



**optalent**

Connecting people & purpose

# Non-Executive Directors

## API Leisure & Lifestyle

Success Profile | July 2025

**API**  
Leisure & Lifestyle

**canopy**  
Early Education

# Introduction



Thank you for your interest in the **Non-Executive Directors** selection process.

OnTalent is thrilled to be leading the process of these multiple appointments on behalf of **API Leisure & Lifestyle**. This briefing pack provides you with information regarding the organisation, the role and requirements.

We aren't actively advertising this role and have opted for a more targeted approach.

I look forward to working with you through this process and invite you to contact me directly at any time on 07 3305 5803.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Dougherty'.

**Chris Dougherty**  
**Head of Government & Not-for-Profit**  
**OnTalent**

# About API Leisure & Lifestyle



## Overview

API Leisure & Lifestyle has been delivering leading-edge benefits to Australians for over a century. Established in 1918, the organisation has consistently evolved to meet the changing needs of its members, offering a diverse range of services that enhance everyday living and promote community engagement. With a focus on quality and value, API Leisure & Lifestyle continues to enrich the lives of its members across the nation.

## Mission & Vision

The mission of API Leisure & Lifestyle is to enrich lives through community connection and provide exceptional value to its members. The organisation envisions creating thriving, child-centred neighbourhood hubs under the Canopy Early Education brand, fostering environments where learning fosters growth. By bringing together families, educators, and the broader community, API Leisure & Lifestyle aims to cultivate connected, healthy, and happy communities.



# About API Leisure & Lifestyle

## Services & Offerings

**Member Benefits:** API membership serves as a gateway to substantial savings on everyday expenses. Members enjoy a wide variety of discounts, benefits, and special offers across a range of products and services, with potential savings of up to \$1,500 per year. These benefits are accessible at over 400 well-known retailers Australia-wide, making it easier for members to manage their daily expenses.

**Holiday Accommodations:** API owns and operates a selection of holiday apartments across Australia, providing members with affordable and comfortable accommodation options. These fully self-contained apartments are located in popular destinations, including family-friendly Kings Beach in Caloundra and the beachside locale of Urangan in Hervey Bay. With 17 other locations nationwide, members have ample choices for their next getaway.

**Corporate Benefits Program:** With over 90 years of experience, API Leisure & Lifestyle is a leader in the employee benefits arena. The organisation collaborates with various entities, including government bodies, not-for-profit organisations, private sector companies, and small businesses, to provide benefit programs that are integral to remuneration and benefits strategies. These programs enhance employee engagement and loyalty by offering a range of discounts and special offers.

**Canopy Early Education Centres:** API owns and operates Canopy Early Education centres, where passionate educators, children, and their families create communities focused on the shared belief that learning fosters growth. These centres provide nurturing environments that support quality care and early childhood development, ensuring children have the best possible start to their learning journey.

API Leisure and Lifestyle is embarking on a strategic plan over the next 5 years to transform their business to a charitable organisation are giving back to the community in many more ways than they do today. By 2040, they have a goal to be one of the top Philanthropic giving organisations in QLD.

# Highlights of our 100 years of History

- The institute was originally established in 1918 by the Honourable William Webster, MP, in Victoria, to meet the social needs of the PMG employees, later to become Australia Post and Telstra.
- The Institute has come a long way from its humble beginnings, originally set up in a single room with a billiard table, card table and a reading area. It went on to become one of Australia's largest social clubs across Australia.
- The first expansion of the Institute was in New South Wales during 1921, followed by Queensland in 1923, Western Australia and Tasmania in 1924 and South Australia in 1925.
- The Institute has held a variety of social events and educational assistances during its history, including training courses, debutante and grand balls, Christmas treats, art unions, education bursaries, sporting carnivals and many more activities held with the involvement of the numerous API branches/clubs and their volunteers.
- API Queensland's many business ventures over our history included: a member library, insurance brokerage, childcare/aged care service, shopper service, API Store.
- Today API membership is open to the public and provides benefits and services to our members Australia wide.



