

Chief Executive Officer
API Leisure & Lifestyle
Success Profile | October 2025

Introduction



Thank you for your interest in the **Chief Executive Officer** selection process.

OnTalent is privileged to lead the process of this appointment on behalf of **API Leisure & Lifestyle including the canopy education and canopy community brands**. This Success Profile provides you with information regarding the organisation, the role, our ideal candidate and the process we will use.

Once you have reviewed this material, and if you haven't already, please [visit](#) for details on how to apply.

I look forward to working with you through this process and invite you to contact Jay Baxter or myself directly at anytime on 07 3305 5800.

Chris Dougherty

Head of Government & Not-for-Profit

OnTalent



API Leisure & Lifestyle

The Australian Postal Institute (API) was founded in 1918 by the Honourable William Webster, MP, in Victoria to support the social needs of Postmaster-General's Department employees, later Australia Post and Telstra. From a single room with a billiard table, card tables and a reading area, the Institute evolved into one of Australia's largest and most respected social clubs.

By the mid-1920s, API had expanded nationwide, with branches in every state. Over the decades, it fostered connection and wellbeing through training courses, bursaries, art unions, debutante balls, sporting carnivals, and countless community events, brought to life by passionate volunteers across the country.

API Queensland, in particular, has demonstrated an enduring spirit of innovation, establishing ventures such as a member library, insurance brokerage, childcare and aged care services, a shopper service, and the API Store, each reflecting the organisation's commitment to meeting members' changing needs.

Today, API is an inclusive, forward-looking organisation open to all Australians. With a proud legacy spanning more than a century, it continues to provide valued benefits and services to members nationwide. As API looks to the future, it seeks visionary leadership to honour its history while shaping the next chapter of growth, connection and community impact.

API Leisure & Lifestyle

The mission of API Leisure & Lifestyle and its group of companies (canopy Early Education and canopy Community) is to enrich lives through community connection and provide exceptional value to its members. The organisation envisions creating thriving, child-centred neighborhood 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.

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.



API Leisure & Lifestyle

Services & Offerings (Continued)

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 in embarking on a strategic plan and growth strategy 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. A new charitable entity **canopy Community** was established earlier this year and has obtained ACNC status. By 2030, they have a goal to be one of the top Philanthropic giving organisations in Queensland.



Canopy

Connections in the local community

Our local partnerships with groups, organisations and individuals across all generations continues to grow, and currently include:

- ✓ **Relationships with local schools** for co-curricular activities and works towards a smooth Kindy to Prep transition for our children.
- ✓ **Albert Park Flexible Learning School** for co-curricular activities, childcare and parenting skills support.
- ✓ **Weekly fruit donations to 'Dig In'** who provide 350 meals every Saturday to inner city homeless at Roma St and West End.
- ✓ **Healthy lifestyle articles** for our newsletter supplied by Lifeshape.com.au
- ✓ **Parent information nights** held with the support of Argus Family Services.
- ✓ **Our participation with QCF:** Christmas Gift Appeal to support Women's Legal Service Qld and Lady Musgrave Trust.
- ✓ **Sustainability program** supported by donations from Coles Petrie Terrace and Officeworks Milton (packaging materials for arts and crafts, vegetables to regrow and magazines).
- ✓ **Support from many local businesses** displaying our brochures.
- ✓ **Support for the QLD Women's Legal Service** Annual 'Labels on the Lawn' fundraiser.



canopy Early Education has four Queensland childcare centres located in and around Brisbane, with more planned

Canopy Milton

A large natural playground sitting on the land of the Turrbel and Jagera First Nations, with strong connections to local charities and educational centres.

Canopy Ormiston

Joined canopy Early Education June 2024. Located on the traditional lands of the Quandamooka people in East Brisbane.

Canopy Dakabin

Canopy Dakabin joined canopy Early Education in April 2024, formerly part of Sesame Lane Childcare Centres.

Leaps and Bounds by canopy
Toowoomba
Joined 15th September 2025
<https://www.leapsandbounds.au/>

canopy Values

Genuine and committed – We foster genuine connection by engaging deeply with our local communities and the families we serve. Guided by empathy and compassion, we create meaningful experiences in safe, joyful environments where every interaction helps children and community members feel seen, valued, and inspired to grow together.

