



Annual Report 2024/2025



RAID Network is a program of the **Crawford Fund for Food Security** and is supported with funding from the **Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)**

CONNECT ENGAGE SUPPORT

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Executive Summary

The RAID Network is an active group of early to mid-career researchers (EMCRs) with an interest in agriculture and international development. Over the 2024/2025 period, we have continued to share knowledge and opportunities, build research capacity, and communicate the value of agricultural research. RAID continues to curate new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships alongside the Crawford Fund for Food Security to engage, connect and support the international agricultural community. The key achievements for this period are highlighted below.

Strategy and Management

- The RAID Network is managed by a central committee which comprises of an executive team and 3 sub-committees. The central committee oversees the implementation of RAID's strategic plan and manages day-to-day business. The RAID central committee and network of representatives operate on a voluntary basis, supported by part-time Administrative Officer, Sue Faulkner, based in the Crawford Fund for Food Security.
- During 2025, the RAID executive changed, seeing Jessica Fearnley take on the role of President, and Megan Williams and Bridget Mullany take on the co-Vice President role. The executive team have also welcomed Krishna Chaitanya Alamuru and Aditya Baxi as secretary and treasurer respectively.
- The network is currently going through a succession plan with the Crawford Fund for Food Security, to determine a sustainable future for RAID, and integration into the Research Collective of the Crawford Fund for Food Security.

Partnerships

- The Central Committee 'Support' team ably designed and implemented Phase 4 of the Australian Volunteers/Vietnam National University of Agriculture (VNUA) research exchange program focused on finalising the partnership and governance foundations needed to support the on-going success of the program.

Events and Representatives

- A team of 25 state representatives continue to connect emerging researchers and practitioners through engaging and interactive networking and speaker events.
- 6 in-person state events were run over this period.

Capacity Building

- The Capacity Building team focused on relevant and novel capacity development opportunities for Network members over the course of the period, stemming from key member interest areas, running ten events including two series events.
- Main events included a 3-part webinar series, "Women in Agriculture", another 3-part webinar series "Harnessing AI in Agriculture", a number of networking events in the ACT and our annual scholars night at the Crawford Fund for Food Security conference.

Communications

- RAID has increased its presence and following on LinkedIn (2,926 followers), Instagram (502 followers) and Facebook (1,900 followers).
- This year the RAID Comms team created and launched the 'Who are we' video across all social media platforms. The video had great engagement with **4366** views and saw 332 new LinkedIn members in the month following the video launch.
- The 2025 photo comp had great engagement around it. **Md Monirul Islam** took out the top prize, second prize winner was **Maree Bouterakos**, and People's Choice went to **Monique Berkhout**.
- The RAID website continues to house opportunities, events and blogs to increase benefits to RAID members and provide a central hub for information regarding agriculture for research in international development.

About the RAID Network

Researchers in Agriculture for International Development (RAID) is an Australia-based network, bringing together early to mid-career researchers with an interest in agriculture and international development.

RAID was founded by a group of motivated Australian researchers who saw an opportunity to establish a network through which they could better CONNECT with their peers and share knowledge, experiences and opportunities working internationally. The group also believed that by raising awareness about career pathways into international agricultural research, more Australians would ENGAGE in agriculture. Finally, the group wanted to SUPPORT the career development of early to mid-career researchers.

RAID is a program of the Crawford Fund for Food Security and was established in December 2013 with the support of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

Mission

To connect, engage and support Australia-based early to mid-career researchers and practitioners working in, or interested in, agriculture and international development.

Vision

The RAID Network is an active young professional's community of early to mid-career researchers working in, or interested in, agriculture and international development, through which knowledge and opportunities are shared, research capacity is built, and the value of agricultural research is communicated.

Objectives

1. **Connect** researchers involved in international agricultural research for development by facilitating networking and knowledge sharing.
2. **Engage** more people in agriculture by raising public awareness about career pathways into, and the importance of, international agricultural research for development.
3. **Support** career development of early to mid-career researchers through targeted capacity building initiatives.

Strategy and Management

The central committee has seen a few members leave in response to evolving work and personal commitments, as well as seeing it as their time to say farewell to the Network after some years of involvement and progression into more mid/senior pathways.