# Director Profiles



## **CLAIRE JOHNSTON - BBUS(INTERNATBUS), MBA, GAICD**

Claire is the President of API and is currently an InfraCo Customer Service Executive at Telstra serving Wholesale and large Enterprise clients. Claire has had many roles over her 20+ year career at Telstra, across front line operations, business and customer service improvement and leading major organisational change and cost reduction programs. Claire has completed university studies in International Business and an MBA specialising in strategy, entrepreneurship and project management. Claire has been awarded the qualification of GAICD by the Australia Institute of Company Directors and also been involved in volunteering for various charities and sporting clubs over many years. Member of HR and Governance committee.



## **HILARY KNIGHTS – MBA (Executive), GAICD, RBV**

Hilary has over 25 years' experience in the childcare sector as a specialised education marketing professional. During this time, she has worked with childcare entities such as the Queensland Professional Childcare Centres Association (now known as ACA Qld) and ABC Early Learning Centres as well as numerous independent centres. In addition, Hilary has been a Non-Executive Director on Sesame Lane Childcare's Board, Misso Institute's Board, Sunshine Coast Grammar School's New Leaf Early Learning Centre's Council, Brisbane North Institute of TAFE's Council and Queensland TAFE's Council. Hilary's extensive childcare, business and marketing experience has made her a well-respected and knowledgeable professional and a regular conference presenter. Hilary is well placed to guide, support and achieve strategic business objectives for stakeholders, at whatever stage of their childcare journey. She is a member of the Finance and Risk Management committee.

# Director Profiles



## **DENIS DADDS - JP (C.DEC), B. COMM**

Denis was elected Vice President in 2021 after serving as Chair of API Promotions and API Travel from 2018/19. He is also a member of the HR & Governance Committee. He has considerable experience in large telecommunications and recruitment organisations together with board and committee experience with RCSA, spanning risk, safety and finance. Denis holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree, majoring in Finance and Accounting, and Human Resource Management. With a strong interest in Management Systems Denis holds accreditation for OHSMS under AS/NZS4801 and has been involved in certification audits OH&S, Quality, and Environmental Management systems. Denis is a trained Lead Auditor for both Quality (ISO9001) and Health and Safety (AS/NZS:4801) Management Systems. In addition to his experience in human resource management, Denis' career was predominantly focused on risk management with particular emphasis on health and safety and worker's compensation management. Chair of HR and Governance committee.



## **GAVIN DOUGLAS - GAICD**

Gavin has over 30 years' experience in the IT and digital sectors. Starting his career in the UK working in sales and marketing roles with various companies including Apple and Adobe, he moved from London to Sydney in 1998. After meeting his wife and taking a year out to travel around Australia, they settled in Brisbane in 2001. Gavin has subsequently held senior sales, channel and program management roles with Microsoft, SAP & Amazon Web Services (AWS). He was recruited to lead the APAC Partner team for wiz.io in June 2022. Recently recognised as the fastest growing software company in history, Wiz is a leading cyber security startup, helping organisations to stay secure as they migrate to the cloud. Outside of work, Gavin has two teenage daughters (both API Little Cribb alumni), is an active member and volunteer with various sporting clubs, and has served on IT industry groups including AIIA and Queensland.NET. He is also an Advisory Board Member with Women In Digital, a global community dedicated to connecting, educating and empowering women in digital. Member of Finance and Risk Management committee.

# Director Profiles



## **AARON RODMAN - BCom, CA, GAICD**

Aaron is a Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee at API. He is an accomplished CFO and Head of Strategy with extensive commercial and leadership experience spanning startups through to large corporates. With over 20 years' experience across a diverse range of sectors including sustainability and recycling, financial services and logistics, Aaron is currently working with an industry peak body to establish a national soft plastics recycling scheme. Previous roles include with Containers for Change establishing the container refund recycling scheme in QLD, as well as almost 8 years in logistics and mining services with ASX-listed company Aurizon. Aaron is a Chartered Accountant with commerce, accounting and corporate governance qualifications and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Chair of Finance and Risk Management committee.

# Our Ideal Candidates



We are seeking a **Non-Executive Directors** to join the Board with a mix of experience to complement the existing skills including:

## **Financial Performance & Oversight**

Strong financial acumen, risk management, and sustainable revenue growth experience.

## **Corporate Governance & Compliance**

Board level expertise with a focus on fiduciary responsibilities and regulatory frameworks.

