

Position description

Branch Manager Community Trust



Department	Strategy, Partnerships and Performance
Employment type	Permanent
Classification	Senior Management
Location	Warrnambool
Date approved	August 2026
Approving Officer	Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance

Position objectives

This role leads the Community Trust Branch, with responsibility for Wannon Water's communications, engagement, education, customer experience, organisational partnerships and First Nations portfolios.

The role is accountable to:

- Lead integrated communication, engagement, education, partnership and customer experience approaches that build trust, understanding and confidence in Wannon Water and support informed decision-making.
- Lead the organisation-wide approach to customer experience, ensuring customer insights, service design and improvement activities are connected, evidence-based and used to strengthen customer, community and regulatory outcomes.
- Lead Wannon Water's organisational partnerships and memberships portfolio, including frameworks, governance, evaluation and capability uplift that strengthen relationships, collaboration and shared value.
- Oversee Wannon Water's First Nations portfolio, including organisational readiness, internal coordination, respectful relationships, reconciliation, self-determination, treaty readiness and cultural capability.
- Provide strategic advice to the Executive, Senior Management Team and Board on communication, engagement, education, customer experience, partnership and First Nations matters, including issues and reputation management.
- Lead and develop a multidisciplinary branch, ensuring clear priorities, effective governance, strong collaboration and continuous improvement within available resources.

The role provides leadership, direction and oversight of the functions for which it is responsible and applies a growth mindset focused on learning, collaboration, continuous improvement, empowering teams and achievement.

The role works closely with the Executive and Senior Management Team and maintains routine engagement across the organisation, with customers, community, Traditional Owners, regional and sector partners and stakeholders, media, regulators and government stakeholders.

Key responsibilities and duties

Branch Leadership and Strategic Direction

- Lead the Community Trust Branch to deliver communication, engagement, education, customer experience, partnerships and First Nations outcomes that support Wannon Water's strategy and corporate priorities.
- Develop and implement branch plans, priorities, budgets and performance measures that clarify work priorities, resource allocation and trade-offs.
- Lead, motivate and develop branch employees, creating a collaborative, accountable, safe and service-oriented culture.
- Support organisational change and improvement by aligning branch activity with strategic outcomes, customer outcomes and community trust.

Communications, Engagement and Education

- Lead Wannon Water's strategic approach to internal and external communications, engagement and education.
- Oversee the development and delivery of communication, engagement and education plans, including strategic communications, digital engagement, public campaigns and education programs.
- Provide expert advice to the Managing Director, Executive, Board and senior leaders on communication, engagement, issues management, reputation and stakeholder impacts.
- Oversee timely and effective internal communications on strategic and organisational issues.
- Manage media liaison, corporate messaging and public communications to ensure reliability, consistency and credibility.
- Ensure engagement is positioned early in project planning and delivery to improve influence, reduce rework and strengthen outcomes.

Customer Experience, Insights and Service Improvement

- Lead Wannon Water's customer experience approach, including customer insight, service design, improvement priorities and customer-centred decision-making.
- Oversee development, delivery and monitoring of customer experience strategies, initiatives and measures.
- Strengthen organisational use of customer data, insights, engagement findings and feedback to inform service improvement, regulatory responsibilities, communications and business decisions.
- Facilitate integrated improvement initiatives that connect customer insight, engagement, customer support, digital metering, service design and operational delivery.
- Represent Wannon Water in customer experience forums, sector activities and collaborative initiatives that improve customer and community outcomes.

Organisational Partnerships and Memberships

- Lead Wannon Water's strategic approach to organisational partnerships and memberships to strengthen relationships, collaboration and shared value for customers, communities, stakeholders and the region.
- Provide leadership and oversight for partnership frameworks, systems, governance, evaluation and capability uplift across the organisation.
- Oversee an enterprise-wide view of partnerships and memberships to support prioritisation, alignment, benefit realisation and management of organisational commitments.
- Build organisational capability in stakeholder engagement, partnership brokering and shared value creation.
- Ensure partnership activity is integrated with branch planning, engagement, communications, customer experience and First Nations outcomes where relevant.

