

Final report

Project title:

Online Resource for Mushroom Health & Nutrition Science for Healthcare Professionals

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Public summary

Mushroom Health Science Australia (MHSA) was established to address the lack of a centralised, credible and accessible source of mushroom nutrition and health information for healthcare professionals in Australia. Prior to the project, mushroom-related information and resources were fragmented across multiple platforms, limiting awareness, accessibility and the long-term value of previous industry investments. The core objective of the project was to build a credible, digestible, engaging and authoritative online hub to increase healthcare professional awareness, knowledge and confidence in recommending mushrooms and their health benefits, ultimately supporting longer term mushroom demand creation outcomes.

The project involved development of the MHSA online hub, supported by strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, scientific oversight and multi-channel activation activities. A **Project Reference Group** and **Scientific Advisory Panel** were established to guide project direction, scientific integrity and content review. Existing mushroom nutrition and health information was reviewed and consolidated, while the website was designed to provide accessible, clinically relevant and searchable information tailored to dietitians, nutritionists, GPs and other healthcare professionals.

To build awareness and engagement, the project implemented a multi-channel activation strategy including digital campaigns, healthcare professional conferences, webinars, EDM communications and stakeholder updates. A healthcare professional database was progressively built throughout the project to support ongoing communication and engagement with the target audience.

Evaluation was undertaken through website analytics and Audience Sentiment Research (ASR) surveys conducted at project commencement and completion. Findings demonstrated that MHSA was perceived as a credible and authoritative source of mushroom nutrition and health information, particularly among health professionals who engaged with the platform. Users reported strong satisfaction with the usefulness and usability of the platform, while engagement data showed high dwell times across key content areas. The project also identified that awareness and visibility remain the key future growth opportunity, with engagement and trust strongest once healthcare professionals accessed the platform.

Key outputs included the MHSA website and online hub, brand identity and strategic plan, health professional database, educational communication assets, conference activation materials, EDM communication program, evaluation report and platform handover resources for ongoing management by the Australian Mushroom Growers Association (AMGA).

Importantly, the project has delivered a scalable, credible platform and engagement model that provides the mushroom industry with a long-term strategic asset for healthcare professional engagement. The project established foundational infrastructure, trusted audience pathways and a growing health professional network to support consistent, evidence-based communication on mushroom nutrition and health benefits.

Evaluation findings demonstrated that engagement, trust and recommendation behaviours strengthened once health professionals interacted with the platform, reinforcing the importance of ongoing activation and visibility to maximise long-term impact. Continued investment will be important to maintain momentum, grow awareness and support longer-term behaviour change and mushroom demand creation outcomes.

Keywords

Mushrooms; Health professionals; Nutrition education; Digital health hub; Stakeholder engagement; Behaviour change; Communication strategy

Introduction

This 3-year (2023-2026) Hort Innovation project *MU22006 – Online Resource for Mushroom Health & Nutrition Science for Healthcare Professionals*, contributes to Outcome 1 of the Mushroom Strategic Investment Plan (SIP, 2022-2026) of Demand Creation, specifically Strategy 1 Consumer Demand: positive influence on consumer preference (KPI1) and use of nutritional information to support consumer demand (KPI2).

Prior to this project there was no go-to source of mushroom nutrition and health information for Australia. Industry nutrition and health projects targeting health professionals undertaken in Australia were largely done in silo and outputs lived across a myriad of places online including the Australian Mushrooms website, the Australian Mushroom Growers Association website, and our own FOODiQ Global health professional (HP) hub. It was recognised that this has many limitations including lost intellectual property, lost content, lost audience engagement, loss of knowledge and limited understanding of the total reach, impact and behaviour change. The industry identified an opportunity to solve for these through the creation of an online platform to serve as the centralised, evidence-based authoritative home for mushroom science and health information.

The core objective of the project was to build an online resource on mushroom science and health that is credible, digestible, engaging, and authoritative, to:

- Build awareness and credibility of mushroom health benefits among HPs
- Increase knowledge and confidence in recommending mushrooms

Methodology

The project was delivered through an integrated, multi-phase approach comprising:

1. Strategic planning and evaluation

The initial phase of the project involved finalisation of key planning elements in conjunction with Hort Innovation, including the **project risk register**, **program logic** and **monitoring and evaluation (M&E)** plan. Project progress, outputs and outcomes were reported six monthly through benchmarking reports.