## **Executive Leadership in Highly Regulated Sectors**

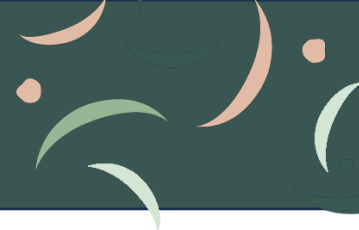
Strategic leadership in industries such as disability, aged care, health, or financial services.

## **Experience:**

Our ideal candidates will have strong senior executive experience within a commercially astute environment, particularly in the areas of financial performance, corporate governance, or highly regulated industries like child care, property, Aged Care or NDIS. When considering more experienced Directors your career should reflect significant director level experience, either within a for profit organisation or a medium to large for purpose organisation; demonstrating a strong capacity for strategic oversight and governance. For less experienced Directors, you will have exceptional executive leadership capacity and demonstrated experience interacting with Boards.

You possess a deep understanding of corporate governance, bringing substantial expertise in managing and guiding organisational compliance and strategy in the context of substantial organisational change.

# Our Ideal Candidates



We are looking for people passionate about generating profit for purpose.

## Leadership Style:

You exhibit a leadership style grounded in integrity and impartiality, enabling you to build trust and cohesion within the board and organisation. You demonstrate strong diplomacy and the ability to foster an inclusive, respectful team culture. Confident and competent, you are adept at facilitating discussions and guiding the organisation toward sound decisions. You will be attuned to risk and supporting the organisation to effectively manage it within a **moderate** risk appetite towards investments, acquisitions and developing tailored experiences for customers, members and stakeholders.

You will contribute to ensuring all voices are heard and the organisation enjoys a cohesive governance approach.

## Success Factors:

To be successful, you will be skilled at distilling and understanding complex information and have the ability to appreciate differing points of view. You will demonstrate a proven track record of representing organisations and a brand effectively, both internally and externally. You may have led an organisation at the Board or Executive level through strategic change.

## Personality Factors:

You should have a high level of energy and presence, contributing broadly to the boardroom discussion with a proactive and forward-thinking attitude. You will be a strong critical thinker with an analytical mindset, able to assess challenges and opportunities with depth and clarity. Tactful and fair in dealings with others, you will foster trust and openness. Additionally, you possess a growth mindset.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



## 1. How often does the Board meet, and what is the usual timing?

The API Leisure & Lifestyle Board typically meets on the third Wednesday of each month from January to November, from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM. In December, instead of a regular board meeting, a half-day strategy session is held to review progress and continued.

Meeting days and times are negotiable, depending on the Director's availability.

## 2. Can Directors attend Board meetings virtually?

While API Leisure & Lifestyle prefers in-person attendance at its Wharf St Office in Spring Hill (where parking is provided), there is flexibility for Directors to attend meetings via Microsoft Teams if required.

## 3. Are there additional meetings outside the regular Board meetings?

Most months, the Board President holds a one-hour in-camera session via Microsoft Teams. These sessions allow Directors to discuss key matters without the CEO or Executive Team present, facilitating open and strategic discussions.

## 4. Are Directors required to participate in any committees?

Yes, all Directors are expected to contribute by participating in at least one sub-committee. The two current sub-committees are:

- Finance & Risk Committee
- Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Committee

Meetings for these committees are typically held every second month for approximately one hour, although the frequency may vary depending on business needs. Some offline preparation and follow-up work may also be required.

## 5. Are applications from interstate candidates considered?

While preference is given to Brisbane-based Directors, interstate candidates will be considered.

Questions continued next page....

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



## 6. Will newly appointed Directors be involved in other governance roles?

Yes. Any new Directors appointed will also serve on the Boards of both API Leisure & Lifestyle and Canopy Community Ltd, along with its associated subsidiaries.

## 7. Is this a remunerated position?

At present, this is a voluntary position; however, remuneration is being considered as part of future planning through Canopy Community Ltd. Further details will be provided during the recruitment process.

## Further Information

For additional details or any further questions, candidates are encouraged to contact Ashleigh McMillan at OnTalent via [a.mcmillan@ontalent.com.au](mailto:a.mcmillan@ontalent.com.au) or call 07 3305 5800.

# Get in Contact



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