



# AIFST CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PROGRAM

**Enhancing your professional profile and future proofing your career pathway**

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## Program Overview

The world of food science and technology is changing rapidly and as an industry we need to ensure that we keep up to date with changes. Education is a major focus for AIFST as we develop and implement our 2019-2021 strategy built around the key priorities of grow, learn, connect and represent.

As an organisation it is important that AIFST supports the continued growth of the Australian food industry by building the skills, capability and networks of food industry professionals to ensure they are equipped to contribute value to the global operating environment.

In today's increasingly competitive and changing world, food scientists and technologists must stay at the cutting edge of new developments throughout their careers. It is no longer possible to rely on basic studies or on-the-job training to provide professional advice and service to our employers, customers and clients. Modern businesses rely on skilled professionals who are competent in their profession, remain current in their knowledge, have the ability to manage and embrace change and are highly engaged. This means to continually improve our technical knowledge and skills we need to engage in continuing professional development. AIFST also recognises that in modern organisations, food scientists and technologists are increasingly responsible for developing their own careers.

A well-managed CPD program can assist both food industry professionals and their employers to better determine and map career development opportunities to assist with succession planning, employee development and wider staff training needs. The AIFST aims to provide structured delivery of skills, knowledge and capability building within the food industry and to provide evidence of CPD or program certification requirements and participation. This will assist with providing better career pathways and recognition for individuals in the industry. AIFST will work with employers to develop and promote recognition of CPD in performance appraisal programs.

It is important for the food science community to develop a recognised professional identity. Many in the field provide professional advice and service to employers, customers and clients. The competence of members is vital to the development and credibility of food science practitioners. A CPD program allows a formalised documentation of skills and reflects the professionalism of the members.

### *What is a CPD Program?*

A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program is an active self-planned and structured program for developing and enhancing your professional skills. The program is designed with clear objectives, extends your professional knowledge and capabilities and allows you to engage in a broad range of activities to increase your career options.

The program is voluntary and designed to encourage members to maintain currency of skills and knowledge and assist with career planning. It will provide recognition of experience and interests and align food scientists and technologists with other well-respected professions.

The CPD program is intended to provide recognition of these activities and skills by formalising and recording the process in a straightforward and transportable way. This program allows you to design your own CPD, so that you can take charge of your career development and best meet your individual responsibilities to your employer, your clients, customers and yourself.

## *CPD allows you to enhance your future*

A CPD program reflects the professionalism of the members of AIFST, improves their professional standing and enhances their employability by formalising and documenting CPD activities.

It assists in keeping knowledge up to date and illustrates an ability to adapt to changing roles in the food industry. Ensuring currency in a complex job market can be difficult and employers look for staff who bring a broad range of skills.

## The AIFST CPD Program

The program requires a minimum of 20 units per year in total for CPD, which aligns with a range of equivalent professions. In its initial phase, enrolled members have 24 months to attain the 20 units required. In July 2021 the program will shift to a 12-month time frame to achieve the 20 units.

### *Choose activities that align with your career*

It is recommended that you take some time to consider:

- a) your technical needs in your current role
- b) your aspirations regarding potential career progression
- c) your skills and interests essential to your work requirements, and
- d) skills that might assist you in the broader work force environment (e.g. people management, people skills, emotional intelligence).

Where appropriate, we recommend that you work with your direct manager or your company's Learning and Development Manager to agree on your development needs and opportunities.

Once you have considered these, you can make choices regarding the best activities to enhance your career path. AIFST can provide information to assist you in this area. Please contact the Education and CPD Manager at [education@aifst.com.au](mailto:education@aifst.com.au) for further details.

The CPD program is based on two types of activities - **Core** and **Supporting**.

**Core activities** are those which involve gaining knowledge and skills in areas directly related to food science and technology. Each activity counts as a minimum of **1 unit**. ***The units are allocated based on time spent in the activity and any assessment component.***

**Supporting Activities** involve:

- 1) gaining knowledge and skills in areas necessary to undertake your role but may not be directly related to food science and technology **OR**
- 2) assist in enhancing your career opportunities **OR**
- 3) provide people or self-management skills.

Each activity counts as a minimum of **0.5 unit**. ***The units are allocated based on time spent in the activity and any assessment component.***

Within each of these 2 groups, there are a range of activities delivered by those providers or courses which align with the AIFST criteria for inclusion. The program requires a minimum of **20 units per year in total**. (per 24 months in its initial phase). Normally this would take 20 hrs to accrue.

**A complete CPD program for 1 year should consist of minimum of 10 Core CPD units.**

The remaining units can be a combination of the core and supporting activities.

## Eligible Activities

- Formal education courses
- Conferences and meetings
- Virtual or online activities
- Employer-sponsored in-house courses
- Delivery of presentations and papers
- Individual learning activities
- Service to the Institute
- Mentoring activities
- Webinars
- Working groups

Reading of technical articles and journals is an accepted supporting activity, but this should not contribute more than a maximum of 25% of the total CPD.