Central Committee

Executive

- President: Jessica Fearnley
- Co-Vice President: Bridget Mullany
- Co-Vice President: Megan Williams
- Secretary: Krishna Alamuru
- Treasurer: Aditya Baxi

Core portfolios

Communications

- Bridget Mullany

Capacity Development

- Manita Raut
- Anam Afzal
- Somia Afzal
- Leandra Fernandes

Partnerships

- Megan Williams
- Kamalpreet Kaur
- Chi Mai Do
- Nam Ha Duong
- Vinh Ngo

Events and Representatives

- Bek Ash Administrative officer
- Sue Faulkner: raid.network@crawfordfund.org

State Representatives

The state representative team saw a valuable refresh during this period which is now an active network of 25 individuals representing most Australian states and territories.

State	Reps
NSW	Kamana Rayamajhi Bishwas Thakuri Dinesh Jamarkattel Annabel White
VIC	Camilla Humphries Anam Afzal
QLD	Sabrina Morrison Dipika Das
TAS	Alex Russell Yash Desai Yaskumar Desi Sarah Fulton Haydn Tracy-Shaw Maria Ortiz Jo Talbot Bianca Das Apeh Omede Fahad Kahn
NT	Patrick Di
SA	Mahsa Dizga Sophie Lountain Mackenzie Coopman
WA	Sneha Sharma Barbara Kachigunda Alice Butler

Table 4: RAID representatives as of December 2025

Communications

Membership

RAID's primary modus operandi is via its website and social media platforms. RAID's website (<https://raidnetwork.crawfordfund.org/>) is the central location of all stories, jobs, opportunities and events. These are then pushed through the various communication channels, primarily LinkedIn and Instagram, however, RAID also publishes material to Facebook and via our member email list. Current RAID membership stands at **1,286 subscribers**.

Social Media

RAID has increased its following across all platforms, including:

1. Significant increase on **LinkedIn** with **2,926** total followers (up from 836 in 2023/2024)
2. Increased **Instagram** followership to **502** individuals
3. **Facebook** network is now standing at over **1,900** individuals
4. Passively decommissioned X (formerly Twitter) as engagement dropped significantly

While it is not the highest follower count, the Network saw the greatest engagement with posts and opportunities on LinkedIn, and it is now considered our professional social media platform of choice. RAID's LinkedIn page had 3,051 visitors across the year, peaking around the 'who are we' video launch and Crawford Conference.

Formal membership on RAID's website continues to grow, adding members via subscription to our quarterly newsletter blast and any one-off email send outs. A focus within the comms team has been to increase engagement with other like-minded individuals and agencies by connecting and sharing online content on platforms such as Instagram and LinkedIn. This has assisted in broadening RAID's connections and awareness of opportunities in agriculture for development space.

The sharing of video content, and hosting of events has enhanced our online capacity, with the majority of our interactions with RAID members occurring through LinkedIn, Instagram and Teams platforms. This has greatly increased collaboration between the events and communications team, leading to the potential development of an additional communications role in the coming year.

RAID Network 'Who are We' video

As part of the 2025 engagement strategy, the RAID Network Communications Team developed and launched a promotional video designed to strengthen RAID's visibility and streamline our messaging. The video performed exceptionally well, achieving 4,366 views and contributing to 332 new LinkedIn members in the month following its release. It has since become a core communications asset played at State Representative Networking Events and other outreach activities. The project also generated new institutional links, with the Coordinator of the UTS Communications degree approaching RAID following the video launch, leading to two fourth-year communications students completing a 10-week professional placement with RAID.

The development of the video also delivered significant internal benefits. It served as a valuable capacity-building opportunity, improving the team's writing, communication, and on-camera confidence, while strengthening teamwork throughout the production process. What began as a communications activity became a highly effective team-building experience, with members supporting one another, building confidence and a more cohesive central committee.

RAID Network Photo Competition

In 2025, RAID held the annual photo competition and judging took place during the Crawford Conference in Canberra. This year we had great engagement from entries, and including the finalists at the conference again attracted attention from the crowd. **Md Monirul Islam** took out the top prize with his photo *Flash Flooding in Bangladesh*, second prize winner was Maree Bouterakos with her photo *Cote D'Ivoire*, and our People's Choice Award went to Monique Berkhout with her photo *Cheeky Cows*.

Partnerships

Vietnam Program

The last 12 months has been a busy period for the RAID Partnerships Team. Following a successful RAID-VNUA partnership from 2020 to 2024, the team have now formed a new program and partnership with the Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF).

