

TRAIL 2020 – A Journey Like No Other

Final Report to Partners



Australian
Rural Leadership
Foundation

It is fair to say that the 2020 cohort of the TRAIL program had an experience like no other. After a false start and some additional recruitment, the group has finally completed their program in Canberra, graduating in a ceremony held on the 4th March. The group was the first to experience our new innovative 'hub' program delivery mode across state regions. This new approach was further supported through the online community platform 'Mighty Networks' which enabled participants to build and maintain connections throughout the program.

"The cohort was thrown plenty of challenges and curve balls, with a pandemic right in the midst. They were the first participants to experience a program using all three of our delivery modalities: 1. hubs, 2. our online community platform and (eventually) 3. face to face. At each point they were receptive and engaged in their participation, they demonstrated an extraordinary attitude in rolling and adapting with whatever situation they faced and making the most of whatever experience was in front of them. This alone provided each participant with an incredible learning and development opportunity" - Sam Archer, Program Facilitator.

Participants



Participant	Sponsor
John Cunnington	Australian Live Export Council
Caela Dye	Australian Lot Feeders Association
Harrison Lightbody	Australian Lot Feeders Association
Aaron Kiely	Cotton Research and Development Corporation
Paul Reynolds	Elders Limited
Judd Smith	National Australia Bank
Paul Aquilina	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Emma Lipscomb	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Jeshua Smith	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Tim Eyes	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Adele Smith	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Yvette McKenzie	NSW Stud Merino Breeders Association
Rob Martyn	Sunpork Farms
Elizabeth Majid	Torres Strait Regional Authority

Session Format

With the standard 8-day program format being interrupted by COVID last year the 2020 program was split into three sessions:

Session	No. of Days	Location
Session 1	3	Hubs (Tamworth, Victor Harbour, Roma, Thursday Island, Perth)
Session 2	1	Online
Session 3	4	Canberra

The third session began on the outskirts of Canberra at Tharwa where the participants undertook 3 days of outdoor experiential learning. The purpose of this session is to provide action-based learning, consolidate relationships, explore personal and social behaviour and experiment with problem solving, decision making, interpretation and adaptive leadership. Activities simulated complexity, disruption and ambiguity to allow participants to respond to changing contexts and perspectives and to consider their personal leadership style.

The participants then spent a day in Canberra consolidating what they had learnt and building on this foundation by engaging with inspirational guest speakers.

Self-reflection, listening, vulnerability, courage and risk taking are incorporated across the entire program.

Session 3 Key Learning Intentions

- Create greater self-awareness and how this relates to collaboration with others.
- Explore a range of areas relevant to leadership, including values, social responsibility, negotiation, crucial conversations, critical thinking and leading in complexity.
- Deepen understanding and appreciation of the need for flexible and responsive leadership within your community, workplace, sector, industry, region.
- Develop a structured pathway for future leadership development, and;
- Provide opportunities to build personal and professional relationships with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's network of alumni.

Graduation

Having persisted through all this, almost a year after beginning, the participants have graduated and joined the ARLF's alumni network.



"I had the privilege of witnessing the transformation of 13 highly enthusiastic and diverse emerging industry leaders graduate from the TRAIL program as a tight knit group of emotionally connected, eager individuals, who were now ready to put their new-found skills and knowledge to practice in order to contribute and give back to their respective agricultural sectors. It was truly inspirational meeting each graduate, hearing their stories and what they gained from the experience. It solidified for me the value of the TRAIL Program."

Madeleine Hamilton, ALFA, TRAIL Partner

As always, this program would not have been possible without the support of our valued partners. This year, more than ever, we would like to recognise and thank you for your support of TRAIL.

