



Final report

Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging (ICMJ) 2021–2026 Program

Project code: P.PSH.1370

Prepared by: Maria Thompson, ICMJ National Coordinator along with ICMJ
National Committee

Date published: May 2026

PUBLISHED BY
Meat & Livestock Australia Limited
PO Box 1961
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

Meat & Livestock Australia acknowledges the matching funds provided by the Australian Government to support the research and development detailed in this publication.

This publication is published by Meat & Livestock Australia Limited ABN 39 081 678 364 (MLA). Care is taken to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication. However MLA cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information or opinions contained in the publication. You should make your own enquiries before making decisions concerning your interests. Reproduction in whole or in part of this publication is prohibited without prior written consent of MLA.

Abstract

The Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging (ICMJ) program is a national leadership, education and people development initiative designed to inspire and develop future professionals in the global red meat industry. Between 2021 and 2026, the program delivered four National Conferences, four Northern Conferences, four Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) Weeks, four USA industry tours, two Asian immersion tours, nine annual careers expos, 13 professional development activities, alumni engagement initiatives and a comprehensive communications program.

Despite COVID-19 disruptions in the early years, all program objectives were achieved. Across the project period, 442 students, 93 coaches and 16 young industry professionals participated in National Conferences. Northern Conference participation also continued to grow, achieving a 50:50 student-to-industry participant ratio in 2025 and 2026, with 540 participants attending from 2023-2026. Post conference survey results demonstrated consistently strong knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) outcomes, with more than 90% of participants reporting increased industry knowledge, skills, networks and career interest. Over 80 students participated in IIED Weeks and 20 students represented Australia on USA study tours. A 2026 alumni survey (n=169) found that 95% of respondents were either working in or studying towards a career in the red meat industry, with 89% indicating ICMJ influenced their decision to pursue or remain in the sector.

Beyond individual participant outcomes, the program has created a long-term pipeline of industry talent and leadership, with many alumni returning as coaches, mentors, committee members, presenters, sponsors and industry advocates. This multiplier effect extends the benefits of the program well beyond individual events and contributes to the long-term capability, connectivity and sustainability of the Australian red meat and livestock industry.

Executive summary

Background

The Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging (ICMJ) program is a national people development initiative designed to increase participant knowledge, skills, networks and career opportunities within the Australian red meat and livestock industry. Funded by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC) along with a number of industry sponsors, the program targets tertiary students, young industry professionals, coaches and alumni to build capability and strengthen workforce attraction and retention across the red meat supply chain. This report evaluates the outcomes of the program from 2021–22 to 2025–26 and provides evidence of participant engagement, capability development and long-term industry impact.

Objectives

The project aimed to:

- Deliver annual National and Northern Conferences to increase participant knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the red meat industry.
- Deliver annual Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) Weeks and international study tours to broaden participant industry knowledge and leadership capability.
- Deliver annual Careers Expos and professional development activities to strengthen industry engagement and career awareness.
- Develop and maintain alumni engagement activities, communications and governance systems to support the long-term sustainability of the program.

All project objectives were successfully achieved during the funding period.

Methodology

The project was delivered through a range of industry development activities designed to build participant knowledge, skills, networks and career pathways within the Australian red meat and livestock industry. Key activities included the annual National Conferences and meat judging competitions, Northern Conferences, IIED weeks, international study tours to the USA and Asia, Careers Expos, professional development workshops, alumni engagement initiatives and communications activities. Program delivery was supported by a volunteer National Committee, Northern Committee, industry coaches, sponsors, a contracted National Coordinator and a media coordinator. Key reflections year on year helped inform the subsequent next year's program design and delivery culminating in this final report and recommendations for ICMJ program beyond 2026.

Results/key findings

Between 2021 and 2026, the program delivered four National Conferences, four Northern Conferences (noting that the 2021-2022 northern conferences were funded under an alternate contract P.PIP.0769), four IIED Weeks, four USA study tours, Asian immersion tours, nine annual Careers Expos and 13 professional development activities. Across all programs, participants consistently reported increased industry knowledge, technical skills, professional networks and career interest, with more than 90% of respondents reporting positive outcomes.

An Alumni Impact Survey (n=169) demonstrated strong long-term impact, with 95% of respondents either working in, or studying towards, a career in the red meat industry and 89% indicating that ICMJ influenced their decision to pursue or remain in the sector.

Benefits to industry

The project strengthened the capability, leadership and networks of current and future employees across the Australian livestock and red meat supply chain. It provided a proven pathway for industry attraction, industry retention and professional development, while creating stronger connections between students, industry professionals, employers and international partners. The program also contributed to developing future industry leaders, coaches, mentors and committee members who continue to work in and to invest back into the sector.

Future research and recommendations

The outcomes achieved throughout the project demonstrate that the current ICMJ program model is highly effective and should continue to be supported and expanded. Continued investment in the National Conference, Northern Conference, IIED Week, international study tours, Careers Expos, professional development activities and alumni engagement initiatives is recommended to maintain the program's strong industry attraction, retention and leadership development outcomes.

Future opportunities include expanding the program through the introduction of a Southern Industry Tour to provide participants with greater exposure to southern production systems, processing and supply chains and exploring opportunities to engage secondary school teachers to strengthen awareness of red meat industry careers and pathways among future participants. Continued investment in alumni engagement and strong M&E is also recommended to further demonstrate the long-term impact of the program.

Invest in governance and leadership development for ICMJ committee members, including support for up to two Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) courses annually. All current and former committee members from the past five years have remained within the red meat and livestock industry, ensuring that governance capability developed through ICMJ continues to benefit the broader industry beyond an individual's tenure on the committee.

To support the ongoing growth, sustainability and modernisation of ICMJ, the governance review currently underway should be progressed, including the implementation of the recommended governance framework and transition to a company limited by guarantee. Investment in contemporary systems, processes and digital infrastructure is also recommended, including redevelopment of the ICMJ website, enhancement of online resources and streamlining of program administration and communications. These improvements will strengthen participant engagement, improve operational efficiency and ensure the organisation remains on purpose and well positioned to continue delivering value to the Australian red meat industry beyond 2026.

Acknowledgements

The Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging Association (ICMJ) program is built on the commitment, passion and generosity of many individuals and organisations across the Australian red meat and livestock industry.

We acknowledge the contribution of the current and past National Committee members who voluntarily dedicated their time to the governance, strategic direction and delivery of the program. Particular recognition is extended to the Executive Committee for its leadership and decision-making throughout the project period. We also thank the employers who supported committee members in undertaking these roles, and the families and partners whose support has helped make this volunteer contribution possible.

We also acknowledge the current and past Northern Committee members whose commitment and enthusiasm have been instrumental in the planning and delivery of the Northern Conference and its continued growth and success.

Sincere thanks are extended to our sponsors, industry partners, presenters, workshop facilitators, volunteers and helpers who contributed their time, expertise and resources to the program. Their ongoing investment demonstrates a shared commitment to developing the people and future leadership of the Australian red meat industry.

We also acknowledge the ICMJ coach network, whose dedication to recruiting, training, mentoring and preparing students is fundamental to the success of the program.

The Association particularly acknowledges Teys Australia for its longstanding commitment to ICMJ through both financial sponsorship and the provision of its processing facilities and staff support for the National and Northern Conferences. Access to these facilities is essential for the delivery of the beef judging competitions. This partnership is a cornerstone of the ICMJ program and underpins one of the most unique and impactful learning experiences within the program.

Finally, we thank the hundreds of students, young industry professionals and alumni who have participated in ICMJ activities over the past five years. The relationships, networks and leadership developed through ICMJ will continue to benefit the Australian red meat industry well beyond the completion of this project.

Table of contents

Abstract	2
Executive summary	3
Background	3
Objectives	3
Methodology	3
Results/key findings	3
Benefits to industry	4
Future research and recommendations	4
Acknowledgements	5
1. Background	9
2. Objectives	9
3. Methodology	11
3.1 Annual ICMJ National Conferences	11
3.1.1 Location and timing	11
3.1.2 Conference delivery	12
3.1.3 2021 ICMJ National Conference	12
3.2 Annual ICMJ Northern Conferences	12
3.2.1 Location and timing	13
3.2.2 Conference delivery	13
3.3 Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) week	13
3.4 Annual USA International tour	14
3.5 Careers expos and professional development	15
3.5.1 National Careers Expos 2022-2024	15
3.5.2 2021 ICMJ virtual careers expo	15
3.5.3 Northern Careers and Industry Expo 2022-2026	15
3.5.4 Professional development	16
3.6 Alumni engagement	16
3.7 Asian industry immersion tour	17
3.8 Annual ICMJ communications strategy	18
3.9 Corporate governance	18
3.9.1 Volunteer committee members	19
3.10 Monitoring and evaluation	19
3.10.1 2021-2025 Alumni survey	20

3.11	Other activities	20
3.11.1	Schools competitions	20
3.11.2	Scoring database	20
4.	Results	20
4.1	Annual ICMJ National Conferences	20
4.1.1	Participation and reach across the National Conferences	20
4.1.2	National Conference survey results	22
4.1.3	Overall outcome	23
4.2	Annual ICMJ Northern Conferences – Rockhampton	23
4.2.1	Northern Conference participation and reach	23
4.2.2	Northern Conference survey outcomes	25
4.2.3	2021-22 Coaches program	27
4.2.4	Sponsorship	27
4.3	Annual Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) week	28
4.3.1	Participation and reach	28
4.3.2	IIED survey results	28
4.4	Annual USA International tour (2023-2026)	30
4.4.1	Australian students and their research report topics	31
4.5	Careers and industry expos	32
4.5.1	National Careers Expos	32
4.5.2	2021 ICMJ virtual careers expo	34
4.5.3	Professional development – National Conferences	35
4.5.4	Northern Careers and Industry Expo	35
4.5.5	Professional development – Northern Conferences	36
4.6	Alumni engagement	37
4.6.1	Mentoring program	37
6.1.1	Alumni events	37
6.1.2	Alumni case studies	38
	Overall outcome	38
6.2	Asian Tour	38
6.2.1	2025 Asian tour participants and webinar series	38
6.3	ICMJ Communications results	39
6.4	Corporate governance	40
4.10	Monitoring and evaluation	41
5	Conclusion	44
5.10	Key findings	45

5.11	Benefits to industry	45
6	Future research and recommendations	45
7	Appendix	47
7.1	ICMJ Program logic 2021-2026	47
7.2	Sponsorship	53
7.2.1	Sponsors of the 2025 National ICMJ Program	53
7.2.2	Sponsors of the 2024 National ICMJ Program	53
7.3	IIED participants	55
7.4	Alumni case studies	56

1. Background

The Australian ICMJ program commenced in 1990 and has become one of the Australian red meat industry's longest-running and most successful people development initiatives. The Australian ICMJ Association Inc. is a not-for-profit organisation with a mission to *inspire and develop future professionals in the global red meat industry*.

Originally established as a university meat judging competition, the program has evolved significantly over the past three decades into a comprehensive capability and capacity-building platform for the Australian red meat industry. The program now provides development opportunities for tertiary students, post-graduate students, young industry professionals, coaches, alumni and industry leaders through conferences, industry immersion experiences, international study tours, careers expos, professional development activities and alumni engagement programs.

ICMJ plays a critical role in connecting participants across all sectors of the red meat supply chain, including production, feedlotting, processing, research, education, extension, government and agribusiness. Through these activities, the program increases participant knowledge, skills, networks and career aspirations while showcasing the diverse range of career opportunities available across the industry.

Over its 35-year history, ICMJ has developed a strong reputation for attracting talented graduates into red meat careers and supporting the development of future industry leaders. Many past participants have progressed into senior industry positions and continue to contribute to the program as coaches, mentors, committee members, presenters, sponsors and industry advocates, creating an impactful and lasting legacy across the Australian red meat industry.

2. Objectives

The ICMJ annual program objectives from 2021-22 to 2025-26 were:

1. Organise and deliver an annual five-day ICMJ National Conference and meat judging competition, that aims to increase student knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the red meat industry.

Four annual ICMJ National Conferences and meat judging competitions were successfully held in Wagga Wagga NSW from 2022 to 2025 with a total of 442 unique student participants, 16 industry participants in 2023 and 93 coaches across the years partaking in the program. Each year there was over ten Australian institutions represented with international teams including West Texas A&M, University of Wyoming, Clarendon College, Texas A&M and Japan.

Across the five years (225 post conference surveys completed) showed an average of:

- 95% agreed that they gained new knowledge of the red meat industry.
- 94% agreed that they gained new knowledge of supply chains.
- 94% agreed that they gained new knowledge of meat science and meat quality.
- 94% agreed that they gained new skills in assessing meat quality (judging).
- 95% agreed that they gained personal and professional development skills.
- 92% Indicated that their interest in the red meat industry had grown

2. Organise and deliver an annual four-day ICMJ Northern Conference for tertiary students and young industry professionals working across the northern beef industry that aims to increase participant KASA of the Northern beef industry.