**Core Activities** are those that are technical, required for your role and that are specifically related to food science or food technology. They include (but are not limited to)

AIFST Branch national meetings and workshops

Technical Seminars and workshops like the AIFST Recall workshop or Food Regulation workshop or those in the areas of Food packaging, Food safety, New Technologies, Nutrition, Sensory evaluation

Short courses offered by Universities, TAFEs and RTOs on a range of technical subjects like Food handling: Food manufacture: Introduction to Food Microbiology: HACCP/VACCP/TACCP

VITAL training delivered by Allergen Bureau endorsed trainers (online and face to face)

Technical Webinars, Presented by AIFST or approved CPD program partners

**Supporting Activities** are those that support your career which are not directly related to food science or food technology but are intended to improve your skill base and provide value to you and your employer. These might include both formal and informal courses or presentations in areas such as Computer skills, Marketing, Business management, Leadership or Organisational skills.

These are included to give examples of the types of activities that can form part of your CPD program but for a detailed list of relevant activities please contact the Education and CPD Manager at [education@aifst.com.au](mailto:education@aifst.com.au) or see details in *Appendix 1 – Eligible Activities* document via the [AIFST website](#) under the 'Grow' tab and the 'Continuing Professional Development Program' page.

## Recording Activities

Recording your activities for the program can be done by completing and emailing the CPD Activities record available on the AIFST website to [education@aifst.com.au](mailto:education@aifst.com.au) along with any available copies of attendance records or certificates. It is intended that direct uploading of attendance records and automatic documentation of eligible AIFST activities will be made available through the website once the capability of the website has been extended.



## Questions and Answers

### *What is CPD?*

Continuing professional development (CPD) is a self-planned, structured program for developing and enhancing your professional skills.

A continuing professional development program:

- should be structured with clear objectives
- requires your active participation;
- extends your professional knowledge and capabilities **AND**
- allows you to engage in a broad range of activities which will increase your career options.

Many equivalent associations and professions have CPD programs which help to identify and enhance the professional standing of the members.

### *What will it do for me?*

- Improve skill levels
- Develop new areas of expertise
- Promote confidence in your skill levels
- Establish links and networks with fellow professionals
- Increase your career options
- Allow you to maintain a competitive advantage in your area
- Allow you to take charge of your future
- An annual certificate will be issued to the members of the program when each year is completed

### *What will it do for my employer?*

- Provide confidence in your skill levels
- Assist in encouraging extension of knowledge of technical and regulatory issues
- Provide improved recording of activities
- Provide knowledge that they have skilled technical professionals.

### *What will it do for the profession?*

- Raise the profile of the profession
- Ensure that the profession remains dynamic
- Enhance the public perception of food science and technology
- Raise professional standards.

### ***What is the benefit to the community?***

- Greater assurance of a safe and secure food supply
- Confidence in the industry, research and teaching.

### ***How much time will it take?***

AIFST has not prescribed a time to achieve the 20 units required in each calendar year post enrolment but 20 hrs are the minimum requirement. In its initial phase, enrolled members have 24 months to attain the 20 units required. In July 2021 the program will shift to a 12-month time frame to achieve the 20 units.

### ***How much will it cost?***

There is no charge to take part in the CPD program. AIFST Webinars are free to members and AIFST provides member discounts to a range of AIFST-run meetings and professional activities.

### ***How do I record my activities?***

At present recording your activities for the program can be done by completing and emailing the CPD Activities record available on the AIFST website to [education@aifst.com.au](mailto:education@aifst.com.au) along with any available copies of attendance records or certificates.

### ***What are the eligible activities?***

Core activities that directly relate to the technical component of food science and technology and supporting activities that are indirectly related to food science and technology.

See *Appendix 1 – Eligible Activities* document via the [AIFST website](#) under the 'Grow' tab and the 'Continuing Professional Development Program' page.

### ***How do I join?***

Complete the AIFST CPD Program Enrolment Form via the AIFST website enrolment and email it to [education@aifst.com.au](mailto:education@aifst.com.au) or contact the Education and CPD manager directly.

### ***Can I join the CPD program at any time?***

Yes, you can join at any time. The CPD year will align with your membership year and will be adjusted pro rata, if you join the CPD after your membership year commences.

### ***Is the Program open to all grades of membership?***

Yes.

### ***What happens if I change my job or take extended leave?***

CPD is not position specific but is intended to be portable. The program can be suspended if extended leave is required.

### ***What are the eligible activities?***

The AIFST CPD Program has two types of eligible activities. Core activities count towards a minimum of one unit, depending on any assessment component. Supporting activities count towards a minimum of 0.5 of a unit depending on any assessment component. The value of assessment components will be determined based on the complexity of the material delivered and the length and format of the assessment. For further details see *Appendix 1 – Eligible Activities* document via the [AIFST website](#) under the 'Grow' tab and the 'Continuing Professional Development Program' page.

## **Review**

The CPD program is voluntary and maintenance of the of the information provided to the CPD manager is the responsibility of the member however AIFST may request to review submissions at the end of one year. The program will be subject to the oversight of an advisory committee.

## **Privacy Statement**

The personal information supplied by you to The Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology Incorporated is considered confidential and you may request access to, and correction of your personal data held by The Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology at any time.



For any further information or to answer any questions please contact the Education and CPD Manager at [education@aifst.com.au](mailto:education@aifst.com.au).