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Hort Innovation chief executive resigns



Matt Brand to leave grower-owned
research and development corporation

Horticulture Innovation Australia (Hort Innovation) has announced the resignation of its chief executive, Matt Brand.

In a press release, the grower-owned research and development corporation said Brand will continue in the role for six months while the recruitment of a new chief executive takes place.

Hort Innovation chair, Julie Bird, said the board extends its thanks to Brand for his leadership during his three years as chief executive.

"Matt has overseen the development and launch of the 2019-2023 strategic plan and the recent 5-year strategic investment plan (SIP) refresh across all 37 levied industries," she said.

"He initiated the process improvement project, to assist in improving transparency, visibility and responsiveness of the investments made on behalf of the horticulture industry and has driven a project with peak

industry bodies on transforming how we receive investment advice."

More than half of Brand's tenure was spent navigating a rapidly changing landscape because of the pandemic, including leading the business remotely and supporting its team working from home to deliver its core business. This while at the same time supporting the horticulture sector to respond to a range of Covid-related crises around labour, export and demand creation.

"We are grateful that Matt will remain in the role while we undertake the search for his replacement to maintain stability and business as usual for the team and our stakeholders," added Bird.

"With a new Strategic Plan due in 2023, this timing allows for a new chief executive to come into the business and lead that process from consultation to implementation.

"As a board, we are focused on finding the right candidate to build on the solid foundations that have been recently

established and to work collaboratively with our partners to take Hort Innovation into the next phase of our strategic development and delivery for the betterment of industry."

Bird said the Hort Innovation board was looking forward to continuing the work it started on building a better stakeholder experience, continuously improving its internal ways of working for efficiency and building a constructive culture.

Recruitment for the new chief executive will commence immediately.

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