The 4th cohort of this program following on from Phase 2 and Phase 3 of this project (funded by the Crawford Fund for Food Security and Australian Volunteers Program) by recruiting six Early Career Researchers (ECR's) to join in a remote (online) and in-country training program partnering Vietnamese and Australian researchers to develop collaborative and cross-cultural research skills.

The aim of the workshop was to develop research and journal paper writing skills, cross-culturally with partners from Australia and Vietnam. It was an incredible opportunity to build relationships between Australian and Vietnamese researchers and students, for long-lasting partnerships. The ability to work in a collaborative aspect throughout the program and into the future has been very evident with continued research paper writing, particularly with the Faculties of Veterinary and Animal Science and Rural Development.

Participants as a part of this program were able to:

- Learn advanced research paper writing techniques.
- Engage in cross-cultural collaboration, enhancing both professional and interpersonal skills.
- Work closely with peers from Vietnam and Australia to produce high-quality, collaborative research outputs.

The program participants committed to six 1.5-hour online sessions across the remote component, in addition to traveling to Vietnam for 1-2 weeks in August/September (23rd August-7th September) of 2025 for an immersive agricultural in country volunteer program with various organisations and farmers.

By joining this program, participants:

- Sharpened their research paper writing skills and contributed to impactful publications.
- Gained valuable experience in cross-cultural collaboration, which is essential for success in global research initiatives.
- Expanded their professional networks by working closely with researchers from both Vietnam and Australia.
- Developed an understanding of agricultural synergies across Australia and Vietnam through in-country volunteering work within the Vietnamese agricultural industry.

The remote agenda follows on Page 10 and the in-country agenda on Page 11:

SCHEDULE	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	WHO
WEEK 1	Tues 8 July 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	Introduction and Welcome Session	Participants and RAID Team Facilitating
	Thurs 10 July 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	Structuring and writing a journal article	Presenter – Dr Bernie Dominiak NSW DPIRD bernie.dominiak@dpi.nsw.gov.au
WEEK 2	Thurs 17 July 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	The “Four Moves” of journal paper writing	Presenter – Dr Jenny Hanks, CQU j.hanks@cqu.edu.au
WEEK 3	Thurs 24 July 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	Contribution of Big Data to Research	Presenter – Dr Niharika Sharma NSW DPIRD niharika.sharma@dpi.nsw.gov.au
WEEK 4	Thurs 31 July 2025	4:00pm-5:30pm AEST	Qualitative vs Quantitative Research	Presenter – Dr Nam Ha Duong (Ha) UTAS namha.duong@utas.edu.au
WEEK 5	Thurs 7 Aug 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	Writing a literature review	Presenter - Dr Bruno Holzapfel NSW DPIRD bruno.holzapfel@dpi.nsw.gov.au
WEEK 6	Fri 15 Aug 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	Structuring a Review Paper	Presenter – Assoc Prof Vinay Pagay, University of Adelaide vinay.pagay@adelaide.edu.au
WEEK 7	Thurs 21 Aug 2025	4:00pm-5:00pm AEST	Summary/Recap/Travel Plans	Participants and RAID Team Facilitating

