership capability, workforce planning, succession arrangements and a practical, service-focused culture.

Capability Requirements

In addition to meeting the Work Level Standards for the SES Band 1 Classification and adhering to the Secretaries Charter of Leadership Behaviours and SES performance leadership framework the following criteria also apply:

1. Strategic Thinking - Connects organisational strategy with operational delivery, anticipating dependencies and translating complex policy, financial and legal considerations into clear priorities and practical options for the CEO.
2. Achieves Results - Demonstrates delivery of cross-organisational reform, integrated services and systems improvement, with clear accountabilities, responsible and reliable corporate services, effective resource management and measurable benefits.
3. Cultivates Productive Working Relationships - Builds trust across research, partnerships and corporate functions, works effectively with specialist advisers and partner agencies, and resolves competing priorities through collaboration.
4. Exemplifies Personal Drive and Integrity - Exercises independent judgement, provides frank advice, manages conflicts of interest and sensitive information appropriately, and balances delivery with lawful, ethical and accountable decision-making.
5. Communicates With Influence - Explains complex operational, governance and legal issues clearly, presents balanced options and recommendations, and negotiates effectively with executives, professional advisers and external stakeholders.
6. Leadership - Leads multidisciplinary teams through change, builds specialist and leadership capability, and fosters a safe, inclusive, accountable and service-focused culture.
7. Role specific Experience - Senior-level experience leading integrated operations, corporate governance and organisational change, with demonstrated capability leading complex corporate functions and managing legal risk, procurement and contracting, financial oversight and the effective use of specialist advice.

Mandatory Qualifications/Experience

1. Tertiary qualifications in law, business, finance, public administration, human resources or another relevant field; and
2. Significant senior leadership experience in complex operational environments and a well-developed understanding of Commonwealth governance, accountability and whole-of-government frameworks, policies and processes.

Legal qualifications and experience in government or administrative law, procurement and contracting, or regulatory governance are highly desirable.

Eligibility

- Australian Citizenship - our successful candidate must be an Australian citizen.
- Security clearance - our successful candidate will be required to obtain and maintain a Negative Vetting Level 2 security clearance.

Contact

For information regarding the recruitment process, please contact HRsupport@aciar.gov.au or call 02 6217 0500. Enquiries specific to the role may be directed, in confidence, to the Chief Executive Officer via the Executive Assistant at Jackie.Madasu@aciar.gov.au or call 02 6217 0548.

How to apply

Tell us in 1000 words or less why you are the right person, what you can offer, and how your skills, knowledge, experience, and qualification are relevant to the role.

Please ensure you provide your pitch by either uploading it to the attachments section or complete the Cover Letter textbox.

Try not to duplicate information that can already be found in your resume but do highlight any specific examples or achievements that will demonstrate your ability to perform the role. Please attach a concise resume (PDF preferred) which clearly outlines your work experience, educational qualifications, and relevant skills.

Please also provide two referees who can attest and validate your credentials and suitability for the role.

NB: All ACIAR employees demonstrate a commitment to the APS Code of Conduct and Values, as well as to workplace diversity and workplace health and safety. It is also expected that ACIAR employees will have appropriate cross-cultural sensitivities.