As part of the M&E plan, an **Audience Sentiment Research (ASR)** program was developed to inform strategy, evaluate project effectiveness and guide project recommendations. Baseline (September 2023) and project end (February 2026) surveys were undertaken (See Appendix 1 and 2 respectively). The surveys used quantitative and qualitative questions aligned to core project objectives to generate actionable insights and support strategic decision making throughout the project. Participants were incentivised through a chance to win mechanism.

The baseline ASR assessed health professional attitudes, knowledge, perceptions and recommendation behaviours relating to mushrooms and their health and nutrition benefits, while also identifying learning needs and resource opportunities to inform MHSA development.

The project end survey evaluated awareness, usage and perceptions of the MHSA Hub, including platform usefulness, relevance and credibility. It also assessed changes in knowledge, confidence and recommendation behaviours relating to mushroom nutrition and health science, as well as barriers and facilitators influencing engagement with the MHSA Hub.

At project commencement, FOODiQ undertook its proprietary **iQ3® strategy** development process with key stakeholders, including the Hort Innovation R&D Manager and industry stakeholders (See Appendix 3). This process aligned stakeholders on the strategic direction, hub development approach and activation plan.

Consistent with FOODiQ's commitment to continuous improvement, the strategy was reviewed and refined throughout the project. Adjustments were aligned with the Hort Innovation R&D Manager and, where relevant, discussed with the Project Reference Group (PRG).

2. Building the core community

A key focus of the project was establishing the core stakeholder and healthcare professional community to support the development, credibility and ongoing growth of the MHSA Hub.

A **Project Reference Group (PRG)** was established with representation across industry, research and healthcare sectors to provide strategic guidance throughout the project. The PRG met six monthly to support alignment on project direction, priorities and implementation.

A **Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP)** was also established, consisting of qualified researchers and health professionals with diverse expertise, institutions and backgrounds. Members included Prof Welma Stonehouse (CSIRO), Dr Tony James (Curtin University), Dr Jessica Danaher (RMIT University) and Mary-Jo Feeney (USA registered dietitian and mushroom researcher/consultant). The SAP met six monthly, with additional ad hoc engagement as required, to provide scientific oversight, strategic advice, content review and support resource development.

Alongside stakeholder engagement, a healthcare professional database was established through the baseline ASR and progressively expanded via webinar registrations, conference activations, resource downloads, EDM sign ups and broader engagement activities. The database became a key project asset for ongoing communication, dissemination and engagement with the MHSA audience.

3. Building the platform

A central output of the project was development of the **Mushroom Health Science Australia (MHSA) online hub**. Development commenced with a strategic brand workshop involving Hort Innovation and AMGA stakeholders to establish the platform vision, positioning, audience profiles, key messaging and visual identity. The MHSA name and branding were developed to reflect authority, credibility and educational purpose, while remaining accessible to healthcare professional audiences.

A significant component of the project involved content collation and mapping. Existing mushroom health and nutrition resources from Hort Innovation, AMGA, FOODiQ and external scientific sources were reviewed to identify content gaps, opportunities and priorities. This informed development of the site architecture, content pillars, wireframes and user journey to ensure the platform was intuitive, searchable and aligned with healthcare professional needs.

New platform copy and supporting resources were developed, including SEO planning, keyword mapping, practical calls to action and translation of science into accessible healthcare professional content. Content development was supported by ongoing SAP review and aligned with emerging science throughout the project.

The platform was designed and developed in WordPress, including staged graphic design, user testing, optimisation, analytics integration and accessibility considerations. The final MHSA Hub provided a centralised platform housing practical, credible and evidence based mushroom nutrition and health information tailored to healthcare professionals.

4. Empowering the community

Following launch of the MHSA Hub, activities focused on ongoing platform maintenance, optimisation and continuous improvement to support long term relevance, usability and sustainability. This included refinement of content, functionality and user experience in response to emerging science, stakeholder feedback and user engagement data.

The final phase of the project involved development of a **strategic evaluation report** to support long term planning beyond the funded project period. Website analytics, final ASR findings and activation insights informed key learnings, recommendations and future growth opportunities. The project also included website handover, user guidance and training to support AMGA's ongoing management and continuity of the platform post project.

5. Promoting the community and online platform

A **multi-channel activation strategy** was implemented to build awareness, drive engagement and support uptake of the Hub. Activities included a KOL launch event, a digital outreach campaign, conference engagement and EDM communications.