Four Northern Conferences were delivered under this project (2023–2026) attracting 540 participants (noting that the 2021-2022 Northern Conferences were funded under an alternate contract P.PIP.0769). Participation increased each year and achieved the target 50:50 ratio of students to young industry professionals in 2025. Survey results consistently demonstrated strong increases in knowledge, skills, networks and industry engagement.

3. Annually immerse at least 15 ‘stand out’ students selected from the National Conference into an ‘Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED)’ week that exposes students to red meat and livestock business supply chains providing further industry training and development.

IIED week was delivered annually, providing approximately 80 students with immersive exposure to the red meat supply chain. Survey results showed strong increases in industry knowledge, career awareness and professional networks, with 100% reporting they had sufficient contacts or pathways to pursue a career in the industry.

4. Utilise the IIED week to annually select up to five tertiary students, and at least two Australian coaches, to represent Australia on an international tour to the USA (pending COVID travel restrictions). This program will be focused on gaining knowledge of international industry developments, participating in an annual US intercollegiate meat judging competition (if the tour includes USA), as well as developing the cohorts as future industry leaders.

USA tours resumed from 2023–2026 following COVID disruptions, with 20 students and multiple coaches participating. The program successfully increased knowledge of international supply chains, meat judging capability and leadership development, while generating industry-focused research reports and strengthening international networks.

5. Annually deliver a careers expo/industry exhibition at both the Northern Conference and the National Conference to expose students to the range of career prospects within the meat and livestock industry and to provide the opportunity for industry to showcase their companies and career paths to prospective employees.

Careers Expos were delivered annually at both the National and Northern Conferences, attracting more than 40 exhibitors annually at the National Conference and growing Northern participation from 16 to 28 exhibitors. Survey results demonstrated increased awareness of career opportunities, new industry networks and stronger interest in red meat careers.

6. Deliver annual professional development training at both the Northern and National Conferences to increase participant knowledge and skills to enhance the future of the Australian red meat industry workforce. This will include coaches’ development training.

Professional development sessions were delivered annually at both National and Northern Conferences, covering leadership, communication, advocacy, personality styles, workforce readiness and networking. Participants consistently reported increased personal and professional development skills.

7. In 2021–22 develop an ICMJ Alumni strategy to ensure ongoing connection, development and support to past cohorts who have been through the program with annual activities such as events and a mentoring program.

An alumni engagement program was established including alumni events, mentoring sessions, case studies and ongoing communications. The mentoring program received high participant satisfaction

scores (4.4–4.8/5), while the 2026 Alumni Survey demonstrated strong industry retention and ongoing alumni engagement.

8. Pending COVID travel restrictions, deliver an annual Asian Industry immersion tour for young industry professionals and ICMJ alumni to increase the understanding of Asian customers and consumers, trade and market access, culture and industry.

Following COVID travel restrictions, Asian tours were successfully delivered in 2025 and 2026. Participants increased their understanding of international markets, trade, consumers and supply chains, with tour learnings shared through webinars, presentations and social media.

9. Implement an annual communications strategy that promotes ICMJ and its mission to industry and the wider community through mainstream and social media channels.

Annual communications strategies were implemented, including media releases, case studies, social media campaigns, participant profiling and industry engagement activities. Communications contributed to increased program awareness, participation and industry support with ICMJ now having a very strong following across a number of channels.

10. Professionally deliver the ICMJ program under the ICMJ Constitution and corporate governance requirements. Increase committee skills, knowledge and understanding of corporate governance.

The program was delivered in accordance with constitutional and governance requirements. AGMs, audits, financial reporting, risk management and strategic planning processes were completed annually. Governance capability was strengthened through committee training and the commencement of governance reform planning for the post-2026 program.

3. Methodology

The five-year ICMJ program was structured and delivered largely based on the Program Logic outlined in Appendix 8.1 - program logic. Each objective includes the activity, method to achieve the activity, who the participants of the activity are and what the impact on industry is. The final column includes the monitoring and evaluation of the objective.

3.1 Annual ICMJ National Conferences

3.1.1 Location and timing

The facility requirements of the tertiary ICMJ program are highly specific, including access to student accommodation, lecture theatres, meat laboratories, training areas and an abattoir in close proximity. As a result, suitable host locations are limited.

From 2022 to 2025, the National Conference was delivered at Charles Sturt University (CSU), Wagga Wagga. CSU provides the necessary infrastructure to support the program, including laboratory training spaces, refrigeration facilities for meat product storage and lecture theatres for formal sessions. Its proximity to the Teys Australia processing facility also enables the delivery of the beef judging competition.

The program is held mid-year annually, to coincide with the common university semester break. This timing also provides sufficient time for finalists to be selected and further trained later in the year before the selection of a suitable team to represent Australia on the USA trips each January.

The ICMJ National Committee have delegated roles to help with the delivery of the National Conference.

3.1.2 Conference delivery

From 2022 to 2025, the National Conferences were delivered at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga. The annual programs included:

- morning seminar sessions delivered by industry representatives and technical experts
- professional development sessions focused on leadership, communication and career readiness
- the National Careers Expo, providing direct engagement with industry organisations
- live animal assessment, aiming to link on-farm production to carcase outcomes
- technical training and meat focussed workshops delivered on campus
- the beef judging competition conducted at Teys Australia
- industry engagement activities, including sponsored dinners held at the Wagga Wagga RSL and industry sponsored lunches at the marquee at CSU.

This delivery model integrates technical skill development, industry exposure, networking and participant engagement, ensuring a consistent and high-quality program experience.

3.1.3 2021 ICMJ National Conference

Planning for the 2021 ICMJ National Conference commenced in January 2021 with significant preparation, time and funds committed to the planning of the conference until the week before it when it was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19.

Following the announcement to postpone the event, the ICMJ Committee investigated alternate opportunities including:

- i) Finding an alternate date for later in 2021. All ICMJ Coaches were contacted to identify the semester dates and exam timetables. Dates were chosen for late November-early December and the venues were tentatively locked in for the new dates.
- ii) As COVID restrictions continued, the Committee discussed the opportunity to run hybrid events in each State. Prior to commencing with planning and preparation it was agreed that a survey be developed and distributed to seek feedback from students and coaches on their availability and interest in an ICMJ Hybrid event.

The survey received 60 responses with interest in participating in a hybrid event however, only 20 respondents were final year tertiary students. It was agreed by the committee that for the effort and expense to run hybrid events for this number of final year students was not worthwhile.

3.2 Annual ICMJ Northern Conferences

The Northern ICMJ Conferences from 2021-2022 were delivered under the Northern Conference P.PIP.0769 project. From 2023-2026 the Conferences were delivered under this program.

3.2.1 Location and timing

The Northern ICMJ Conference is held annually in Rockhampton, Queensland. Rockhampton provides strong alignment with the objectives of the Northern ICMJ program, offering access to CQUniversity, saleyards and Teys processing facilities required to deliver the program.

The conference is typically held in the week following Easter, with timing adjusted where required to align with other major Rockhampton-based events and industry activities.

3.2.2 Conference delivery

The Northern Conference (delivered annually from 2021-2026) was designed to deliver a practical, industry focussed experience, with both student and industry participants actively involved in the program.

The northern program includes:

- Morning seminar sessions delivered by industry representatives and technical experts
- A professional development session focused on leadership, communication and career readiness
- The Northern Careers and Industry Expo, providing direct engagement with employers and sponsors
- Live animal assessment conducted at RLX Rockhampton, incorporating both hoof and hook components to link live animal evaluation with carcase outcomes
- The ICMJ northern conference feature being the beef carcase breakdown
- Technical meat judging training and workshops supporting skill development in meat judging
- Industry networking events, providing opportunities for participants to build connections across the supply chain

Industry participants are a key feature of the Northern Conference, contributing to knowledge exchange, strengthening industry engagement and enhancing the overall learning environment for all attendees.

This delivery model integrates technical skill development, industry exposure and networking, reinforcing the role of the Northern Conference as a key pathway for participant development within the ICMJ program.

3.3 Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) week

Following each National ICMJ Conference in Wagga Wagga, approximately 20 participants are selected annually to participate in the Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) Week, held across Southeast Queensland in late September.

Participant selection is based on a combination of competition performance and demonstrated commitment to the industry:

- Top performers: The top ten participants are selected based on National Competition results, with final selection informed by short interviews conducted at the conclusion of the Wagga Wagga event.
- Coaches pick: A further ten participants are nominated by university coaches in recognition of their passion, enthusiasm and commitment to the red meat industry.

The IIED Week provides a structured, immersive learning experience across the red meat supply chain. The program includes site visits to key sectors of the industry, such as:

- feedlots
- processing facilities
- retail outlets
- value-adding businesses
- distribution operations

These visits are designed to build participant understanding of the end-to-end supply chain, strengthen industry awareness and connect technical knowledge with practical application.

Professional development is integrated throughout the week and includes networking opportunities and targeted skill development sessions, such as media and communication training delivered by ICMJ's media and communications contractor.

From 2023 to 2025, AUS-MEAT Ltd sponsored the delivery of the IIED Week.

3.4 Annual USA International tour

During this project period, the USA International tours were run from 2023-2026, with 2021 and 2022 being impacted by COVID travel restrictions.

The USA component of the ICMJ program is designed to provide high performing participants with an intensive international learning and development experience, combining technical meat judging training, USA competition and exposure to global red meat supply chains.

Participant selection is undertaken through a staged process to ensure both capability and commitment to the industry:

- Initial selection occurs at the National Conference, based on competition performance, CVs, interviews and overall engagement in the program.
- Participants then undertake the IIED Week, where further assessment of technical ability, industry awareness and professionalism is conducted.
- Final team selection, typically five students, is determined following additional evaluation and interviews, focusing on demonstrated interest in the red meat industry, leadership potential and ability to represent Australia internationally.

The USA program is delivered as a structured tour, typically across a three-week period in January, incorporating:

- participation in up to three USA intercollegiate meat judging competitions
- intensive training in the USDA grading system and competition formats
- site visits across the red meat supply chain, including production, feedlotting, processing, retail and value-adding sectors
- engagement with universities, meat science departments and industry bodies
- exposure to global production systems, market dynamics and supply chain differences

The program is designed to balance technical skill development with broader industry exposure. Participants are required to actively engage throughout the tour through structured learning activities, including:

- completion of an individual industry research project, where each student selects a topic of interest, gathers insights during the tour and prepares a written report to contribute learnings back to the Australian industry
- reflective journals
- interaction with industry leaders and hosts
- where possible, extending their stay to complete work experience within the USA industry.

This approach ensures participants not only develop advanced meat judging capability but also gain a deeper understanding of international markets, enabling them to critically evaluate opportunities and challenges relevant to the Australian red meat industry.

The USA component represents the culmination of the ICMJ program, providing a pathway for developing future industry leaders and strengthening global industry connections.

3.5 Careers expos and professional development

3.5.1 National Careers Expos 2022-2024

The ICMJ National Careers Expo is a feature of the National Conference program, designed to connect participants with companies and to showcase career pathways across the red meat and livestock sectors.

From 2022 to 2024, the expo was delivered as a Friday morning event at Charles Sturt University (Joyes Hall). In 2025, the format was revised, with the expo held as an evening event at The Range Function Centre in Wagga Wagga to enhance accessibility, engagement and networking opportunities.

In response to the postponement of the 2021 National Conference, a virtual Careers Expo was delivered on 10 August 2021, ensuring continued industry engagement and participant access to career information during COVID-19 disruptions.

The Careers Expo provides:

- Direct interaction with business and companies supporting participants to explore career pathways, opportunities and industry roles.
- Networking opportunities via informal engagement between participants, employers and industry stakeholders.
- A platform for sponsors, companies and organisations to connect with emerging talent and promote career opportunities.

3.5.2 2021 ICMJ virtual careers expo

The ICMJ Committee agreed to hold a virtual careers expo in 2021, particularly following the need to postpone the Wagga Conference. The Committee invested a subscription to the 'Careers Fair Plus' platform and App. The 2021 ICMJ Virtual Careers Expo was held on Tuesday, 10 August 2021.

3.5.3 Northern Careers and Industry Expo 2022-2026

At each Northern ICMJ Conference, a Careers and Industry Expo was delivered as an evening event. The expo was designed to provide participants with exposure to a broad range of career pathways within the red meat and livestock industries.

The event serves a dual purpose:

- Career awareness - Supporting the student participants to explore career pathways, engage directly with industry companies and organisations and to gain insight into potential career opportunities.
- Industry networking - Providing participants already working within the industry with opportunities to strengthen networks, build relationships with employers and stakeholders, and explore career progression pathways.

3.5.4 Professional development

Professional development is a core component of both the Northern and National ICMJ Conferences, with dedicated sessions delivered annually as part of the conference proceedings.

The professional development program is designed to build participants' capability beyond technical meat judging skills, with a focus on supporting personal and professional growth within the red meat and livestock industries.

Delivery has included a mix of interactive workshops, presentations and facilitated sessions, covering areas such as:

- leadership
- DiSC profiling
- telling your story
- advocacy
- understanding your learning styles
- preparing for the workforce
- communication and personal effectiveness
- teamwork and collaboration

Sessions are delivered by a combination of industry professionals, subject matter experts and experienced facilitators, ensuring content is relevant, practical and aligned with industry needs.