Innovation and growth – Through our commitment to community, we nurture curiosity, creativity, and joy—helping people thrive through playful, meaningful experiences that spark a lifelong love of learning. With innovation, sustainability, and growth at our core, we cultivate values and knowledge that create lasting impact for every child, family, and the communities we serve.

Equity and inclusion – We create safe and nurturing spaces where everyone feels supported and valued. Through acts of generosity, helping hands, and a spirit of giving, we model kindness and community. We advocate for each child’s voice and potential, empowering them to grow with confidence, compassion, and a sense of belonging.

Learning and development – We foster inclusive learning environments that support the growth and development of children, staff, and the wider community. Through play-based, meaningful experiences, we nurture curiosity, creativity, and a love of learning in children. We invest in our educators and community partners through ongoing professional development, collaboration, and innovation—building a culture of lifelong learning that strengthens our collective capacity and leaves a lasting legacy.





Board of Directors



Claire Johnston

Non-Executive Director, President

Claire has over 20 years' experience in customer service leading front-line operations, driving strategy, business improvement, and leading major organisational change and cost reduction programs. In her current role as the InfraCo Customer Service Executive at Telstra, she leads a team of passionate customer service professionals serving Wholesale and large Enterprise clients. Claire is passionate about making difference in the Community. Most notably, she has worked with First Nations Communities, Government, Regulators, and Financial counsellors to create jobs, address financial hardship, and support local sustainable business models.

Claire holds a degree in International Business and an MBA with a specialisation in strategy, entrepreneurship, and project management. She has been awarded the GAICD qualification by the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Outside of work, Claire has a blended family of 4 children with her partner and been an active volunteer for various charities and sporting clubs over many years.



Natasha Foster

Non-Executive Director, Vice President, Member of Finance and Risk Management Committee

Natasha is a recognised expert in risk, compliance, and governance, with extensive international experience across the finance, telecommunications, technology, and not-for-profit sectors.

Her diverse background enables her to provide Boards and Executive teams with strategic insights and advice on risk management within innovative, high-growth organisations operating in both emerging and established markets. Natasha holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws. She is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD) and a member of the Risk Management Institute of Australasia.

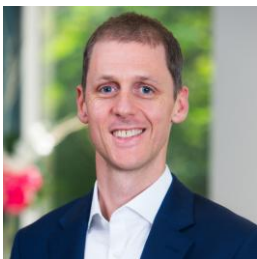


Gavin Douglas

Non-Executive Director, Chair of Environmental, Social & Governance Committee

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 cybersecurity startup, Wiz, in June 2022, and is currently providing advice to various startup founders across Australia & New Zealand as they seek to grow their businesses globally.

Board of Directors



Aaron Rodman

Non-Executive Director, Chair of Finance and Risk Management Committee

Aaron is an accomplished CFO and Head of Strategy with extensive commercial and leadership experience spanning start-ups 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 the CFO and COO of a new NFP establishing a national soft plastics recycling scheme. Previous roles include with Containers for Change establishing the container refund recycling scheme in QLD, as well as 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.



Chris Veraa

Non-Executive Director, Member of Finance and Risk Management Committee

Chris is an experienced leader and company director, with a career spanning higher education, government, and media. Currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC), Chris oversees university admissions for 17 Queensland institutions and more than 60,000 applicants annually. Prior to this role, Chris held senior positions with Central Queensland University, Australian Catholic University, and the Victorian Government, as well as roles with the UK government and private sector.

Chris has an EMBA from Queensland University of Technology, a Bachelor of Communication from Griffith University, and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In addition to API/canopy, Chris is a director of the Gregory Terrace Foundation Board and has held previous board and sub-committee appointments with Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Schools Ltd and the Presbyterian & Methodist Schools Association.



