



RESEARCH DIRECTOR, AQUATIC SCIENCES - SARDI

JOB & PERSON SPECIFICATION

JUNE 2025

SAES Role Description

General Information

Title:	Research Director – Aquatic Sciences			Classification:	SAES1	
Division:	SARDI	Branch:	Aquatic Sciences		Business Unit:	Aquatic Sciences
Type of appointment:	Term Contract Up to 3 years	Hours of duty:	37.5 hrs / week	Location:	West Beach	

About Us

South Australia is internationally recognised for the quality of its agriculture, food and wine. Our regions are the backbone of our state and the economic powerhouse that drives prosperity for all South Australians.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) is a key economic development agency working in partnership with our primary industries, regional stakeholders and across all levels of government to advance the prosperity and sustainability of South Australia's primary industries and regional communities.

We are a passionate team of around 800 people working across metropolitan and regional South Australia to develop and protect our state's regions and food, wine, aquaculture, fisheries, forestry, grains, livestock, dairy and horticulture industries.

We are proud to partner with Aboriginal people, their communities and organisations to learn, grow and develop sustainable opportunities.

As a division of PIRSA, the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) plays a vital role in delivering innovative research, products, processes, services and technologies for primary industries, sustainable foods and agribusiness sectors in South Australia and nationally.

SARDI is one of Australia's leading applied research institutes and has provided its stakeholders with innovative, world-leading research and development solutions for more than 25 years. SARDI provides research and development services to the state government, commercial clients and research partners to help make South Australia's primary industries and regions internationally competitive and ecologically sustainable.

SARDI's extensive research capability is divided into four focus areas — aquatic sciences, crop sciences, food sciences and livestock sciences. Each research area involves practical and experimental research that attracts curious and innovative scientists, many of whom are recognised leaders in their fields, nationally and internationally.

SARDI's aquatic sciences research division supports sustainable management of marine resources. Our work protects the ecology of aquatic environments and grows South Australian marine industries.

Purpose

The role of the Research Director - Aquatic Sciences is to develop and maintain relevant, premium quality science and technology capabilities; to ensure people and capital resources are allocated and managed effectively so that SARDI's objectives in strategic and business plans are met or exceeded; and to coordinate and integrate across SARDI the science, technology and intellectual property delivered by Science Leaders and scientific, research and technical employees. The incumbent provides high-level leadership to promote a focus on developing strategic aquatic sciences initiatives and collaborations, identification of new research, development and commercialisation opportunities and funding sources. The incumbent also actively drives and influences corporate culture and continuous improvement initiatives.

Key Accountabilities

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseeing the performance Aquatic Sciences employees, budget that are located at the South Australian Aquatic Sciences Centre West Beach, South Australian Aquatic Biosecurity Centre, North Arm, Pt Lincoln and Mt Gambier research centres, as well as overseeing the sea-going research vessel - MRV Ngerin. Developing and delivering science program goals, which align with the PIRSA Corporate Plan and the SARDI Strategic Plan, SA government plans and industry blueprints. Ensuring statutory science meets the needs of PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring our research outputs meet government, departmental and stakeholder expectations and are delivered in accordance with financial, administrative and human resource requirements. Developing and fostering collaborative and strategic partnerships with stakeholders at international, national, regional and local levels. Assume full oversight for the delivery of business development and commercialisation activities across Aquatic Sciences, including overarching responsibility for the delivery of fee for service activities ensuring appropriate return to government. Ensuring science capability is maintained in key areas. |
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SAES Role Description

Key Deliverables / Results

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound, timely and accurate advice, support and briefings provided to the Minister and PIRSA Executives. • Initiatives, programs and projects aligned to government priorities and industry needs. • Research plans and strategies are developed, implemented and achieved consistent with the the PIRSA Corporate Plan and the SARDI Strategic Plan. • SARDI is strategically positioned as leaders in aquatic sciences and is generating high-quality, innovative applied research and development. • Leadership, coaching and role modelling is provided to Program Leaders to support strategic directions, key initiatives, program priorities, leadership succession and management of employees. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies and plans are in place to ensure the enhancement and development of SARDI science capabilities in strategically relevant areas and role modelling of SARDI's role, vision and values are made, and corporate cultural development initiatives are led. • Personal and professional development of self and others is facilitated through the provision of professional support, feedback, direction, coaching, mentoring and training and development opportunities. • Overseeing new and emerging funding sources are identified and bidding processes are well managed across the Branch. • Effective linkages are forged with relevant industry and community stakeholders, universities, funding bodies, NGO and state and national government sectors. |
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Key Selection Criteria

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional & Technical Knowledge
Demonstrates expert knowledge of Aquatic Sciences and is recognised as a leader in the field • Leads and Develops People
Effectively performs and contributes to the organisation by providing ongoing feedback and opportunities for development and growth. • Establishes and Maintains Strategic Networks
Builds effective working relationships, networks and partnerships with internal and external stakeholders. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves and Delivers Results
Drives for results while maintaining a focus on the business unit and/or organisations strategic goals. • Exercises Sound Judgement
Makes well informed, effective and timely decisions even when information is incomplete or ambiguous. • Models the South Australian Executive Service Values
Models and promotes appropriate social, ethical and organisational standards in all interactions. |
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South Australian Executive Service (SAES) Core Competencies

Shapes Strategic Thinking and Change

Anticipates and plans for future events, trends, problems and opportunities and exercise sound judgement. Develop creative solutions, stimulating new ways of thinking and solving problems.