3.6 Alumni engagement

Each participant who attends an ICMJ Northern or National Conference becomes part of the ICMJ alumni network. The alumni program is designed to maintain engagement and strengthen industry connections beyond initial participation.

The alumni engagement approach included:

Alumni events

Informal networking and engagement activities were coordinated at major industry events such as Beef Australia, MLA Updates and LambEx, providing opportunities for alumni to reconnect and build industry networks.

Mentoring

During the COVID-impacted period, the ICMJ Power Hour mentoring program was established, connecting alumni with current participants through structured online sessions. Three Power Hour sessions were successfully delivered between 2021 and 2023. In 2024 a survey was distributed to

current and previous students calling for an expression of interest for a mentoring session however there was limited interest.

Alumni case studies

Each year alumni case studies are developed and promoted to showcase career pathways and to highlight program impact.

The alumni network also plays an important role in supporting the ongoing sustainability of the program, including contributing as presenters at National and Northern conferences, through industry engagement and maintaining strong relationships with sponsors and stakeholders.

3.7 Asian industry immersion tour

The Asian Tour, which re-commenced in 2025 and 2026 is designed to provide ICMJ alumni with an immersive international learning experience focused on understanding the positioning of Australian red meat within key Asian export markets.

Participants were selected through a competitive application process including a written application and an online interview, targeting stand out alumni who have demonstrated ongoing engagement with the red meat industry and a strong interest in international supply chains and a clear vision of derived value for them personally.

The program was delivered as a structured international study tour, typically across multiple countries within SE Asia and key regional markets. The itinerary was designed to provide exposure across the full red meat supply chain and included:

- visits to feedlots, processing facilities, retail outlets, value adding businesses, food service establishments and wet markets
- engagement with key industry stakeholders, including exporters, importers, government representatives and industry bodies
- interaction with international research and education institutions
- attendance at relevant industry events and competitions where applicable

The tours focused on building participants' understanding of:

- consumer preferences and purchasing behaviour
- product positioning and value-adding opportunities
- trade dynamics, market access and regulatory environments
- cultural influences on red meat consumption

To support active learning and knowledge transfer, participants were required to:

- undertake an individual topic of focus, investigating a specific aspect of the supply chain or market dynamics throughout the tour
- contribute to post-tour knowledge dissemination activities, including written reports, presentations and industry webinars
- engage with stakeholders and capture insights relevant to the Australian red meat industry

This approach ensured that the tours deliver both individual capability development and broader industry value, with insights shared back to stakeholders to inform market understanding and future opportunities.

The Asian Tour complements the domestic and USA components of the ICMJ program by strengthening participants' global perspective, building networks and growing capability in international market awareness and engagement.

3.8 Annual ICMJ communications strategy

In 2021, CQUniversity was contracted to develop and deliver an annual ICMJ Communications Strategy with a focus on promoting ICMJ and its mission to industry and the wider community through mainstream and social media channels. This contract was wound up by CQU in June 2025. In July 2025, TrueStory Communications was contracted to develop and deliver an annual communications strategy that built upon the communications results over the past several years to increase support and investment in ICMJ by demonstrating its value to the red meat industry.

The annual communications strategies were developed in close consultation with the ICMJ executive and the wider National committee at strategic planning events and through regular meetings. This also included consultation with the ICMJ Northern sub-committee, ICMJ sponsors, alumni and other stakeholders. Regular reports were generated to demonstrate the impact of the communications activities across several key performance indicators including media mentions, number of visits to the ICMJ website, social media engagement, views and reach, e-newsletter open rates and click-through, participation levels of students and early-career industry professionals in ICMJ programs and sponsorship value.

The key components of the communications activities included media releases, case studies, educational/tutorial style videos and social media posts, reels, stories and stories that included video, photos and graphics. It also involved direct pitching to journalists and providing editorial support to ICMJ committee members for op-eds in traditional media publications.

Delivery of an annual media training workshop at the Intensive Industry Education Week event was also a key component of the delivery plans. This activity not only developed the interview skills of program participants, but also empowered them to share their experiences of the ICMJ program and the red meat industry through their own social media platforms. All of these activities were underpinned by a set of communications objectives and key messages that ensured that all outputs were aligned with ICMJ's overall strategy and mission.

3.9 Corporate governance

Corporate governance is a core component of the ICMJ program, ensuring effective oversight, accountability and strategic direction.

From 2021–2026, ICMJ operated as an incorporated association governed by a constitution. The organisation was overseen by a National Committee comprising 12 and then 14 volunteer members, supported by a contracted National Coordinator responsible for operational delivery.

Governance processes were underpinned by:

- Annual General Meetings (AGMs) held each July, with a formal nomination and voting process to appoint the National Committee.
- An Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) provided leadership and oversight between full committee meetings.
- Monthly National Committee meetings were held to support decision-making, monitor progress and address operational and strategic matters.

- The Treasurer was responsible for financial oversight, supported by a bookkeeper. Financial reports were presented at each committee meeting, with the National Committee responsible for reviewing and approving financial reports and key expenditure decisions. External annual financial audits were conducted to ensure compliance and transparency.
- An annual report was prepared and distributed each year to members and funding stakeholders, outlining program activities, outcomes and financial performance. MLA milestone reports were also developed and submitted to MLA and AMPC in line with project funding requirements.
- A formal risk management plan was developed and implemented, outlining key operational, financial, reputational and safety risks, along with mitigation strategies and committee responsibilities.
- The committee implemented a Conflict of Interest (COI) register in late 2025.

Strategic direction was guided through structured planning processes. Dedicated strategic planning sessions were held in October 2024 (Dubbo) and November 2025 (Sydney) to identify future priorities and inform program strategy beyond 1 July 2026.

Recognising the importance of capability within the governance structure, the program invested in the professional development of National Committee members. This included leadership training (delivered by Beau Robinson) and formal corporate governance training (delivered by Governance by Design) in November 2025.

Building on this foundation, work has commenced on the development of an enhanced corporate governance framework to support the next phase of the ICMJ program beyond 2026.

3.9.1 Volunteer committee members

A key component across the program including both the National and Northern Conferences, the IIED Brisbane week, USA tour and other activities throughout the year is the contribution of volunteer committee members. Throughout the project period, the conferences and activities were planned, coordinated and delivered by members of the National and Northern ICMJ Committees, supported by the National Coordinator and industry sponsors.

Committee members contributed significant volunteer time to program planning, sponsorship acquisition, participant communications, competition coordination, speaker engagement, logistics, careers expos, social activities and on-ground event delivery. The majority of committee members are former ICMJ participants who continue to contribute to the program as part of the ICMJ alumni network due to the value they have received from the program individually.

The volunteer-led structure is a unique strength of the ICMJ program, providing opportunities for leadership development and industry service while helping to maintain strong industry ownership of the conferences. The involvement of volunteers also ensures that the program remains connected to the needs of participants, universities and industry stakeholders.

In addition to committee members, a number of coaches, alumni and industry representatives contribute their time each year to support training activities, judging competitions, mentoring and participant development.

3.10 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting was embedded within the five year ICMJ program through a program logic framework. Consistent data collection was undertaken using SurveyMonkey across

key program activities, including Northern and National conferences and IIED week, enabling ongoing assessment of outcomes and continuous improvement.

3.10.1 2021-2025 Alumni survey

To assess longer-term program impact, a targeted survey was conducted at the end of 2025 with participants who attended Northern and National ICMJ events between 2021 and 2025. This provided insights into knowledge and skill development, industry engagement, and the ongoing value of the program to participants' careers and the broader red meat industry.

3.11 Other activities

3.11.1 Schools competitions

In addition to the annual activities outlined above, the ICMJ program also supports four annual schools competitions including:

- Wingham Beef Week each May
- Casino Beef Week each May
- Gympie Carcase Classic each July
- Scone Upper Hunter Beef Bonanza each October

Other youth activities have included small ICMJ competitions conducted including:

- Angus Roundup
- Angus World Forum
- SA Heifer Show

ICMJ has provided prizes, overjudges for the competitions, scoring sheets and use of the ICMJ scoring database.

3.11.2 Scoring database

During this funding period, ICMJ invested in the development of a new scoring system for the competitions. This included developing and distributing a Terms of Reference, receiving four quotes, conducting interviews and determining a final supplier.

The online competition scoring system was developed and tested in 2021 and is a resource used multiple times a year across the various competitions. The scoring database can be used by external parties with logins that restrict their use to their competitions only. Some further development mostly around reporting of awards will need to be carried out in the future.

4. Results

4.1 Annual ICMJ National Conferences

4.1.1 Participation and reach across the National Conferences

Across the 2022–2025 period, four ICMJ National Conferences and meat judging competitions were successfully delivered in Wagga Wagga, NSW. The conferences brought together students, coaches, industry representatives and international participants to undertake technical meat judging, professional development and industry engagement activities.

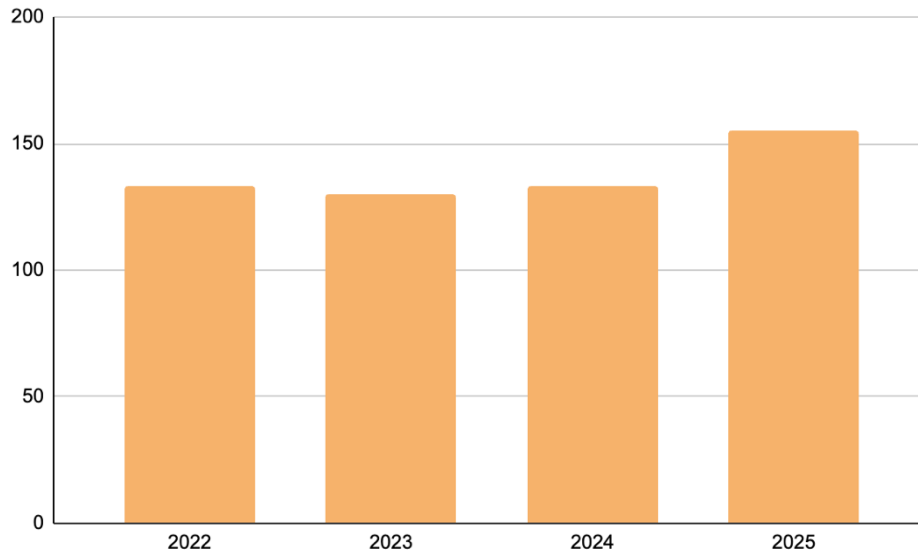


Figure 1. National Conference participants from 2022-2025.

Following the disruption caused by COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, student participation took several years to fully recover. Student numbers were lower in 2023, with 114 students registered, as universities continued to rebuild engagement and participation in extracurricular activities. In response, the National Committee made the strategic decision to open the conference to a limited number of young industry professionals. This initiative provided an opportunity for individuals who had missed the chance to attend ICMJ during the COVID-affected years to participate in the program and further their professional development within the red meat industry.

The inclusion of industry participants was well received and demonstrated the ongoing demand for ICMJ beyond the university sector. More broadly, student participant numbers have steadily recovered since COVID-19, with the 2025 conference attracting the highest student attendance of the reporting period.

While demand for the conference continues to grow, the National Committee has deliberately maintained a target of approximately 130 student participants each year. This cap helps ensure workshop groups, competition rotations and practical training sessions remain manageable and interactive, enabling participants to maximise their learning experience. It also allows greater interaction between participants, coaches, presenters and sponsors, preserving one of the key strengths of the conference, the ability to build meaningful industry networks and connections throughout the week.

Each year, the program attracted 10–12 Australian institutions, demonstrating consistent national reach and engagement across universities. International participation further strengthened the program, with teams attending from West Texas A&M, University of Wyoming, Clarendon College, Texas A&M and Japan. These international relationships provide valuable benchmarking opportunities and strengthen global connections for Australian participants.

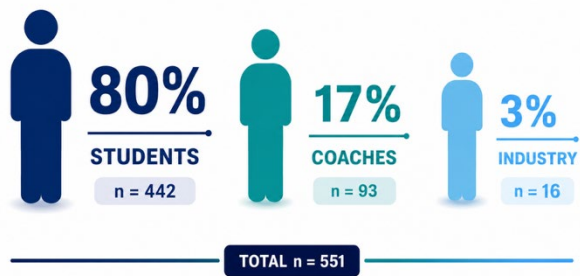


Figure 2. National Conference split of student, coach and industry

A total of 551 participants engaged in the face-to-face National Conferences, including 442 students, 93 coaches and 16 industry participants (2023 only).

The success of the National Conference relies heavily on the network of university coaches who recruit, train and mentor participants throughout the year and seek sponsorship for their respective teams. Coaches play a critical role in promoting the program within their institutions and encouraging students to pursue opportunities within the red meat industry.

4.1.2 National Conference survey results

Capability development (KASA outcomes)

Post-conference evaluation surveys completed between 2022 and 2025 (n=225) demonstrated consistently positive outcomes across participant knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA).