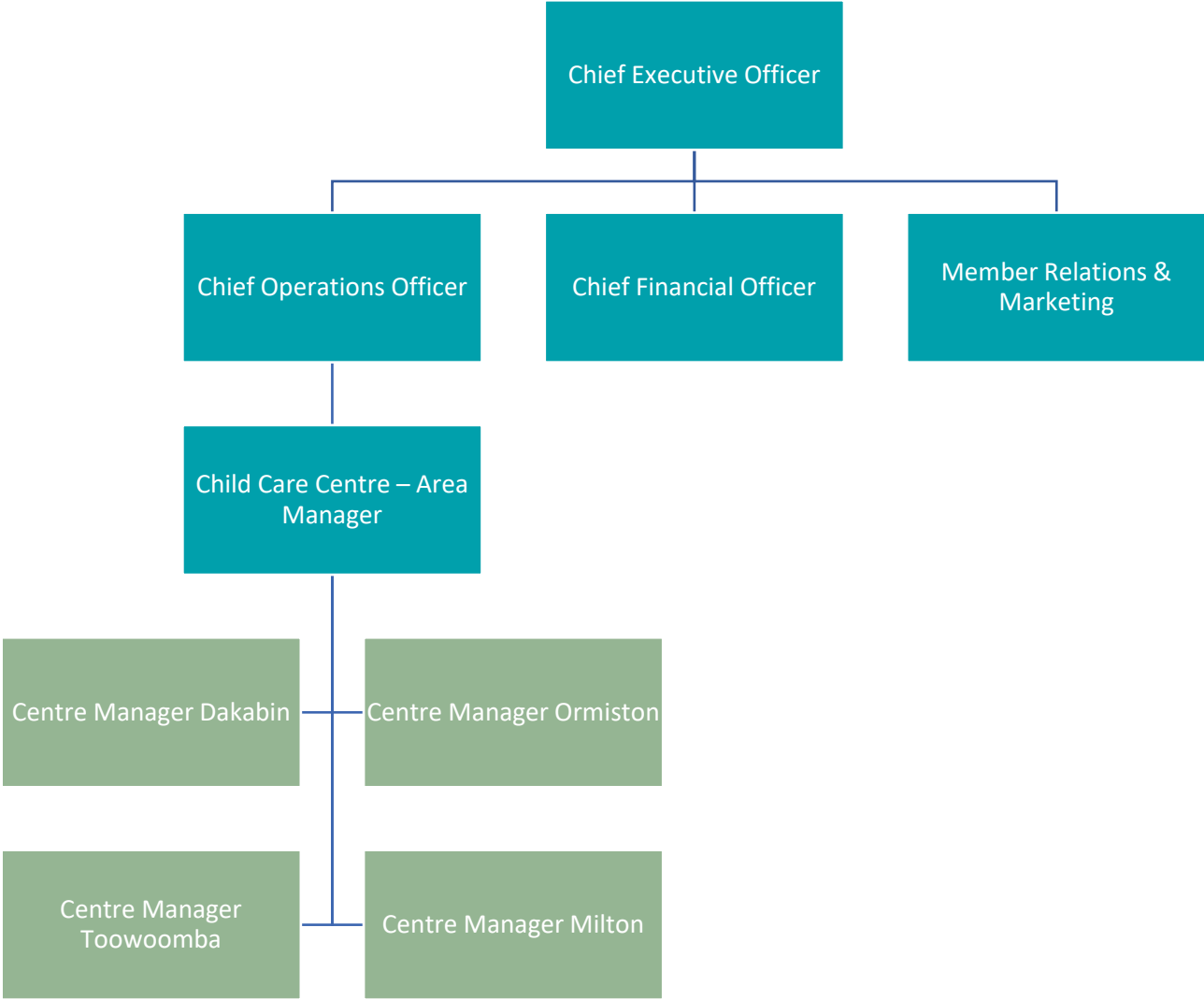
Joanne Jessop

Non-Executive Director, Member of Environmental, Social & Governance Committee

Joanne is a skilled, experienced and ethical leader, having held both Director and Executive roles across a broad range of organisations. She brings a strong customer and human rights focus, values-based decision making, strategic expertise and a creative and innovative approach to social challenges.

Jo joined DVConnect, a crisis response service for people experiencing domestic, family, sexual violence and interpersonal trauma, as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 2024. She was most recently the Group CEO for the Vertaview Group of organisations providing services covering disability, employment, community mental health, coordination of services, case management and housing across Qld, NSW and Vic (Multicap, Open Minds, Allinto and Arbourwell). She is currently a director of Tier 1 Community Housing Provider Bric Housing, and a director of Ability Roundtable.