First Nations

- Oversee Wannon Water's approach to First Nations engagement, Traditional Owner relationships, reconciliation, self-determination, treaty readiness and cultural capability.
- Provide leadership and oversight for the First Nations Coordinator, ensuring the role is focused on organisational readiness, internal coordination, respectful relationships and cultural capability.
- Champion organisational capability, accountability and sustainable operating models for First Nations outcomes, including support for employees who hold First Nations relationships across the business.
- Support culturally appropriate, coordinated and respectful engagement with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations and sector partners.
- Support co-design of future First Nations initiatives and resourcing opportunities with Traditional Owners, within approved scope and funding pathways.
- Help create a supportive environment for future First Nations advisory or identified roles by strengthening governance, cultural capability and internal coordination.

Issues, Reputation and Stakeholder Management

- Lead coordinated approaches to issues management, including Wannon Water's communication response to unplanned events and matters affecting reputation, trust or public confidence.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with government, regulators, media, community leaders, partner organisations and sector peers.
- Anticipate political, regulatory, social and community changes that may require strategic communication, engagement or stakeholder responses.
- Represent Wannon Water professionally in relevant forums, committees and stakeholder activities.

Governance, Budgets, Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- Develop and manage branch budgets, procurement, contracts and delegations in accordance with organisational requirements.
- Prepare and oversee reporting, insights and recommendations for the Board, Executive, governance forums and external stakeholders as required.
- Monitor branch risks, opportunities, performance, compliance obligations and continuous improvement priorities.
- Develop and maintain systems, processes and standards that support effective governance, quality, safety, records management and integrated management system requirements.
- Prepare regular and special reports as required and carry out other duties as directed from time to time.

Organisational relationships

Responsible to	Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance
Responsible for	Manager Media and Communications; Manager Customer Experience and Insights, Coordinator Engagement and Education, First Nations Coordinator
Internal liaison	Board, Managing Director, Executive and Senior Management Team Customer Support, Development Services, Strategy and Performance, People and Wellbeing, Employees requiring communication, engagement, customer experience, partnership or First Nations support Employees holding First Nations relationships, partnership responsibilities or community trust initiatives
External liaison	Customers and community, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal organisations, media outlets, government departments and regulators, local government and regional organisations, water corporations, sector associations and partner organisations, consultants, contractors and service providers

Accountability and extent of authority

- Freedom to act is governed by policies and delegations of the Board and by legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements.
- Maintain authority, as Branch Manager Community Trust, over all Community Trust Branch employees and delegate authority and responsibility to individual employees where appropriate to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the branch.
- This position will coordinate the communication, engagement, education, customer experience, partnerships and First Nations functions consistent with Wannon Water's objectives and strategic directions under the general guidance of the Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance.
- This position is accountable for organisational partnership frameworks, governance and capability uplift, and for leadership oversight of First Nations coordination, cultural capability and relationship approaches.

- This position will be expected to be highly self-sufficient.
- This position is responsible for ensuring that all Community Trust Branch employees work in a safe environment and use sound and safe work practices which maximise employee health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with occupational health and safety requirements.
- The effect of decisions and actions taken by this position may have a significant impact on Wannon Water's reputation, customers, community, Traditional Owners, partner organisations.

Judgement and decision making

This position is expected to develop policy, frameworks, systems and methods in consultation with the Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance within the areas of responsibility.

- This position requires the incumbent to use significant initiative to develop systems, schedules, approaches and methods to efficiently and effectively carry out the branch functions.
- This position will make all decisions necessary for the proper performance of the duties within the limits of budget constraints, policy, procedure and direction of Wannon Water, the Managing Director, Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance and the limitations of the law.
- This position will make recommendations to the Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance regarding policy, procedures and methods that would improve the efficiency, effectiveness and integration of branch functions.
- This position will exercise judgement in balancing partnership, First Nations, customer, community, reputation and organisational capability considerations.
- Generally, guidance may be sought from external experts in specialist areas, with general guidance available from the Executive Strategy, Partnerships and Performance.