Table 1. Average participant KASA outcomes from National Conference post-event surveys, 2022–2025 (n=225).

Outcome	Average agreement (%)
Gained new knowledge of the red meat industry	95%
Gained new knowledge of supply chains	94%
Gained new knowledge of meat science and meat quality	94%
Improved skills in assessing meat quality (judging)	94%
Developed personal and professional skills	95%
Increased interest in the red meat industry	92%

These results demonstrate that the National Conference consistently achieved its objective of increasing participant knowledge, skills and engagement with the Australian red meat industry.

Participant experience

Participant feedback consistently highlighted the value of the integrated program design, combining technical meat judging, industry exposure, professional development and networking opportunities. Analysis of participant feedback from 2022–2025 identified networking, people, connections and industry exposure as some of the most frequently cited aspects of the conference. Across all years, key elements identified as participants' favourite parts of the week included:

- networking and peer-to-peer learning opportunities
- direct engagement with industry professionals
- exposure to the broader red meat supply chain
- hands-on judging and competition activities

As participant numbers grew, the Northern Committee made a deliberate decision to cap attendance at approximately 140 participants. This ensured that group sizes remained manageable during competition rotations and workshops, while also recognising venue capacity constraints and the availability of sponsorship product required for the practical components of the program.

Maintaining a capped attendance has also helped preserve one of the key strengths of the Northern Conference, the opportunity for participants to engage directly with presenters, sponsors and industry leaders in a more intimate learning environment. Participants consistently report the value of the networking opportunities and the ability to build meaningful industry connections throughout the week as the highlight.

A key objective of the Northern Conference has been to increase participation from young industry professionals and achieving a balance between tertiary students and industry participants. This objective was successfully achieved in 2025, with the conference reaching a 50:50 ratio of students to young industry professionals. This balance has strengthened peer-to-peer learning, facilitated greater knowledge exchange and enhanced industry engagement across the program.

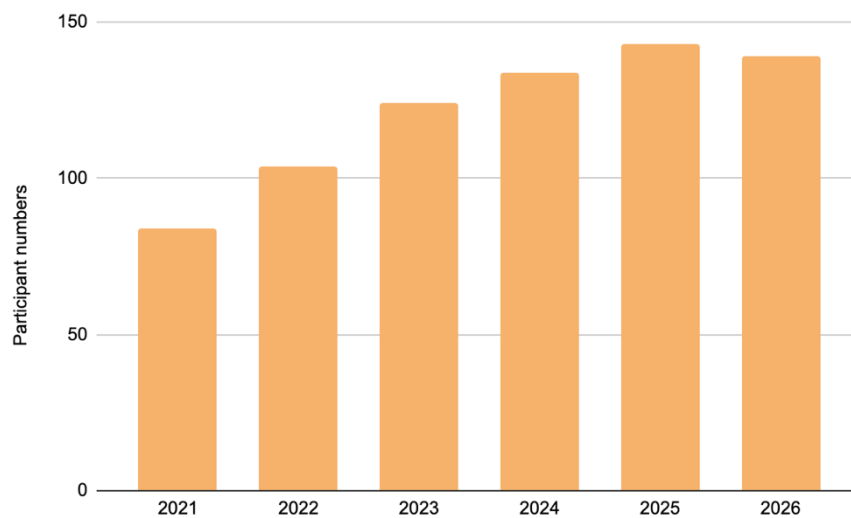


Figure 4. Northern Conference participants from 2021-2026.

As the reputation of the Northern Conference has continued to grow, industry companies and breed societies are increasingly recognising the program as a valuable professional development opportunity for their emerging leaders. In recent years, this has resulted in a growing number of companies registering teams of young industry professionals to attend the conference. This shift reflects the perceived value of the program in building technical knowledge, industry awareness, professional networks and leadership capability.

Demand for the conference continues to increase. In 2026, the conference sold out following a single social media post and approximately three weeks before applications closed, demonstrating the strong level of interest and demand from both industry and tertiary participants. This demand highlights the Northern Conference's growing reputation as a premier professional development and networking opportunity within the northern beef industry.

Industry representation

Companies represented at the Northern Conferences include:

- Australian Agricultural Company (AACo)
- AAM Investment Group
- Australian Brahman Breeders Association
- Australian Brangus Society
- Angus Australia World Angus Forum Australian teams x 2
- Advancing Beef Leaders
- CPC
- JBS
- MINTRAC
- MEQ Probe
- Smithfield Cattle Co.
- AgForce Qld
- Entegra Signature Structures
- Harris Food
- QDAFF
- NH Foods
- Thomas Borthwicks and sons
- Mort & Co
- North Australian Pastoral Company
- OxBow
- Sandalwood feedlot
- Signature Onfarm
- Bindaree Food Group
- Black Box Co
- Bullakeana Brangus
- Camm Agricultural Group
- Condabri Beef
- Frasers Livestock Transport
- Hewitt Cattle Company
- Teys Australia
- Treswell Cattle Co
- Signature onfarm
- Santa Gertrudis
- Skye Droughtmasters
- Thomas Foods International

Registrations included students from:

- University of Queensland
- University of New England
- Marcus Oldham College
- Central Queensland University
- Charles Sturt University
- James Cook University
- University of Adelaide

4.2.2 Northern Conference survey outcomes

Capability development (KASA outcomes)

Post-conference surveys demonstrated consistently strong outcomes across participant knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA). Across the four years, more than 90% of respondents reported increased knowledge of the Northern beef industry, meat science and meat quality, improved meat judging skills, and increased interest in the beef industry.

The conference also delivered strong networking outcomes, with more than 90% of respondents in the years measured reporting that they had developed new industry connections.

Table 2. Northern Conference participant average KASA outcomes from post-conference surveys, 2023–2025 (n=300).

Outcome	Average 2023–2025
Knowledge of Northern beef industry and supply chains	93%
Knowledge of meat science and meat quality	92%
Skills in assessing meat quality	91%
Personal and professional development skills	90%
Increased interest in the beef industry	91%
New industry networks formed*	95%

These results demonstrate that the Northern Conference consistently achieved its objective of increasing participant knowledge, skills, industry awareness and engagement with the northern beef industry.

Favourite aspects of the week

Participants were asked to identify their favourite aspect of the Northern Conference as part of the post-event evaluation each year. Analysis of responses across the four years showed several consistent themes.

The most frequently cited aspects of the conference included:

- networking and meeting new people from across the beef industry
- learning about the northern beef industry and supply chains
- the live animal and carcass judging competitions
- carcass breakdown sessions and learning about different beef cuts
- hearing directly from industry speakers and learning about their career journeys
- workshops, professional development sessions and the Careers Expo

These findings highlight that participants value not only the technical meat judging components of the program but also the opportunity to build industry networks, gain exposure to different parts of the supply chain and engage directly with industry professionals. The combination of technical training, professional development and networking continues to be a key strength of the Northern Conference.



Figure 5. Most frequently cited favourite aspects of the Northern Conference, based on participant feedback from 2022–2025.

Some testimonials from across the Northern conferences include:

- *“I always love coming to these events and I think they get better each time. Thanks for coordinating them, and I’d love to continue to be a part of ICMJ in the future!”*
- *“Congratulations to the committee – it was a fantastic week of delving deep in the red meat Industry and the workload and commitment to deliver such a wonderful series it greatly appreciated. Looking forward to encouraging others to attend in future.”*
- *“Thanks for a great week and I hope to come back! The conference you guys have put on has sparked a newfound interest and deeper love for the beef cattle and red meat industry.”*

- *“Cannot recommend the ICMJ Northern Conference enough to agriculture students and anyone interested or involved in the beef industry.”*
- *“My favourite part was being able to connect and network with a range of individuals not only from industry but within the peer space. It was awesome to get an insight to just how varied the range of careers can be within the red meat industry “*
- *“This experience has pushed me out of my comfort zone and has made me gain a greater understanding of what I would like my future to look like”*
- *“The conference was an awesome opportunity to meet new people from both uni and industry, and I personally learned plenty from the seminars and speakers, as well as hands-on learning in the chillers and with the competition “*

Overall outcome

The Northern Conference has evolved into a highly regarded professional development and networking opportunity within the northern beef industry. Strong participation growth, consistently high KASA outcomes and increasing industry involvement demonstrate the value of the program in building knowledge, skills and industry connections. The achievement of a 50:50 student-to-industry participant ratio in 2025 and the 2026 conference reaching capacity weeks before registrations closed further highlight the program’s strong reputation and demand across the sector. It is a privilege to be able to educate, develop and enhance the professionalism of these young industry delegates that attend the Northern ICMJ conference.

4.2.3 2021-22 Coaches program

The 2021-22 Coaches program commenced with a survey out to the coaches in early 2022 to get an understanding of where each university sat with their coaches and coach succession planning. This was required due to the interruption from COVID and some universities losing their coach succession.

As part of our Milestone 2 deliverables, a Coaches Development program was developed and included as part of the 2022 ICMJ Northern Conference in Rockhampton with 12 coaches registered for the Nth Conference including:

- University of Sydney x 4 (with two withdrawing late due to COVID)
- CSU – 2
- UQ – 3
- Marcus Oldham – 3

The coaches session at the Northern Conference was coordinated by National Committee member Nick Van Den Berg and included training sessions as well as joint sessions.

An ICMJ Coaches Facebook page was also established to provide a platform for sharing and information.

4.2.4 Sponsorship

Sponsorship of the National and Northern ICMJ programs is provided in a number of ways:

- Monetary support from industry businesses and organisations
- The majority of industry speakers are asked to contribute their time and cover travel arrangements
- CSU supports the program through use of facilities for the National Conference

- CQUniversity support the program as a monetary sponsor and through the use of the facilities for the Northern ICMJ conference..
- Teys Australia provides the venues and resources to conduct the judging contest as well as allowing students on-plant for training for both the National and Northern ICMJ Conferences.

The ICMJ sponsorship package has a tiered structure based on financial contribution with appropriate sponsor benefits.

The majority of the presenters should be acknowledged for their in-kind contribution to ICMJ (through their time and/or covering their own travel expenses) to either present at the ICMJ conferences or to assist with the workshops and competitions.

The companies and organisations that employ our dedicated Committee members (Northern and National) must also be acknowledged for providing support, encouragement, and time for the committee members to attend the National ICMJ Conference and the other ICMJ Initiatives throughout the year.

4.3 Annual Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) week

4.3.1 Participation and reach

The IIED week continued to be one of the flagship leadership and industry exposure opportunities within the ICMJ program. Between 2022 and 2025, over 80 students participated in the program, representing universities from across Australia.

Participants were selected through a combination of National Competition performance and university nominations. The program brought together the top-performing students from the National Conference, alongside “Coaches’ Pick” participants who had demonstrated exceptional enthusiasm, commitment and passion for the red meat industry and the ICMJ program.

The week provided participants with an immersive experience across the Australian red meat supply chain, including exposure to feedlots, processing facilities, retail and value-adding businesses, exporters and industry service providers. The program also incorporated professional development, networking and leadership activities designed to inspire participants and support future careers in the red meat industry.

A very important part of the IIED week is also the media training conducted by our media managers CQU and True Story Communications. This training covers print, radio, TV and social media. The core learning for all delegates is that media must be utilised to tell your story, know your story for an interview and deliver it strongly.

4.3.2 IIED survey results

Capability Development (KASA Outcomes)

Post-program surveys demonstrated consistently strong outcomes across participant knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA). Feedback collected between 2022 and 2025 showed that the IIED Week successfully increased participant understanding of the Australian red meat industry and strengthened confidence in pursuing industry careers.

Table 3. Average participant KASA outcomes from IIED Week post-program surveys, 2022–2025.

Outcome	Average
Considering a career in the red meat industry	97%
Gained knowledge of the Australian red meat industry	89%
Gained knowledge of commercial supply chains	97%
Gained personal and professional development skills	89%
Interest in the red meat industry has grown	92%
Have a pathway or sufficient contacts to pursue a career in the industry	100%

These results demonstrate the effectiveness of the IIED Week in building participant capability and inspiring future industry leaders. Of particular significance, 100% of participants reported having a pathway or sufficient industry contacts to pursue a career in the red meat industry, highlighting the value of the program in connecting students directly with employers and industry professionals.

Participant experience

Participant feedback consistently highlighted the value of the supply chain exposure, industry access and networking opportunities provided through the IIED Week. Many participants described the program as one of the most influential experiences of their tertiary education and noted the opportunity to interact directly with industry leaders, gain a whole-of-supply-chain perspective and build long-term professional relationships.

Participants frequently referenced:

- increased understanding of the Australian red meat supply chain
- exposure to a diverse range of career opportunities
- opportunities to build networks with industry professionals and peers
- increased confidence to pursue careers within the red meat industry
- personal growth and professional development

Testimonials

The following testimonials have been captured from numerous IIED programs:

“Been a fantastic week and amazing to see so many businesses so open and welcoming to let us all through places while still operating. Thank you to the coaches for giving up their time and organising plus helping put the trip together and making sure we’re on time and get to and from safely! Great driving everyone!”