Organisational Structure





Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer of **API Leisure & Lifestyle** provides strategic and values-led leadership across a purpose-driven group that includes **canopy early education** and **canopy community**. Reporting to the Board, the CEO is accountable for delivering the organisation's strategy, strengthening governance, and driving sustainable growth. This is a hands-on, future-focused role leading a passionate team to realise API's 2030 vision, expanding the canopy network, deepening community impact, and positioning API as one of Queensland's most respected philanthropic organisations.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide visionary leadership that drives API's purpose and strategic direction.
- Lead, empower, and develop the Executive Management Team to deliver high performance and accountability.
- Drive organisational transformation, ensuring sustainable growth and operational excellence across the group.
- Strengthen governance and compliance frameworks to meet regulatory, ACNC, and quality standards.
- Oversee financial performance, business development and risk management for long-term sustainability.
- Build and nurture strong relationships with government, partners, members and communities.
- Champion the expansion of **canopy early education** and the growth of **canopy community** as platforms for positive social impact.
- Role model API's values — integrity, inclusion, innovation, and genuine connection in all aspects of leadership.



 [Position Description: Chief Executive Officer](#)



Our Ideal Candidate

We are seeking a dynamic and purpose-driven Chief Executive Officer to lead a century-old organisation through its most ambitious transformation. You're an accomplished executive with the experience, courage, and heart to scale a values-based enterprise and deliver impact that endures. With strong credentials in business management, governance, and stakeholder engagement, you bring a track record of leading teams through growth and change — ideally within early education, community, or regulated sectors. You're eligible to hold *Approved Provider Status* under the National Quality Framework and *Child Care Subsidy Approval* under the Family Assistance Law, and you combine commercial insight with a deep sense of social purpose.

You're both strategic and hands-on, equally comfortable in the boardroom and on the ground, ensuring people, systems, and culture align to deliver results. You've built high-performing teams, strengthened governance, and led transformation with integrity and authenticity. You communicate with clarity, influence with credibility, and lead with empathy. Financial acumen, risk management, and operational excellence come naturally to you but what drives you is purpose and possibility.

You're inspired by API's mission to *enrich lives through community connection* and by its bold 2030 vision — to grow **Canopy Early Education** and **Canopy Community**, expand to 12–15 thriving centres, and stand among Queensland's most respected philanthropic organisations. This is a rare opportunity to shape a powerful legacy:

leading with vision, **building** with heart, and **creating** communities where everyone can thrive.



Our Process

At OnTalent, we specialise in partnering with purpose driven organisations to identify and secure exceptional leadership and we are pleased to be working with **API Leisure & Lifestyle** on this critical appointment.

Our approach is deliberate, strategic and people centred. Every step of our process is designed to ensure alignment between candidate capability and organisational purpose. From understanding the culture and objectives of our clients to engaging and assessing talent in a considered and thorough way, we don't cut corners.

We are deeply committed to creating inclusive and equitable recruitment experiences. Our process is built to reduce bias and support diverse representation at all stages. We will work closely with you to ensure we are able to create an inclusive, fair and accessible pathway for you throughout the process. We encourage all candidates to discuss their individual circumstances with our team at any time.

Our recruitment process is built to deliver results that last.



OnTalent Commitment

OnTalent is committed to providing exceptional levels of service to our clients and candidates alike.

Our commitment is to 'Connect People and Purpose' and we take this seriously.

Our core service standards for this project will include:

- All candidate calls returned on the same day.
- All client requests actioned in the same day.
- All applicants to be given an outcome within five working days.
- All interviewed candidates to be given verbal feedback.
- All reports to be tailored and accurate and delivered on time.
- Interviews coordinated so that candidate's privacy is a priority with no candidates seen by other candidates.
- All candidates to be prepared and briefed for panel interviews.
- All panel members fully briefed prior to interviews as to format, questions, and candidate profiles.



If you have questions about this role, please reach out to one of the team below.
We welcome your application via the apply button on the [OnTalent Website](#).

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