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Building industry capability through SRA Travel and Learning Awards

Applications are open for the Sugar Industry Travel and Learning Awards (STLA) through Sugar Research Australia (SRA).

The STLA offer successful applicants up to \$7,500 for an individual award or \$10,000 towards a workshop or event.

These awards encourage innovative thinking and activities that can clearly demonstrate benefits to the Australian sugarcane industry. The activity should be aligned with the outcomes and strategies of SRA's five-year SRA strategic plan.

The STLA are part of SRA's investment in building the Australian sugarcane industry's knowledge and capability.

General Manager of the Research Funding Unit, Dr Harjeet Khanna, said SRA was seeking applications for innovative learning ideas.

"The awards cover a range of possible activities that will deliver benefits throughout the Australian sugarcane industry," Dr Khanna said. "This includes, for example, skills-development activities such as conference or workshop attendance, visiting farm trials and assessing new farming methods, or visiting a sugar, paper or pulp mill, and then sharing this information back with industry via an adoption activity."

"These awards are on offer to all industry participants, including growers, millers, and service providers including researchers."

The Awards recognise that it is crucial that the Australian sugarcane industry continues to develop its skills and expertise, which includes looking at other industries and other countries to generate new ideas and innovation.

"SRA is committed to investing in research that can be adopted on farm or in the mill, providing a tangible outcome for sugarcane growers and millers. All applications will be assessed in that context

of the benefit to the industry,” Dr Khanna said.

Mr Kent Selby, Business Diversification Manager with Sunshine Sugar, took part in a recent STLA to participate in the 2018 International Society of Sugarcane Technologists co-products workshop in Brazil.

He said the conference was a valuable learning experience that helped him understand the advanced state of other sugar-producing nations when it came to diversification.

“What would be considered a diversified factory in Australia is the basic standard for the majority of the international industries,” Mr Selby said. “Furthermore, many overseas industries continue to explore and implement new opportunities driven by the fact that they are fully aware they need to continue to diversify in order to remain viable.

“The STLA really reinforced for me that the Australian Industry take a more global view of sugarcane production systems and recognise that there is a multitude of solid information readily available from these other nation’s significant resources. By accessing them, the Australian Industry may be able to fast track our own diversification ambitions.”

Applications close August 31, 2019.

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