“I loved it, this week I will remember for the rest of my life and I believe that I genuinely will have connections from this trip that I can use in my career. I loved that it was a whole overview of the red meat industry from feedlot, processing, hides/value add and finishing with shipping”

“This week has been absolutely incredible. All the tours we went on I have gotten so much out of it in terms of knowledge, life skills and connections. Everyone in the ICMJ team was incredible and I think we will all treasure our experience together on this trip!”

“Its been a great week, providing great opportunities to meet industry professionals and gain a greater understanding of the red meat industry”

“Really amazing week, really good variance of aspects within the industry”

“This week was amazing and I will never forget it!”

“This was the most influential week learning about the red meat industry that has increased my knowledge significantly. The ICMJ industry week allowed me to create what I believe will be lifelong connections with people who are also passionate about the industry. It allowed me to understand the industry in a new part of the country which I didn’t have much knowledge of. I developed as a person over the week and the skills that I learnt will be useful in my everyday life and has given me the confidence to pursue a career within the industry.”

Overall outcome

The IIED Week continues to be one of the most influential components of the ICMJ program. The combination of supply chain exposure, professional development and direct interaction with industry leaders provides participants with a greater understanding of career opportunities within the red meat industry and strengthens their motivation to pursue industry careers.

The program is achieving its objective of continuing to develop and inspire ICMJ graduates. Feedback consistently demonstrates increased industry knowledge, stronger professional networks and greater confidence to pursue opportunities within the sector. Importantly, the relationships formed during IIED Week often continue beyond the program through the ICMJ alumni network, international study tours, coaching opportunities and committee involvement, ensuring long-term benefits for both participants and the broader Australian red meat industry.

4.4 Annual USA International tour (2023-2026)

Across the 2023–2026 program, the USA tour consistently delivered strong outcomes in participant capability, international industry exposure and leadership development. Over the four-year period, 20 students and multiple Australian team coaches represented Australia, participating in USA meat judging competitions and industry visits.

Key outcomes of the USA tours included:

- **Technical capability in carcase evaluation**
Participants developed skills in carcase evaluation, USDA grading systems and meat judging under USA competition conditions. Across the four years, the Australian team demonstrated consistent performance at intercollegiate competitions, achieving team placings across beef, lamb and pork judging categories, as well as strong individual results. The program strengthened participants ability to make objective assessments, interpret specifications and apply critical thinking in commercial contexts.
- **Exposure to global supply chains**
The tours provided extensive exposure to the US red meat supply chain, including ranches, large-scale feedlots, processing facilities, retail outlets, value-adding businesses and research institutions. Participants observed production systems operating at significantly larger scale than Australia, including feedlots exceeding 100,000 head capacity and processing plants handling up to 5,000 head per day. This exposure improved understanding of efficiency, automation, vertical integration and supply chain coordination in a global context.
- **USA industry insights**
Participants developed an understanding of global market dynamics, including US herd cycles, supply constraints and trade flows. Key insights included the growing demand for lean beef in the US market and the resulting opportunity for Australian exports, as well as

the influence of consumer preferences, particularly the dominance of ground beef. Participants also identified differences in production systems, technology adoption and value-adding strategies, strengthening their ability to critically assess opportunities and challenges for the Australian industry.

- **Leadership development and industry engagement**

The program provided a high-intensity learning environment, requiring participants to demonstrate professionalism, adaptability and teamwork throughout the tour. Participants engaged directly with global industry leaders, universities and businesses, building networks and strengthening their confidence to operate in international environments. Many participants extended their stays in the USA to undertake additional internships and work placements, further extending their industry experience.

4.4.1 Australian students and their research report topics

As part of the USA program, each participant completed an individual research project on a topic of relevance to the Australian red meat industry. Across the four years, research topics covered a broad range of industry issues including market access, feedlot innovation, traceability, sustainability, genetics, beef-on-dairy systems, food security, animal health and supply chain efficiency.

2026 students	Report Title
Piper Christensen (University of Queensland)	Screwworm Preparedness in the United States: The Role of Livestock Identification and Traceability
Sarah Bradfield (University of New England)	Market Potentials for Australian Lamb in the United States and Pathways for Market Access
Will Lawrence (University of Queensland)	Understanding Prevalence of Byproduct Feeding in American Feedlot Systems to Assess Feasibility of Comparable Strategies in an Australian Context
Zoe Skinner (Murdoch University)	Why beef on Dairy? Growth and implications of Beef-on-Dairy crossbreeding in the US Cattle sector
Penelope Crothers (Marcus Oldham)	Predicting Value Based on Composition and Red Meat Yield: Management and meat processing tools for the prediction of beef cattle value in America

2025 Students	Report Title
Angus Brennand (University of Queensland)	Automation and Data Capture within the Feedlot Sector – Insights and Comparison between Australia and the USA
Ben Spackman (University of Queensland)	The Battle for Farmland: How Urban Expansions Threatens Global Food Security
Madison Luke (University of Sydney)	Preparing the Next Generation to Enter the Red Meat Industry
Nick Greenwood (University of Queensland)	Answering America's Demand for Lean Beef Through Targeted Feeding of Heifers in Northern Australia
Sophie Marriott (University of New England)	IMPACTS OF THE US COW HERD LIQUIDATION and implications for Australian Exporters

2024 Students	Report Title
---------------	--------------

Angus Bartter (Charles Sturt University)	Lamb on the menu
Shania Gough (University of Queensland)	Beep, Beep, Beef: a comparative analysis of utilisation of carcase grading technology in Australia and America
Sarah Hamblin (University of Queensland)	Increasing Yield in the US Beef Industry: Evaluating the Progress, Drivers and Barriers
Holly Johnson (University of Queensland)	How is the red meat industry in the USA addressing sustainability concerns (environmental impact/ animal welfare/ waste reduction/ regenerative ag) and are these currently influencing Australian market access into the US?
Georgia Laurie (University of New England)	Beef on Dairy, an underutilised enterprise

2023 Students	Report Title
Austin Smith (Murdoch University)	Breeding Technologies, Genetic Predictors and Beef Production in the United States vs Australia
Lawton Elliott (University of Queensland)	The Meat We Eat: Differences between Australian and American Consumer Choices and Buying Pressures Regarding Red Meat Protein & Where Australia Can Capitalise
Jasmine Wholton (Charles Sturt University)	Risk Factors and Economic Losses of Bovine Respiratory Disease in Beef Feedlots: A United States and Australian Case Study
Rachel Franklin (University of Sydney)	An insight into the US Lamb Industry, US Consumer Preference and the Opportunities it presents for Australian Lamb
Samuel Turner (University of Queensland)	Livestock Traceability Report: Australia vs United States Comparison

These reports, along with participant insights, contributed to broader knowledge sharing with the Australian red meat industry through inclusion in project outputs and the promotion of the students and topics via ICMJ communication channels including media releases of some reports.

The USA tour component has consistently delivered high-impact outcomes by combining technical skill development with global industry exposure. It has strengthened participant knowledge, skills and industry awareness, while contributing valuable insights to the Australian red meat sector and supporting the development of future industry leaders.

Importantly, there is strong evidence of ongoing engagement, with many USA team alumni returning to the ICMJ Australian program in leadership roles, including as university coaches and as members of both the Northern and National ICMJ Committees. The Australian team coaches are commended for their input and mentoring of the team members.

4.5 Careers and industry expos

4.5.1 National Careers Expos

Participation and reach

The National Careers Expo continued to attract strong industry support throughout the four years, providing participants with direct access to employers, industry organisations, service providers and graduate opportunities from across the Australian livestock and red meat supply chain.

Table 4. National Careers Expo exhibitors, 2022–2025.

Year	Number of Exhibitors
2022	39
2023	39
2024	42
2025	41
Average	40.3

The consistently high number of exhibitors demonstrates the value industry places on the ICMJ program as a mechanism for engaging with emerging talent and promoting career opportunities within the red meat industry. Over the four-year period, more than 160 exhibitor opportunities were provided through the National Careers Expo.

Careers expo outcomes

Participant feedback consistently demonstrated strong outcomes from the National Careers Expos. Across the four years, the majority of participants reported increased awareness of companies and career pathways within the red meat industry, developed new industry networks and gained a greater understanding of the diversity of career opportunities available.

Table 5. National Careers Expo student outcomes, 2022–2025.

Outcome	Range
Increased awareness of companies and career pathways	95–99%
Made new industry networks	77–99%
Increased understanding of industry careers	79–95%
Increased interest in a red meat industry career	68–93%
Considered the Careers Expo worthwhile	89–97%

The Careers Expo continues to play an important role in connecting participants with potential employers and providing a pathway into graduate programs, internships and industry careers. Feedback indicates that the opportunity to engage directly with industry representatives is highly valued by participants and contributes to increased awareness of career opportunities across the sector.

Overall outcome

The National Careers Expo has become a key mechanism for connecting students with employers, strengthening industry networks and increasing awareness of career pathways and opportunities across the Australian red meat and livestock industry. The strong and consistent support from exhibitors demonstrates industry commitment to attracting, developing and retaining future talent within the sector.

While difficult to quantify, one of the most valuable aspects of the Careers Expo is the energy and enthusiasm generated when almost 300 students, coaches, exhibitors and industry representatives come together. The event creates a unique environment for networking, career exploration and industry engagement, helping to build momentum and optimism for the future of the Australian red meat industry.

4.5.2 2021 ICMJ virtual careers expo

Following the cancellation of the 2021 National Conference due to COVID, the committee swiftly moved to creating a virtual careers fair, using a platform and App called 'Careers Fair Plus', which ICMJ funded the subscription to.

For the Virtual Careers expo a total of 38 companies spanning the length and breadth of the meat and livestock value chains used the opportunity to seek out new talent for their businesses, for roles as varied as stock handlers to marketers, engineers, researchers and financial analysts.

The Virtual Careers Expo resulted in 316 meeting planned between students/job seekers and companies. It wasn't just final-year university students taking part, but young industry professionals looking to take the next step in their career

Survey results

A survey was provided to the participants of the Careers Expo with the following results:

- Exhibitors/recruiters = 23
- Student/Job Seekers = 31
- Total of 54

Questions included:

- A. Overall how would you rate the Careers Fair Plus App and Platform?
Average = 4.5/5
- B. How would you rate the communications and coordination of the virtual Careers Expo from ICMJ?
Average = 4.5/5
- C. For Exhibitor: Overall how would you rate the interest & enthusiasm from the candidates?
Average 4.7/5
- D. Would you recommend the ICMJ Careers Fair to others in the industry?
Average = 4.7/5
- E. How would you rate the exhibitors and their engagement with you?
Average = 4.1/5

2021 professional development

Nigel Crawley, of Rimfire Resources, opened the Careers Expo day with professional development webinar on 'Making the Most out of Networking Opportunities'. This included presenting the jobseekers with top tips to help prepare for their 10-minute meetings with prospective employers. They were:

- Have a meeting plan – know what you want to learn and what you want to communicate about yourself
- Articulate who you are in a 2-minute mini-story detailing where you're from, your training and ambitions, and why you're interested in learning more about the company you're meeting with
- Remember it's a two-way conversation, and
- Be sure to follow up in writing.

This session was attended by 30 participants.

4.5.3 Professional development – National Conferences

Professional development has remained an important component of the National Conference, complementing the technical meat judging and industry exposure activities. Each year, participants were provided with opportunities to develop their communication, leadership and personal effectiveness skills through dedicated professional development sessions.

Professional development topics delivered throughout the project included:

- **2025:** Understanding personality styles and workplace interactions, delivered by Claudia Mitchell, and *Mastering Your Own and Others' Learning Styles*, delivered by Maria Thompson.
- **2024:** *Telling Your Story*, delivered by AgCommunicators, focusing on communication and advocacy skills.
- **2023:** An introduction to DiSC behavioural profiling, delivered by David Faulkner, which received an average participant value score of 4.4 out of 5.
- **2022:** *An Introduction to Advocacy*, delivered by The Livestock Collective as the inaugural sponsored professional development session.

In addition, Rimfire Resources has annually delivered a *Preparing for the Workforce* session, providing participants with practical guidance on entering the workforce. Topics covered included resume and cover letter preparation, interview skills, job applications, personal presentation and strategies for securing graduate and employment opportunities within the red meat industry.

Participant feedback consistently highlighted the value of the professional development component, with an average of 95% of National Conference participants reporting that they gained personal and professional development skills through the program. These sessions complement the technical aspects of ICMJ by helping participants build confidence, communication skills, self-awareness and industry leadership capability.

4.5.4 Northern Careers and Industry Expo

Participation and reach

The Northern Careers and Industry Expos continued to grow throughout the project, reflecting increasing industry support and engagement with the Northern Conference. The expo provided participants with direct access to employers, breed societies, industry organisations and service providers operating across the northern beef industry.

Table 5. Northern Careers and Industry Expo exhibitors, 2023–2026.