Specialist skills and knowledge

- A sound knowledge of the development and implementation of strategic communication, engagement, customer experience and stakeholder management approaches.
- Sound knowledge of media management, issues management, digital communication, internal communication and public messaging.
- Sound knowledge of customer insight, customer experience strategy, service design, research, performance measurement and improvement approaches.
- Sound knowledge of partnership development, stakeholder collaboration, shared value approaches, partnership governance and membership evaluation.
- An understanding of First Nations engagement, Traditional Owner relationships, reconciliation, self-determination, treaty readiness, cultural capability and organisational readiness.
- Understanding of the need for culturally appropriate engagement, cultural load considerations and supportive organisational structures for First Nations work.
- A systematic and creative approach to problem solving and alternative solutions.

- A sound understanding of the legislative, regulatory, political and social context relevant to the branch functions.
- Knowledge of administrative procedures, budgeting, procurement, contract management and financial procedures.
- Sound knowledge of the application of quality, safety, risk and integrated management systems in a corporate environment.

Management skills

- Self-motivation, management of time, setting priorities and organising own work and the work of branch employees.
- Effective competencies in performance management, development, coaching and training of staff.
- Ability to prepare strategic and operational plans for areas of responsibility, timetable tasks and meet objectives within agreed timeframes.
- Ability to lead, recognise and motivate staff in a performance culture.
- Ability to manage budgets, resources, procurement, reporting and branch performance measures.
- Ability to oversee organisational frameworks and coordinate cross-functional activity where responsibility is shared across business areas.
- Ability to support effective change management practices and integrated management philosophies across the branch and wider organisation.

Interpersonal skills

The Branch Manager Community Trust must have excellent leadership and communication skills.

This position requires:

- Very well-developed ability to manage people, including gaining cooperation in change management and improvement activities.
- Ability to lead and motivate teams in a manner that encourages high levels of satisfaction, motivation, commitment and accountability.
- Written skills at a level suitable for direct presentation to the Executive and Board.
- Ability to negotiate, liaise and advocate issues with media, regulators, Traditional Owners, customers, community members, partner organisations and external stakeholders.
- Ability to build effective working relationships across Wannon Water and with counterparts in other organisations to resolve specialist matters and cross-organisational issues.
- High levels of integrity, judgement and interpersonal capability when dealing with sensitive, complex or high-profile matters.

Qualifications and experience

- A tertiary qualification in communications, public relations, journalism, community engagement, customer experience, business, social sciences, public policy, management or a related discipline, or extensive experience in a similar role, is required.
- Postgraduate qualifications in a management or relevant specialist discipline will be well regarded.
- Appropriate experience in communication, engagement, customer experience, stakeholder management, partnerships or related functions is required.
- Experience in a significant management role is a necessary prerequisite.
- Experience working with community, government, regulators, media, Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations or sector partners will be well regarded.
- A current Australian driver licence is required.

Our values and Code of Conduct

All employees are required to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and demonstrate the Victorian Public Sector values of responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights, together with Wannon Water's organisational values.



Inclusion and diversity

We embrace all forms of diversity and promote family friendly working hours and leave arrangements to ensure our workforce reflects the community that we serve.

Policies and procedures

All employees are required to adhere to systems, policies and procedures in relation to our activities. Employees shall not use their position for personal gain or advantage, nor disclose any confidential information acquired through employment by the Corporation.

Occupational health and safety

We've developed OH&S policies and procedures designed to meet the requirements of the internationally recognised Australian Standard/New Zealand Standard 4801 (AS/NZS 45001). These standards ensure that all employees are provided with a safe and healthy working environment.

Equal employment opportunity

We follow the principles of equal employment opportunity and every employee is responsible for ensuring the workplace is free from discrimination.

Position description

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Training and development

Well-planned training is crucial to our success. Managers and employees work collaboratively to identify training and development needs to equip our employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their roles effectively. Each year, managers conduct performance reviews with employees to identify, plan, and initiate relevant training and development for the upcoming twelve months.

Signature

Employee Name

Employee Signature

Date

