

Get involved in industry associations

Most industries in Australia are represented by industry Associations. Typically not-for-profit, industry associations provide members with a range of services, including lobbying on their behalf, support and training. Some associations offer some information and services for free, but in most cases, you need to become a member and pay a fee to access their full range of resources and services.

Industry associations provide a number of services:

- information about your industry, such as business trends, statistics, and the effects of legislation on your business
- useful resources, information and programs to help you improve business practices
- training and education programs, seminars, conferences, networking events and mentoring programs
- connections with other businesses in your industry
- public relations or promotional activities to increase sales
- advertising campaigns to educate or persuade the public about issues relevant to your industry
- research and development projects
- lobbying to influence government policy.

In many industries, becoming a member of the peak body can give your business credibility, as your membership proves to customers that you are professional and involved in improving your own business and the wider industry.

Each professional association or group in Australia is run by a committee of volunteers, referred to as Board Members or

Executive Committee Members. Each group has its own rules, written formally in its constitution, which dictate who and how many committee members the group should or can have. Although being a committee member is a commitment of time for meetings and often to assist or undertake activities, it can be personally and professionally rewarding.

There are a number of reasons to become involved in an industry association. These include:

1. Build industry strength by advocating on important issues to government and other decision makers
2. Learn new skills and gain a different perspective on your business by viewing it through the wider industry
3. Expand your network of industry contacts - meet with, and build relationships with some of the most influential people in the industry
4. Lift your profile and reputation amongst colleagues and create a name for yourself as an industry leader
5. Make a difference and shape the industry's future.

The magazine provides a list of industry association and flower grower group contacts in Australia and New Zealand in every issue (page 30) to assist those looking for a local group relevant to their business.

Read some thoughts below from a number of industry board members from around Australia and New Zealand on why they become involved and took a leadership role in their industry associations. 🐦



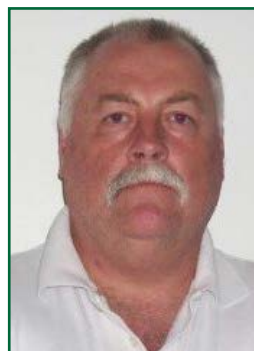
"I became involved in Flowers Victoria to help grow the industry. If the whole industry grows, everybody benefits. I have taken on a leadership role on the FV board to encourage other young growers to join. New faces, fresh ideas."
 Owen Brinson, Flowers Victoria President



"The greater the numbers, the louder the voice. It is crucial that every industry has a representative association."
 Wayne Inglis, Aliway Flowers Flower Growers Group of NSW President



"The rise of order gatherers is a grave threat to our industry across the board, from growers to wholesalers to florists. It's a race to bottom and there will be no winners if we don't all group together to support each other."
 Kim Dodwell, Northside Flower Market Flower Association Board Member



"I have always believed that you need to give something to the industry which you make your living out of. By being part of the Association I have tried to give the whole industry a feel for what we do successfully."
 Mark Irwin, Cedar Hill Group WildFlowers Australia Treasurer

Building flower industry leadership

The flower industry has obtained funding from the federal government to undertake a project to build leadership skills and assist the next generation of industry professionals to lead the Australian cut flower industry into the future.

The program will roll out leadership training in six regions, with events planned for Melbourne, regional Victoria, Brisbane, Cairns, Sydney and Perth. Each event will focus on governance, financial management, strategy development and risk management for association and industry leaders. A national networking event aimed at the next generation of industry leaders will bring them together for a day's discussion and presentations, to support their development as business people and future industry leaders. The project will also produce practical information and tools that will be available online and articles in Australian Flower Industry magazine.

The funding is from the Leadership in Agricultural Industries program. The project will be undertaken under the umbrella of the Australian Flower Council, led by the Flower Association in collaboration with the Flower Growers Group of New South Wales, Flowers Victoria and WildFlowers Australia. For further information on the project or to get involved, contact project leader Shane Holborn.

T: 07 3821 3350; E: shane@flowersqueensland.asn.au



"I'm passionate about enhancing awareness about local growers and locally grown seasonal flowers, especially when imported flowers are so readily available. Local flowers are far superior. I want to see this industry thrive and succeed for future generations."

Sonia Bitmead, Currey Flowers
Flower Association Board Member



"I joined the industry association to keep abreast of industry developments, and to gain access to the association's products and services. I was pleased to join the Board to represent local flower growers."

Geoff Hussey, Charm City Flowers
Flower Association Board Member



"I became involved with WildFlowers Australia as I always enjoy learning about what other growers are facing in terms of challenges, opportunities and obstacles facing the industry, and so that we, as a group, can develop solutions to help drive our industry forward collectively."

Jo Gardner, Australian Wildflowers Pty Ltd
WildFlowers Australia Board Member



"The floriculture industry has a bright future and it will continue to grow. I strongly believe that we can achieve more by working together than working alone."

Lodi Pameijer, Top of the Range
Flowers
Flower Association Board Member



"I became a part of the Flower Association to learn and network with experts in my field. I was brand new to the industry, so this was invaluable. It led me to gain a broader understanding of the complexities within the industry and ultimately, helped in guiding the long-term direction of our business. The decision to take on a more active leadership role was something that evolved for me over time, when, I felt that I had some skills that I could contribute. Without a focussed and viable association, the cut flower industry has no voice when we need it. A lot of really good work is being done at the Flower Association and I am proud to be a part of it."

Jason Nealon, Tropical Blooms
Flower Association President