Year	Number of Exhibitors
2023	16
2024	22
2025	24
2026	28

The number of exhibitors increased by 75% over the five-year period, demonstrating the growing recognition of the Northern Conference as a valuable opportunity for industry to engage with both tertiary students and young industry professionals. The increasing exhibitor numbers also reflect the

growing reputation of the conference and the value industry places on attracting and developing future talent within the northern beef sector.

An important feature of the Northern Careers and Industry Expo is that many industry representatives attend the conference as participants as well as exhibitors. While these individuals are often represented on their respective company stands during the expo, they also participate throughout the conference. As a result, the expo serves not only as a platform for career exploration but also as an important opportunity to strengthen industry networks, build professional relationships and facilitate peer-to-peer learning across the northern beef industry.

Careers and Industry Expo Outcomes

Participant feedback consistently demonstrated strong outcomes from the Careers and Industry Expo. Across the years, participants reported increased awareness of companies and career pathways, development of new industry networks and greater clarity around future career opportunities.

Table 6. Northern Careers and Industry Expo participant outcomes, 2023–2026.

Outcome	Range
Gained awareness of companies and career pathways	82–86%
Made new industry networks	82–97%
Intend to follow up with a new industry connection*	74–84%
Have a clearer idea of future career pathways	58–64%
Intend to pursue a career in the red meat industry*	59–66%
Intend to progress their career within the red meat industry*	80–84%
Considered the event worthwhile	91–95%

*Not measured in all years.

These results demonstrate the important role the Careers and Industry Expo plays in connecting participants with employers, industry leaders and potential career pathways. Particularly strong outcomes were observed in industry networking, with more than 80% of participants reporting that they developed new industry connections through the event. The results also indicate that the expo is helping participants better understand the breadth of career opportunities available within the red meat industry and providing the confidence and contacts needed to pursue those opportunities.

Overall outcome

The Northern Careers and Industry Expo has become a valuable platform for connecting emerging talent with the northern beef industry. Strong exhibitor growth, high levels of networking and positive participant feedback demonstrate its success in building industry connections and increasing awareness of career opportunities.

4.5.5 Professional development – Northern Conferences

Professional development is a key component of the Northern Conference. Each year, participants are provided with opportunities to develop their leadership, communication and career development skills through dedicated professional development sessions.

Professional development topics delivered throughout the project included:

- 2026: Leadership and working effectively with teams, delivered by Matt Brown.

- 2025: Leadership development, delivered by Tammy Kruckow.
- 2024: Career development and workforce readiness, delivered by Outplacement Australia.
- 2023: Using LinkedIn to Build Industry Networks and Career Opportunities, delivered by Heidi Wright.

These sessions were designed to help participants develop the personal and professional skills required to succeed within the red meat industry. Combined with the technical and industry components of the conference, the professional development program contributes to participant confidence, leadership capability, communication skills and career readiness.

4.6 Alumni engagement

4.6.1 Mentoring program

During the COVID-impacted years, ICMJ introduced a mentoring program to provide participants and alumni with additional opportunities for professional development, networking and career support. The program connected current participants with ICMJ alumni including industry leaders in a structured online mentoring format.

The 2021 Power Hour involved 10 mentors and 10 mentees, while the 2022 program involved 14 mentors and 14 mentees. Feedback from participants demonstrated strong satisfaction with the initiative, with the mentoring sessions receiving average ratings of 4.8 out of 5 in 2021 and 4.4 out of 5 in 2022.

A key outcome of the mentoring sessions was the formation of ongoing professional relationships. Most participants exchanged contact details to continued discussions beyond the formal session, highlighting the value of the program in facilitating industry connections and career support.

Common discussion topics included:

1. career pathways within the red meat industry
2. professional development opportunities
3. leadership and personal development
4. networking and industry engagement
5. job applications, referees and career progression
6. work-life balance and navigating early career decisions

The mentoring program demonstrated the value of leveraging the ICMJ alumni network to support current participants and strengthen industry connections.

6.1.1 Alumni events

Maintaining engagement with alumni remains an important component of the ICMJ program. Throughout the project period, alumni networking events were held in conjunction with major industry events, providing opportunities for past participants to reconnect, expand their professional networks and maintain their connection with ICMJ.

Key alumni events included:

- MLA Updates Alumni Event, Toowoomba (2022)
- Beef Australia Alumni Event, Rockhampton (2024), which attracted more than 50 registrations and attendees
- LambEx 2024 in Adelaide

6.1.2 Alumni case studies

Each year a number of alumni case studies are developed. An example of these are found in the Appendix.

Overall outcome

The strength of the alumni network continues to be one of the key assets of the ICMJ program, with many alumni remaining actively involved as mentors, coaches, committee members, sponsors and industry leaders.

6.2 Asian Tour

The Asian Tour delivered strong outcomes in improving participant capability and enhancing understanding of key export markets for Australian red meat. Key results included:

Participants developed a deeper understanding of how Australian red meat is positioned across diverse Asian markets, including the role of price, quality, branding and cultural preferences in purchasing decisions.

The tour highlighted distinct market dynamics across countries:

- Indonesia – a price-sensitive, high-volume market with opportunities across all value tiers, alongside risks associated with regulation and product labelling.
- Singapore – a highly import-dependent market where strong branding and consistent marketing underpin consumer trust and product preference.
- Japan – a mature, premium-focused market with opportunities for high-quality products, balanced by challenges related to demographic change and economic conditions.
- China - a highly import-dependent market with huge variability in products from bone and body fat to high end beef and lamb, primals, trim and offal. A growing market of increasing importance.

Participants gained insight into how red meat is processed, marketed and consumed across different cultural contexts, including opportunities for value-adding and product differentiation.

Exposure to multiple points along the international supply chain improved participants' understanding of trade dynamics, market access and the complexity of exporting Australian red meat.

6.2.1 2025 Asian tour participants and webinar series

The 2025 ICMJ Asian tour ran from February 16, to March 1, 2025, and included six participants (Hugh Dawson, Sonya Moyes, Katja Zapf, Harriet Taylor, Sam Turner, and Rebecca Bennett), along with one ICMJ Committee tour coordinator (Kieran Smith), who travelled to Indonesia, Singapore, and Japan.

Insights from the tour were shared with the broader industry through participant presentations at the 2025 ICMJ National Conference and the 2025 webinar series extending the value of the program beyond the individuals involved.

Six webinars were delivered and can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLaHHRc9AovXCH3JDesJ6MvmFlxo5Ncc1B>

6.2.2 2026 Asian tour participants

The 2026 ICMJ Asia Tour involved six participants and two committee members travelling to Japan, China and Indonesia. Selected through a competitive process from 31 applicants, the group represented a diverse cross-section of the Australian red meat supply chain.

Building on the success of the 2025 tour, the 2026 program expanded to include China and provided participants with exposure to businesses operating across production, processing, wholesale, retail and food service sectors. The group also attended the Japanese National ICMJ Competition.

Key learnings varied across the three markets. In Japan, participants observed opportunities to increase value through portion-controlled manufacturing and product standardisation. In China, discussions focused on changing tariff arrangements, consumer preferences and opportunities for Australian red meat exports. In Indonesia, participants gained insight into halal markets, Ramadan-driven consumption patterns and the importance of Australian product across a wide range of market segments.

Across all three countries, participants observed increasing competition from South American imports, while also noting the continued reputation of Australian red meat for consistency, reliability and quality. A recurring theme was the strong interest international businesses showed in Australian production systems and supply chain practices, creating valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and relationship building.

The tour strengthened participants' understanding of customer requirements, market dynamics and export opportunities across three key Australian red meat markets. The diverse participant cohort also facilitated peer-to-peer learning and strengthened professional networks across the Australian red meat industry.

Tour learnings were shared more broadly through daily social media updates, participant presentations and a two-part webinar series, extending the benefits of the program beyond those who attended.

Webinars were delivered online in May 2026 and can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4BPiGPAVY>

6.3 ICMJ Communications results

Since July 2021, ICMJ has worked with service providers at CQUniversity and True Story Communications to develop and implement an annual communications strategy that promotes ICMJ and its mission to industry and the wider community. These annual strategies included outputs such as media releases, social media content, website content, sponsorship prospectus, video content, case studies, and general event promotion.

Traditional media

Awareness of ICMJ within the agricultural industry has increased significantly since 2021, with regular media exposure across major agricultural publishers including Beef Central and Sheep Central, Queensland Country Life, The Land, North Queensland Register and ABC Rural and Local Radio. The total number of media mentions across the project period is unavailable due to changes in media monitoring providers and current provider limitations that restrict reporting to the previous 12 month period.

However, Meltwater media monitoring reporting for the 12 months from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026 shows ICMJ was mentioned 359 times in the Australian media, an average of 27 times per month. This is a significant increase on the first 12 months of the project which saw a total of 103 media mentions or 8 mentions per month. Meltwater estimates the ‘reach’ of these 359 mentions at 28.5m. As expected, media mentions spike during major event periods, with broadcast radio and online news platforms providing the most media mentions.

Social media

ICMJ’s social media presence has grown significantly over the life of the project. The growth in ICMJ’s social media followers from March 2022 - May 2026 is as below:

- Facebook - 2.2k to 4.5k
- Instagram - 802 to 2,868
- twitter/x - 895 to 899
- Linked In - 412 to 2,152

Over the last 12 months, ICMJ moved away from sharing content via twitter/X and will likely eventually exit the platform. In November 2025, ICMJ established a presence on TikTok, It now has 171 followers and 10k post views as at 1 May 2026. ICMJ will continue to build its audience on TikTok with content targeted towards the largest Australian TikTok user group - the 18-24 age group.

Of particular note is ICMJ’s recent social media results across the Meta platforms (Facebook and LinkedIn). Over the 90 days prior to 02 May 2026, ICMJ’s instagram views were more than 310k. These results were largely due to content posted during the ICMJ Northern Conference in April 2026. The best performing post during that period saw 92,488 views on Facebook alone (from 65,454 individual accounts) and was the source of 141 new followers on the ICMJ Facebook page. The second highest performing post in the week saw 58,732 views on Facebook.

The impact of ICMJ’s communications activities is further evidenced in the high-level of participation in both the ICMJ National Conference and the ICMJ Northern Conference. The ICMJ Northern Conference has sold out the last two years in a row, and caps to team numbers have been established for the ICMJ National Conference to manage growth and encourage attendance by first-time participants.

ICMJ’s communications activities have also supported the increase in industry sponsorship achieved since 2021. Engaging a media specialist to deliver ICMJ comms was a strategy to enhance the visibility of the ICMJ ‘brand’ and also deliver better value to our sponsors. This has been achieved as evidenced by greater reach and increased sponsorship of the program.

6.4 Corporate governance

The ICMJ governance framework provided effective oversight, accountability and strategic direction throughout the 2021–2026 project period. The National Committee, supported by the Executive Committee and National Coordinator, successfully governed the delivery of national conferences, Northern Conferences, study tours, alumni activities and professional development initiatives while maintaining strong financial and operational oversight.

Table 7. Key corporate governance outcomes achieved, 2021–2026.

Governance activity	Outcome
Annual General Meetings	Completed annually

National Committee meetings	Monthly meetings conducted throughout the project period
Financial management	Financial reports reviewed and key expenditure approved by the Committee
Annual financial audits	Completed annually
Annual reports	Developed and distributed annually
MLA and AMPC milestone reports	Submitted in accordance with funding requirements
Strategic planning workshops	Delivered in 2024 and 2025
Risk Management Plan	Developed and implemented
Conflict of Interest Register	Introduced in 2025
Insurances	Review of insurances in 2025 and early 2026
Committee professional development	Leadership and corporate governance training delivered in 2024 and 2025
Future governance framework	Development commenced for the post-2026 program
Schools Program Host Agreement	Legal agreement developed in 2026 – implemented for 2026 schools competitions post June 30

The current governance structure enabled the organisation to maintain compliance with its constitutional, financial and reporting obligations, protect the association from litigation issues while continuing to grow participation, strengthen industry engagement and expand program activities. Importantly, these outcomes were achieved through a volunteer-led committee structure, demonstrating the commitment of committee members and the strong industry ownership of the ICMJ program.

As the organisation has grown in scale, complexity and industry reach, the National Committee recognised the need to review and strengthen the governance model to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose beyond 2026. This has included the commencement of a governance review and the development of an enhanced governance framework to support the long-term sustainability and continued growth of the program. A key component of this work is the proposed transition from an incorporated association to a company limited by guarantee, providing a governance structure more aligned with the size, scope and strategic objectives of the organisation.

Overall outcome

The project strengthened the governance maturity of the ICMJ organisation and positioned it well for future growth. Through the implementation of formal governance, risk management and strategic planning processes, ICMJ has established a strong foundation to support the ongoing sustainability and development of the program beyond 2026.

4.10 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has become an embedded component of the ICMJ program and has supported evidence-based decision making throughout the 2021–2026 project period. A consistent evaluation framework was implemented across the National Conference, Northern Conference, IIED Week, USA Tour, Asia Tour, Careers Expos and alumni activities, enabling outcomes to be tracked over time and across programs.