Date	Content	Responsible and Participants
23 August 2025	Arrived to Hue	RAID and APV
24 August 2025	Free	RAID and APV
25 August 2025	Workshop at HUAF	HUAF, RAID and AVP
08:30-9:00	Registration	HUAF, RAID and AVP
Morning	Moderators	HUAF/Dr. Nguyen Hai Quan RAID/Ms. Megan Williams
08:30-09:00	Videoclip on introduction on HUAF	HUAF
09:00-09:15	Welcome and introduction participants	HUAF/Dr. Nguyen Hai Quan
09:15-09:25	Opening workshop	HUAF/A. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Huu Van
9:25-9:40	Introduction on AVP program, RAID/RAIDS Research	RAID and AVP
9:40-9:50	Introduction on Faculty of Agronomy	HUAF/A. Prof. Dr. Phan Thi Phuong Nhi
9:50-10:00	Introduction on Faculty of Animal Science and Veterinary	HUAF/Dr. Nguyen Hai Quan
10:00-10:15	Photo session	HUAF, RAID and AVP
10:15-10:30	Tea break	
10:30-10:40	Introduction on Faculty of Land Resource and Agriculture Environment	HUAF/Mr. Nguyen Phuc Khoa
10:40-10:50	Introduction on Faculty of Rural Development	HUAF/A. Prof. Dr. Le Thi Hoa Sen
10:50-11:30	Discussion	HUAF, RAID and AVP
11:30-13:00	Lunch time	HUAF, RAID and AVP
Afternoon	Moderators	HUAF/Dr. Le Thi Hoa Sen RAID/Dr. Chi Mai Do
13:00-13:15	Efficiency of using Rhizobium bacteria in combination with nitrogen fertilizer rates on soybean yield in coastal sandy soil in Hue City	HUAF/Ms. Tran Thi Anh Tuyet
13:15-13:30	Ca ²⁺ - sensitive and non-selective Na ⁺ /K ⁺ channel activity of a barley aquaporin HvPIP2;8 under saline condition	HUAF/Dr. Tran Thi Huong Sen
13:30-13:45	Overview livestock production in Vietnam	HUAF/Ms. Than Thi Thanh Tra
13:45-14:00	Antibiotic resistance in poultry farming and alternative approaches	HUAF.Nguyen Thi Quynh Anh
14:00-14:15	Recent research results of AVP	AVP
14:15-15:00	Australian and Vietnamese Research Dialogue	RAID
15:00-15:30	Tea break	
15:30-15:45	Greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural soil amended with kitchen compost of varying ages	HUAF/Dr. Tran Thi Minh Chau
15:45-16:00	A new approach in soil organic carbon estimation using machine learning algorithms: a study in a tropical forest in Vietnam	HUAF/Dr. Tran Thi Thuy Phuong
16:00-16:15	Gender roles in the value chain: A case study of goat farming among ethnic minority communities in Hue City	HUAF/Dr. Nguyen Van Chung
16:15-16:30	Developing community-based ecotourism in the Tam Giang lagoon: Solutions for balancing livelihoods and natural resource conservation	HUAF/Dr. Hoang Dung Ha
16:30-17:00	Sum up the Workshop and Information about field trip	HUAF/A. Prof. Dr. Le Thi Hoa Sen
18:00	Dinner (Restaurant)	HUAF, RAID and AVP
26 August 2025	Field trip	HUAF, RAID and AVP
07:30-09:30	Visiting cattle farm in Phong Thai ward, Hue city (30 km from Hue city)	HUAF, RAID and AVP (HUAF/Dr. Nguyen Hai Quan)
09:30-12:00	Visiting crop production in Dan Dien commune, Hue city (15 km from Hue city)	HUAF, RAID and AVP (HUAF/Prof Dr Hoang Thi Thai Hoa)
12:00	Back Hue city and Lunch	HUAF, RAID and AVP
27 Aug – 9 Sept 2025	Divided into 4 groups in 4 faculties following registration list (activities following 4 faculties)	HUAF, RAID and AVP

RAID Network Australian and Vietnamese Partnership

Website report by Megan Williams

Future Partnership in 2026 and beyond

The future partnerships and research of the program have many exciting opportunities. Due to the travel time for HUAF in August being sub-optimal in the wet season and semester holidays, the next program for in-country will be in April 2027. Due to the RAID budget based on a FY, an in-country program for 2026 in April cannot be funded. Instead, a remote program with current participants and HUAF will be structured with the opportunity to bring on new participants remotely in 2026 to work with the 2025 cohort and travel to Hue in April 2027. These participants both new and current will continue the strong partnership that has been developed with HUAF on research paper writing skills, with the future objective of these leading to on the ground research partnerships for EMCRs in 2027.

Newsletters, capacity development and events

[RAID Network E-Newsletter – Summer 2025](#)

[RAID Network E-Newsletter – Autumn 2025](#)

[RAID Network E-Newsletter – Winter 2025](#)

[RAID Network E-Newsletter – Spring 2025](#)

11 February 2025

[AARES – RAID Network student networking night](#)

The RAID Network was a sponsor of the Australasian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (AARES) Conference in Brisbane QLD this year and held a student networking night which encouraged like-minded students and early career professionals to network.

26 February 2025

[RAID Network & Crawford Fund WA networking event – February 2025](#)

Crawford Fund WA and RAID Network WA, in collaboration with Curtin University, hosted a networking event for early career researchers and students. This event aimed to raise awareness of the Crawford Fund for Food Security Student Awards, the new Crawford Fund for Food Security Henzell Awards and conference scholarships.

13 May 2025

[Coffee, Cocoa and Conversations: RAID SA re-launch with Emeritus Professor Randy Stringer](#)

The SA division of the RAID Network hosted this relaunch event featuring special guests Emeritus Professor Randy Stringer and Dr Daniel Gregg. The event brought together a diverse audience, including undergraduate, honours, masters and PhD students, as well as early career researchers and professionals.