Key Elements of the Competency:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creates Vision ▪ Inspires | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thinks and Acts Strategically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leads and Influences Change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Solves Problems |
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Achieves Results

Makes timely, quality decisions taking a broad range of factors into consideration. Evaluates reasonable risk taking opportunities. Sets broad organisational goals and priorities in order to drive results consistent with government direction and public expectations.

Key Elements of the Competency:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieves and Delivers Results ▪ Drives Organisational Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manages Compliance with Legislation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluates ▪ Assumes Accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applies Technical Expertise ▪ Exercise Sound Judgement |
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Drives Business Excellence

Builds an effective, sustainable and high performing organisation through leadership. Engages and aligns human, financial and information resources to achieve strategic targets. Plans for future organisational needs to minimise risk and maximise opportunity. Leads organisational change that maximises results.

Key Elements of the Competency:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Influences Organisational Performance ▪ Builds Capability and Expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leads and Develops People | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Predicts and Plans for Future Organisational Needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Directs Resources ▪ Promotes a Customer Service Ethos |
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Forges Relationships and Engages Others

SAES Role Description

Builds effective working relationships, networks and partnerships with internal and external bodies at all levels. Creates a commitment to customer service excellence. Actively listens to what others have to say and responds in a clear, concise and diplomatic manner. Adapts communication style as appropriate.

Key Elements of the Competency:

▪ Develops and Uses Political Savvy ▪ Negotiates and Influences	▪ Promotes Information Sharing and the Gathering of Knowledge	▪ Establishes and Maintains Strategic Networks ▪ Manages Conflict	▪ Communicates Clearly and Adapts to Audience
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Exemplifies Personal Drive and Professionalism

Models ethical practice and embeds the values of the public sector into the culture of the organisation. Acts with integrity while promoting consistency among principles, values and behaviours. Sets challenging personal and organisational performance standards and pursues them with passion and energy.

Key Elements of the Competency:

▪ Models the South Australian Executive Service Values	▪ Promotes and Integrates Diversity into the Workplace ▪ Displays Flexibility and Resilience	▪ Demonstrates Self Awareness and a Commitment to Personal Development	▪ Engages with Risk and Shows Personal Courage ▪ Values Wellbeing for Self and Others
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Relationships

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Research Director, Aquatic Sciences reports to the Executive Director, SARDI • The role delivers high level leadership and direction for all employees within SARDI Aquatic Sciences • Leads a multi-disciplinary team of Program Leaders to oversee the Aquatic Sciences Branch • Is a member of the Division's Senior Management Team and represents SARDI on a number of national and state committees and working groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role develops strong networks and working relationships within PIRSA, and with other government agencies across SA, universities and the Commonwealth Government. • Strong linkage, collaborations and relationships are developed and maintained with key stakeholders; industry, partner research providers, funding bodies and research and development organisations. |
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Requirements

- Possession of a current driver's license and willingness to drive is desirable
- Out of hours work and inter / intrastate travel may be required
- You acknowledge your [work, health and safety obligations](#) and [our expectations](#) when applying for a role.
- The incumbent will be required to undertake emergency management training and must be willing to participate in emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities required by government agencies.
- Appointment is subject to a satisfactory Background Screening and National Criminal History Check.

Qualifications

- **Essential:** A PhD qualification in a relevant scientific discipline or equivalent demonstrated business development and management experience.

Corporate Responsibilities

- Keep accurate and complete records of business activities in accordance with the *State Records Act 1997*.
- Maintain a commitment to the *Public Sector Act 2009* and *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* and the *Return to Work Act 2014* and their legislative requirements.
- Observe the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector, the Public Sector Values.
- Demonstrate a commitment to creating and maintaining a fair, inclusive and diverse working environment that values and utilises the contribution of all. In particular show support for the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other underrepresented groups.
- Contributes to emergency management.
- Compliance with PIRSA policies and procedures including people management and financial delegations and expenditure authority.



HOW TO APPLY

Applications including a cover letter and CV should be addressed to Justin Hinora. Please visit henderconsulting.com.au to apply.

For a confidential discussion, please call (08) 8100 8827.

Please Note

Your application will be automatically acknowledged by a return email.