The program collected data through post-event surveys, participation records, testimonials, case studies and alumni surveys. This information was used to assess participant KASA, monitor participant satisfaction and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Key outcomes of the M&E framework included:

- Demonstration of consistently high participant satisfaction and capability development across all major program activities.
- Evidence of strong industry attraction and retention outcomes.
- Identification of networking and industry connections as some of the most valued aspects of the program.
- Continuous improvement of program activities through participant feedback.
- Development of a strong evidence base to support strategic planning, sponsor engagement and future funding proposals.
- Delivery of the 2026 Alumni Impact Survey, providing valuable long-term evidence of program impact.

4.10.1 2021-2025 Alumni survey

An Alumni Impact Survey was conducted in 2025 to assess the longer-term impact of ICMJ for participants involved in the National and Northern conferences between 2021 and 2025. A total of 169 alumni responded.

Industry attraction and retention

The survey results demonstrated strong retention within the red meat and livestock industry from those who completed the survey. Of the 169 respondents, 121 were working full-time in the red meat or livestock industry, six were working part-time, and 34 were currently studying towards an industry career (noting that five indicated that they were studying veterinary science, which we have taken as an 'industry career'). Combined, 161 respondents, or 95%, were either working in the industry or studying towards an industry career.

A further eight respondents indicated they were working or studying in another industry. These included fields such as horticulture, education, academia, agronomy, cropping agriculture, environmental management and professional sport.

ICMJ also had a strong influence on career direction, with 151 respondents, or 89%, indicating that ICMJ had either strongly or somewhat influenced their decision to pursue or remain in the red meat industry.

The survey also indicated strong future retention, with 146 respondents, or 86%, reporting they were likely or very likely to remain working in the red meat industry over the next five years. Of these, 126 respondents, or 75%, reported they were very likely to remain in the industry.

Industry sectors represented

Survey respondents were employed across a diverse range of sectors within the red meat and livestock industry, demonstrating the broad reach of the ICMJ program across the supply chain.

Table 8. Industry sectors in which alumni are currently working or involved (multiple responses permitted).

Industry Sector	Number of Respondents
Livestock production (farm owner, manager or employee)	68
Processing / abattoir	42
Feedlot sector	27
Education and training	25
Service providers (nutrition, genetics, animal health, finance, technology)	17
Research and development	15

Advisory, consulting and extension	13
Government policy and advisory roles	8
Agronomy and pastures	8
Agribusiness and banking	5
Livestock agent	3
Other: these included livestock industry roles including - livestock export, veterinary science x 3, genetics sales, pork industry vet, breed society Non- livestock industry roles: Education, retail, Agriculture assess and operational fund management x 2	13

As respondents could select multiple sectors, the results highlight the breadth of industry engagement among ICMJ alumni. While livestock production remained the largest sector represented, significant numbers of alumni were also employed in processing, feedlots, education, research, advisory services and other supporting industries. This demonstrates the role of ICMJ in developing capability and leadership across the entire red meat supply chain.

Capability development

Respondents reported strong improvements in capability as a result of their participation in ICMJ.

Table 9. Participant response to capability areas

Capability Area	Moderate or Significant Improvement
Industry knowledge	99%
Professional networks	95%
Confidence	91%
Communication skills	83%
Leadership capability	73%

The strongest outcomes were in industry knowledge and professional networks, reinforcing the role of ICMJ in building both technical understanding and long-term industry connections.

Australian team alumni

The survey included 26 respondents who had participated as members of an Australian team to the USA. Of these, 25 were either working in the red meat/livestock industry or studying towards an industry career. This demonstrates very strong retention among Australian Team alumni.

Australian Team respondents were involved across a range of industry sectors, including livestock production, feedlotting, processing, education and training, research and development, service provision, government, advisory roles and agribusiness. This highlights the breadth of career pathways supported through the program.

Of the Australian Team respondents, 24 indicated they were likely or very likely to remain working in the red meat industry over the next five years, and 24 also indicated that ICMJ had influenced their decision to pursue or remain in the industry.

Committee and coaching pathways

The survey also demonstrated the role of ICMJ in supporting ongoing leadership and contribution back to the program. Of the respondents, 14 had served as committee members and 26 had participated as coaches.

Committee respondents showed strong ongoing engagement, with 100% currently working full-time or part-time in the red meat/livestock industry. All committee respondents indicated that ICMJ had influenced their decision to pursue or remain in the industry. This reinforces the role of ICMJ in developing people who continue to contribute to the program through leadership, governance, coaching and mentoring roles.

Pathways into the red meat industry

The final survey question explored how alumni first became involved in the red meat industry prior to participating in ICMJ. The responses showed that participants entered the program through a range of pathways:

- 112 respondents were studying agriculture, veterinary science, animal science or a related discipline.
- 94 respondents came from a family livestock production background.
- 62 respondents were already working in industry.
- 9 respondents had limited prior exposure to the industry.
- 5 respondents had no prior involvement in the industry.

These results show that while many participants had existing links to agriculture, ICMJ also provides an important pathway for people with limited prior exposure to build connections, confidence and career interest in the red meat industry.

Survey limitations

As with all voluntary surveys, there is the potential for response bias, with alumni who remain engaged with the red meat industry or the ICMJ program potentially more likely to participate in the survey than those who have moved away from the industry. While this should be considered when interpreting the results, the survey still provides valuable insight into the longer-term outcomes and career pathways of a substantial cohort of ICMJ alumni.

5 Conclusion

The Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging (ICMJ) program successfully delivered all project objectives between 2021–22 and 2025–26, despite the challenges associated with COVID-19 in the early years of the project. Across the funding period, the program delivered National and Northern Conferences, Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) Weeks, international study tours, Careers Expos, professional development activities, alumni engagement initiatives and a comprehensive communications program.

The project demonstrated strong outcomes in participant knowledge, skills, networks, leadership capability and career development. Evaluation results consistently showed high levels of participant satisfaction and increased knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA) across all major activities. Importantly, the 2026 Alumni Impact Survey demonstrated strong long-term outcomes, with 95% of respondents either working in, or studying towards, a career in the red meat industry and 89% indicating that ICMJ influenced their decision to pursue or remain in the sector.

Beyond individual participant outcomes, ICMJ continues to play an important role in attracting, developing and retaining talented people within the Australian red meat and livestock industry. The program has created a strong alumni network and leadership pipeline, with many former participants returning as coaches, mentors, committee members, presenters and industry

advocates. This ongoing cycle of participation and contribution represents one of the program's most significant and enduring impacts.

5.10 Key findings

- All project objectives were successfully achieved during the funding period.
- Four National Conferences, four Northern Conferences, four IIED Weeks, four USA study tours and two Asian immersion tours were delivered.
- More than 90% of participants consistently reported increases in industry knowledge, technical skills, professional networks and career interest.
- The National and Northern Conferences continue to be highly valued for their combination of technical training, professional development and industry networking.
- Careers Expos provided direct engagement between participants and employers, increasing awareness of career opportunities across the red meat supply chain.
- International study tours broadened participant understanding of global markets, supply chains and industry practices.
- The 2026 Alumni Survey demonstrated strong workforce outcomes, with 95% of respondents either working in, or studying towards, a career in the red meat industry.
- ICMJ continues to develop future industry leaders, with alumni returning to support the program through coaching, mentoring, governance and industry leadership roles.

5.11 Benefits to industry

- Strengthened industry attraction, retention and leadership development across the Australian red meat industry.
- Increased participant knowledge and understanding of red meat production, processing, supply chains, markets and careers and career diversity
- Developed strong professional networks and connections between students, young professionals, employers, researchers and industry leaders.
- Increased awareness of career opportunities across the red meat supply chain, supporting industry recruitment efforts.
- Enhanced industry capability through professional development, international benchmarking and leadership development opportunities.
- Created a sustainable pipeline of future coaches, mentors, committee members and industry leaders who continue to contribute back to the sector.

6 Future research and recommendations

- Continue investment in the existing ICMJ program model, including the National Conference, Northern Conference, IIED Week, Careers Expos, professional development activities, international study tours and alumni initiatives.
- Expand participant development opportunities through the proposed Southern Industry Tour, providing exposure to southern production systems, processing and supply chains for delegates from the Northern ICMJ Conference.
- Invest in the modernisation of ICMJ systems and digital infrastructure to improve participant engagement, operational efficiency and program accessibility, including:
 - Redevelopment of the ICMJ website to provide a contemporary and user-friendly platform for students, industry participants, coaches, sponsors and alumni.

- Development of an online resource hub to support competition preparation, professional development and year-round engagement.
- Improved digital systems for participant registration, communications, alumni engagement and program administration.
- Expansion of online resources, webinars and learning materials to complement face-to-face activities and extend the reach of the program.
- Explore opportunities to engage secondary school teachers and careers advisors to increase awareness of red meat industry career pathways and strengthen future participant pipelines.
- Continue to build the alumni program and longitudinal tracking of participants to further demonstrate the long-term impact of ICMJ on workforce attraction, retention and leadership development.
- Continue to invest in governance and leadership development opportunities for ICMJ committee members. To strengthen governance capability and support succession planning, consideration should be given to funding up to two Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) courses annually for current committee members. This investment would build governance skills, enhance board effectiveness and support the long-term sustainability of the organisation. Importantly, given the strong retention of committee members within the red meat and livestock industry, the benefits of this investment extend beyond ICMJ itself, with governance capability, leadership skills and industry knowledge continuing to contribute to the broader red meat sector long after individuals have completed their service on the committee.
- Progress the governance review and implementation of the new governance framework, including transition from an incorporated association to a company limited by guarantee, to ensure the organisation remains fit-for-purpose and sustainable beyond 2026.
- Review the constitution especially around nomination for committee and length of tenure to ensure progression of ICMJ for many decades to come.
- Maintain strong industry partnerships and sponsorship arrangements that enable participants to engage directly with employers, industry leaders and the broader red meat supply chain.

7 Appendix

7.1 ICMJ Program logic 2021-2026

Program logic

Method to achieve objectives

ICMJ Mission: Inspire and develop future professionals in the global red meat industry

Objective	Methods	Participants – Who is it targeting?	Outcome KASA & Practice Changes	Impact on Industry	Monitoring & Evaluation
Objective 1: Organise and deliver an annual five-day ICMJ National Conference and meat judging competition, that aims to increase student KASA of the red meat industry.					

Annual National ICMJ Conference & meat judging contest (Wagga Wagga)	Deliver an annual 5-day ICMJ National Conference incl: • A program that covers red meat supply from the paddock through to the consumer. With seminars featuring the latest industry trends, innovations and presenters through to hands on practical workshops. • Careers Expo featuring at least 30 companies • Professional development training. • Showcase red meat industry businesses via sponsorship & involvement in the program. • Conduct an ICMJ competition.	• Tertiary and Vocational Education & Training students from as many universities across Australia as possible. • Pending COVID restrictions, invite international teams to attend such as USA, Japan, Korea, Indonesia & others. • Meat and livestock industry to showcase their businesses & innovations via the careers expo, industry exhibition, sponsorship & speakers • Alumni invited to particular aspects of the program.	• Increase participant knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the red meat & livestock industry. • Increase skills in meat judging • Attract students to careers in the red meat & livestock industry. • Provide a platform for industry networking, connection and support. • Build the network and capacity of the ICMJ National Committee	• ICMJ provides a platform for the red meat industry to showcase the diversity of careers, to attract intelligent students to the industry and to encourage the retention of young industry professionals within the industry by providing networks, connections & support to these individuals via the annual conference. • ICMJ is a proactive people development program for the red meat industry.	• Number of coach and student registrations both a number of institutions. • Sponsorship contribution received. • Number of companies exhibiting at the Careers Expo • Surveys of participants measuring their KASA & the impact of the program. • Survey of the Careers expo exhibitors to determine the value that they get from attending the program. • Number of participants who join the Alumni program.
Objective 2: Organise and deliver an annual four-day ICMJ Northern Conference for tertiary students and young industry professionals working across the northern beef industry that aims to increase participant knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the Northern beef industry.					
Annual Northern ICMJ Conference (Rockhampton)	Deliver an annual 4-day ICMJ conference in Northern Australia. Including: • A program that covers red meat supply from the paddock through to the consumer. With seminars	• Industry professionals working across the northern beef industry incl. producers, agribusinesses, pastoral companies, agents, advisors • Tertiary students.	• Increase participant knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the Northern beef industry. • Attract students to careers in the northern beef industry.	• ICMJ provides a platform for the Northern Beef industry to showcase the diversity of careers, to attract intelligent students to the industry and to encourage the retention of young	• Number of registrations both from industry & tertiary students. • Sponsorship contribution received. • Number of companies exhibiting at the Careers Expo & Industry Exhibition.

	through to hands on practical workshops. • Northern ICMJ Careers Expo & Industry Exhibition. • Professional development training. • Showcase beef industry businesses via sponsorship & involvement in the program. • Enhance relationships with partners such as Teys Australian, CQUniversity, Beef Australia.	• Northern businesses to showcase their businesses and innovations via the careers expo, industry exhibition, sponsorship, speakers •	• Provide a platform for industry networking, connection and support. • Build the network and capacity of the ICMJ Northern Conference Committee	industry professionals within the industry by providing networks, connections & support to these individuals via the annual conference. • 'People see being part of the Australian red meat and livestock industry as attractive now and into the future' (Red Meat 2030) •	• Surveys of participants measuring their KASA & the impact of the program. • Survey of the Careers expo exhibitors to determine the value that they get from attending the program. • Number of participants who join the Alumni program.
Objective 3: Annually immerse at least 15 'stand out' students selected from the National Conference into an 'Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED)' week that exposes students to red meat and livestock business supply chains providing further industry training and development.					
Annual Intensive Industry Education and Development (IIED) week for selected tertiary students (Brisbane)	Deliver an annual 5-day including: • From top 10 to 22 students • 5 day SE QLD tour encompassing 15+ visits • Professional development, Industry insights, networking	• Top 10 to 22 students selected at the National Conference. • Australian Coaches	• Continue to develop and inspire our graduates	ICMJ students who attend the IIED, become future coaches, mentors and future leaders in their businesses, communities and in industry.	• Surveys of participants measuring their KASA & the impact of the program. • Number of participants who join the Alumni program.
Objective 4: Utilise the IIED week to annually select up to five tertiary students, and at least two Australian coaches, to represent Australia on an international tour to the USA (pending COVID travel restrictions). This program will be focused on gaining knowledge of international industry developments, participating in an annual US intercollegiate meat judging competition (if the tour includes USA), as well as developing the cohorts as future industry leaders.					