4 June 2025

[RAID Webinar Series: Women in Agriculture: Webinar 1](#)

Leadership Journeys and Lessons Learned - What does it mean to lead with lived experience, to collaborate with purpose, and to ground leadership in the everyday realities of our work? These were the questions Manita Raut found herself reflecting on as she led the first session of the Women in Agriculture webinar series, hosted by the RAID Network.

5 June 2025

[SIDER x RAID panel discussion – ACT event](#)

RAID Network partnered with Sustineo, a social development consultancy based in Canberra, to host a careers panel and networking night in collaboration with their Sustainability, International Development and Environmental Research (SIDER) monthly networking series. A thought-provoking and engaging session on the wide range of career pathways in international agriculture, spanning government, research and industry, with three inspiring speakers with real world experience and insights.

22 July 2025

[RAID Webinar Series: Women in Agriculture: Webinar 2](#)

Seizing opportunities and gaining ground - Dr Bosibori Bett and Dr Anna Okello from ACIAR have forged diverse, impactful careers in agriculture and development, and their stories serve as powerful reminders that uncertainty, self-doubt, and questioning one's path are not signs of weakness, but natural parts of every journey. Bosi and Anna shared how they didn't wait for opportunities, they created them. Their stories showed that often, career-defining moments begin with simply saying "yes," even when you're unsure.

7 August 2025

[SIDER x RAID panel discussion – ACT event](#)

RAID Network and Sustineo presented a special panel discussion exploring career pathways in international development. An engaging session designed for students, early-career researchers, and young professionals looking to navigate the world of consulting and NGOs. The panel featured experienced professionals from Sustineo, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Callida Consulting.

12 August 2025

[Crawford Fund for Food Security Conference – 2025 Scholars Social Trivia Night](#)

RAID Network facilitated the Crawford Fund for Food Security Conference scholars trivia night once again in 2025 at the Kingston Hotel in Canberra. A great opportunity for early career researchers and students to connect with fellow scholars in a relaxed environment.

29 August 2025

[RAID Webinar Series: Women in Agriculture: Webinar 3](#)

From grassroots to global impact: women leading agricultural change – In this, the final webinar of the series, guest speakers, Dr Humera Iqbal and Dr Shumaila Arif, shared candid insights into the challenges women face in agriculture and international development. They highlighted the realities of working in male-dominated spaces, where women often have to constantly prove their credibility, and described the cultural shifts required when moving from local contexts in Pakistan to global platforms.

24 September 2025

[“Your research in one photo” competition – 2025](#)

Once again, we received some beautiful and creative entries in our 2025 RAID Network photo competition. We get excited every year to see our members entries and learn more about their research. First prize went to **Md Monirul Islam**, second prize winner was **Maree Bouterakos** and the People's Choice went to **Monique Berkhout**.

Crawford Fund for Food Security Engagement

State/Territory Committees

RAID representatives continue their involvement with Crawford Fund for Food Security state/territory committees in Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and ACT which strengthens our connections at a state-level providing opportunities for co-branding and funding of events.

Through their involvement on the state committees, RAID can provide insight and connect opportunities specialised for the next gen in international development.

Crawford Fund for Food Security Conference

In 2025, RAID partnered with the Crawford Fund for Food Security through the development and delivery of the scholars days, and as Keynote Listeners during the conference. As part of the scholar's day, RAID chaired, facilitated, presented and time kept various sessions throughout the two days. On Tuesday night after the conference, RAID hosted all the scholars for a social trivia event held at the Kingston Hotel. RAID provided an 'international development' themed trivia night and provided food and soft drinks for the scholars.

ACIAR

RAID Network has had a very close relationship with ACIAR, both in funding and in-kind support of our mission and activities. Over the course of this period, the network has maintained the agreement of contribution to the Network via the Graduate Research Officers (through the Graduate Program) at a rate of 8 hours/week.

Contributions in 2025 from graduates include key central committee roles of President (Mikayla Hyland-Wood), State Rep Coordinator (Greta Stark) and Partnership Officer (John Yaxley). This support, facilitated by ACIAR, has been an incredible resource to drive Network initiatives and regular events. Additionally, the close proximity of graduates to senior ACIAR research and outreach staff has proved useful in the search of event speakers and panelists as well as promotional assistance on communication platforms.