An international tour to USA (or an alternative pending COVID) involving the top five students selected at the IIED week	Deliver an annual 2.5 week international tour to the USA (pending COVID travel restrictions) covering: ● Industry tours ● Building connections with US universities ● Representing Australia in at least one USA Meat Judging Competition ● Encouraging the students to seek work experience & industry placement in the USA ● Build in leadership training	● Top five tertiary students selected from the IIED week. ● Up to two Australian Coaches.	● Increase participant knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the USA red meat & livestock industry. ● Increase skills in USA meat grading & meat judging. ● Builds a network of connection and support	● ICMJ Australian Team members become future leaders in their businesses, communities and in industry.	● Surveys of participants measuring their KASA & the impact of the program.
Objective 5: Annually deliver a careers expo/industry exhibition at both the Northern Conference and the National Conference to expose students to the range of career prospects within the meat and livestock industry and to provide the opportunity for industry to showcase their companies and career paths to prospective employees. Objective 6: Deliver annual professional development training at both the Northern and National Conferences to increase participant knowledge and skills to enhance the future of the Australian red meat industry workforce. This will include coaches development training.					
Careers expos and delivery of professional development training. Coaches development training	● Northern ICMJ Careers Expo & Industry Exhibition. ● National Conference Careers Expo featuring at least 30 companies. ● Careers Fair Plus online careers expo ● Professional development training delivered at the Northern & National Conferences ● Coach Development Training	● Tertiary students & coaches. ● Industry professionals working across the northern beef industry incl. producers, agribusinesses, pastoral companies, agents, advisors ● Red meat and livestock businesses to showcase their businesses and innovations via the	● Increase participant knowledge on the diversity of career pathways in the red meat industry. ● Change attitudes and aspiration to want to work within our industry ● Provide new skills in areas such as communications, networking, interviewing, CV	● Attract the next generation of talented graduates into careers in the red meat industry as well as providing opportunities to showcase the range of careers available across the industry providing a targeted recruitment channel for industry.	● Number of companies exhibiting at the Careers Expo. ● Surveys of participants measuring their KASA & the impact of the program. ● Survey of the Careers expo exhibitors to determine the value that they get from attending the program. ● Post event survey (6-12months) ● Coach surveys

		careers expo & industry exhibition. ● Coaches	development, adult learning etc. ● Increase coach meat judging skills as well as other knowledge & skills such as adult learning styles, personality training		
Objective 7: In 2021-22 develop an ICMJ Alumni strategy to ensure ongoing connection, development and support to past cohorts who have been through the program with annual activities such as events and a mentoring program.					
Implementation of an ICMJ Alumni & mentoring program	● Develop an alumni strategy ● At major red meat industry engagements (such as MLA AGM/Red Meat forum) hold ICMJ alumni events. ● Facilitate and deliver the Alumni ICMJ 'Power Hour' mentoring sessions ● Promote Alumni Network at all conferences.	● People who have previously been to an ICMJ Conference. ● Mentoring program focussed on young industry professionals in the early stages of their careers.	● Provide a platform for industry networking, connection and support.	Retention of talented individuals in the red meat industry who feel connected and supported.	● Number of alumni on the ICMJ database ● Number of Alumni who attend events ● Surveys from the Power Hour program both for the mentees and mentors
Objective 8: Pending COVID travel restrictions, deliver an annual Asian Industry immersion tour for young industry professionals and ICMJ alumni to increase the understanding of Asian customers and consumers, trade and market access, culture and industry.					
A Asia industry immersion tour for young industry professionals	● Deliver a two-week South East Asian Industry immersion tour covering: - Industry tours - Building networks with trading partners	● Young industry professionals ● ICMJ Alumni ● Stand out representative at the ICMJ Northern Conference	● Increase participant knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations (KASA) of the South East Asia red meat & livestock industry including customers and consumers, trade and market access, culture and industry.	● Tour members become future leaders in their businesses, communities and in industry.	● Survey of participants

			• Builds a network of connection and support		
Objective 9: Implement an annual communications strategy that promotes ICMJ and its mission to industry and the wider community through mainstream and social media channels.					
Implement an annual communications strategy	• ICMJ Communications strategy rolled out annually including: • Media releases • Social media content • Podcast series (depending on listening stats)	• Wider red meat and livestock industry • Sponsors of the program	• More people participating, more sponsors supporting	ICMJ is a well recognised brand across industry.	Media monitoring Social media reports
Objective 10: Professionally deliver the ICMJ program following the ICMJ Constitution and corporate governance requirements including delivering an Annual General Meeting (AGM). Increase committee knowledge and understanding of corporate governance					
Corporate Governance	• Annual AGM held. • Corporate Governance training provided to the National committee. • ICMJ program meets all it's governance requirements	• ICMJ National Committee	The ICMJ Committee continues to attract high calibre of volunteers to drive the program forward.	ICMJ is professionally delivered and highly regarded by industry and sponsors.	

7.2 Sponsorship

7.2.1 Sponsors of the 2025 National ICMJ Program

Founding Partners	
Meat & Livestock Australia	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
Principal Partners	
Australian Pork Limited	Teys
Thomas Foods International	
Major Partners	
JBS Australia	NHFoods
Supporting Partners	
Rimfire Resources	Fletcher International
Australian Poll Dorset Association	Australian Meat Group
Associate Partners	
Harvest Road	Cattle Australia
Allflex	Angus Australia
Bindaree Food Group	Greenham
Agri Talent/Agri Labour	
Product Sponsors	
Product sponsor – Gundagai Lamb	Product sponsor – Sunpork Group
Product sponsor – Teys	
Venue Sponsor	
Charles Sturt University	
Media Sponsor	
Beef Central	

7.2.2 Sponsors of the 2024 National ICMJ Program

Founding Partners	
Meat & Livestock Australia	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
Principal Partners	
Australian Pork Limited	Teys
Major Partners	
JBS Australia	NHFoods
Greenstock	
Supporting Partners	
Rimfire Resources	Fletcher International
	Australian Meat Group
Associate Partners	
Fulton Market Group	Cattle Australia
Allflex	Angus Australia
Kilcoy Global Foods	Hewitt
Product Sponsors	
Product sponsor – Linley Valley Pork	Product sponsor – Australian Country Choice
Product sponsor – Gundagai Lamb	Product sponsor – Rivalea
Product sponsor – Sunpork Group	
Venue Sponsor	

Charles Sturt University	
Media Sponsor	
Beef Central	

Sponsors of the 2023 National ICMJ Program

Founding Partners	
Meat & Livestock Australia	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
Principal Partners	
Coles	Teys
Australian Pork Limited	
Major Partners	
JBS Australia	AACo
	Australian Poll Dorset Association
Supporting Partners	
Rimfire Resources	Fletcher International
	Australian Meat Group
Associate Partners	
Fulton MarketGroup	Herefords Australia
Allflex	Angus Australia
Kilcoy Global Foods	AusMeat
Product sponsor – Gundagai Lamb	Product sponsor – Rivalea

Sponsors of the 2022 National ICMJ Program

Founding Partners	
Meat & Livestock Australia	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
Principal Partners	
Coles	Teys
Australian Pork Limited	
Major Partners	
JBS Australia	AACo
Kilcoy Global Foods	
Supporting Partners	
Rimfire Resources	Fletchers International
NH Foods	
Associate Partners	
Fulton Marketing Group	Herefords Australia
Allflex	Angus Australia
AMIST	Allflex

7.3 IIED participants

2025 cohort

The tour group included the top ten students from the National Competition: Piper Christensen (University of Queensland), Kathryn Fisher (University of Queensland), Penny Crothers (Marcus Oldham College), Zoe Skinner (Murdoch University), Jess Vaughan (University of Sydney), Catherine Baxter (University of Sydney), Libby Hardingham (Murdoch University), Will Lawrence (University of Queensland), Andrew Thompson (University of Queensland), and Sarah Bradfield (University of New England).

An addition to this an individual student was selected by their university as a representative who demonstrated above and beyond dedication to the industry and the ICMJ program, Charlie Salter (James Cook University), William Thompson (University of Queensland), Xavier Cornelius (University of Melbourne), Jess Lavis (Charles Sturt University), Jade Burge (University of Sydney), Angus Langsmith (University of New England), Alicia Nixon (Marcus Oldham College), Chevy Fowler (University of Adelaide), Tom Tunstall (Murdoch University), Basem Aly (University of Southern Queensland). The tour was led by four ICMJ committee members, Aimee Bolton, Ellie Hays, Jake Bourlet and Macky Lawrence.

2024 Cohort

The tour participants consisted of the top eleven students selected from the Wagga competition, Angus Brennand (University of Queensland), Ben Spackman (University of Queensland), Evey White (Marcus Oldham College), Kieran Hammood (Charles Sturt University), Kristen Batten (Murdoch University), Kristy Shadbolt (Murdoch University), Madison Luke (University of Sydney), Nick Greenwood (University of Queensland), Sophie Marriott (University of New England), Taylah Menenes (University of Adelaide), Tink Morgan (University of New England); along with the coach's pick of students.

These students were each selected by their university as a representative who demonstrated above and beyond dedication to the industry and/or the ICMJ program, Amber Whibley (University of Queensland), Griffin Graham (University of Melbourne), Hayden Mckimmie (Charles Sturt University), Jack Mayhew (University of Sydney), Lachlan West (University of New England), Meg Grogan (Marcus Oldham College), Saralouise Graefling (University of Adelaide), Taite O'Neill (Murdoch University). The tour was led by three ICMJ committee members, Aimee Bolton, Ellie Hays and Macky Lawrence.

2023 Cohort

The tour participants consisted of the top eleven students selected from the Wagga competition, Angus Bartter (Charles Sturt University), Deanna Blessing (University of Adelaide), Shania Gough (University of Queensland), Sarah Hamblin (University of Queensland), Jonty Hemingway (University of New England), Holly Johnson (University of Queensland), Georgie Laurie (University of New England), Stephanie Leziach (Charles Sturt University), Mitchell Lollback (Marcus Oldham), Emma-Rae Shaw (Charles Sturt University), and Rowan Vallance (University of New England); along with the coach's pick of students. These students were each selected by their university as a representative who demonstrated above and beyond dedication to the industry and/or the ICMJ program, Harry FitzGerald (University of Queensland), Hannah Hill (Murdoch University), Holly Newsome (University of New England), Sam Palmer (Marcus Oldham), Alana Plowright (Marcus Oldham), Isabella Tatchell (University of Melbourne), Megan Walker (University of Sydney) and Kelly Will (University of

Adelaide). The tour was led by three ICMJ committee members, incoming Australian Team coaches, Molly Greentree and Macky Lawrence and outgoing Australian Team coach Melanie Smith.

2022 Cohort

The tour participants consisted of the; *Top 10* students selected from Wagga (Austin Smith, Anna Johnson, Callum Melton, Harriet Taylor, Jack Jensen, Jasmine Wholton, Katja Zapf, Lawton Elliott, Rachel Franklin, and Samuel Turner); and the 9 coaches pick students (Chloe Sansom, Connie Blake, James Palmer, Jasmine Campbell-Brown, Jillian Burges, Kaitlyn Anderson, Lachlan Young, LiLi Du, and Meg Kennett) selected as a representative from each university that attended the National Program (UNE, UQ, USYD, CSU, Marcus Oldham, Murdoch University, University of Adelaide, University of Melbourne, and La Trobe University) and was led by three ICMJ committee members (Melanie Smith, Nicholas van den Berg and Macky Lawrence).

7.4 Alumni case studies

(See MLA for seperately attached PDF)