A virtual launch event introduced the platform to healthcare professionals and key opinion leaders, supported by guest speakers, media promotion and social assets. Conference and digital outreach activities targeting dietitians, nutritionists, GPs and nurses were designed to drive MHSA Hub visibility and healthcare professional database sign up through incentivised calls to action. Subscribers entered an automated EDM sequence designed to progressively educate users on the hub, strengthen ongoing engagement and reinforce MHSA's positioning as a credible and authoritative source of mushroom nutrition and health information.

Industry communication was maintained through Mushroom Link, AMGA updates and PRG engagement to support stakeholder visibility, buy in and contribution to the platform.

Results

Mushroom Health Science Australia (MHSA) Website

The [MHSA website](#) was successfully developed and launched as a contemporary, centralised and user friendly hub for mushroom nutrition and health information. The platform was designed to be low maintenance, while remaining functional, accessible and scalable to support future growth. User engagement data demonstrated consistent utilisation, with 10,356 sessions from 9,045 unique users across the project period. Most traffic was new, reflecting both the early stage of the platform and the impact of activation activities. Traffic was strongly campaign dependent, with the April–June 2025 digital outreach generating approximately 65% of total project traffic. Between activations, the site averaged around 120 sessions per month.

Beyond campaign traffic, the platform developed a growing organic search presence. Google Search Console data (January 2025–April 2026) showed consistent growth in impressions and clicks, reaching over 65,000 search impressions and approximately 200 organic clicks per month by early 2026, achieved without active promotion. This demonstrates the platform's growing value as a long term digital asset.

Overall usability was strong, with 70% rating the hub easy or very easy to use. GPs were more likely to report difficulty (23.1% vs 12.1%), likely reflecting time constraints and differing information seeking behaviours. Desktop accounted for 60% of usage and generated longer session durations than mobile (~10 minutes vs ~3.5 minutes). Recipes performed particularly strongly on mobile (93% engagement).

Users who reached the platform were highly engaged, with average dwell times of 7–14 minutes on key pages. Engagement was highest on recipe and health benefits content (~80%), while the Vitamin D page recorded the longest dwell time on the site at 14+ minutes. Most downloaded resources included the Mushroom Health Benefits factsheet, Vitamin D Client Factsheet, Health Credentials Booklet, Vitamin D Infographic, Mushroom Nutrition Raw vs Fried, Culinary & Nutrition Tips & Tricks and From Farm to You.

Activation

Conferences: The project successfully engaged health professionals through a combination of face-to-face and digital strategies. A total of five educational events were undertaken including launch webinar November 2024, Nutrition Society of Australia December 2024, General Practice Conference & Exhibition (GPCE) 2025 & 2026 and Doctors for Nutrition 2025. See **Table 1** for results.



Digital activation: One digital outreach activation was implemented. The campaign involved paid social media and channel advertising. A total of **1,516 sign-ups** were generated through the campaign. See **Table 1** for results.



Table 1: Summary results from activation activities

Online Launch event	Attendance	Event "excellent or very good overall"	Event 'Excellent or very engaging'	Event useful	Event 'Excellent or very informative'
KOL launch event	131 (KPI >100)	95.7%	95.7%	93.5%	93.5%
Conferences	Delegates to stand	Database sign-ups (new)			
Nutrition Society of Australia 2024 (Sydney)	200	168			
GPCE 2025 (Melbourne)	500	254			
Doctors for Nutrition 2025 (Adelaide)	150	148			
GPCE 2026 (Sydney)	500	277			
Digital Activation	Audience	Open Rate %	CTR%	Sign ups	
Dietitian Connection (DC) Newsletter	12, 354	46%	1.3%	164	
Australian Practice Nurses (APNA) Online newsletter	29, 913	24.7%	0.8%	59	
Healthy Food Guide (HFG) Pro Mailout	1100	29.4%	2.4%	26	
AusDoc GP Article	32,000/165 page views	NA	10.9%	18	
Paid social media (Meta)	53, 756	NA	1.9%	1211	

Health Professional Database

The HP database was originally commenced at start of project with initial acquisition via the baseline audience sentiment survey. The database has grown throughout the project via recruitment strategies at conferences and the digital outreach campaign. At project end, the HP database sits at a total of 2916 subscribers (KPI >2000) and represents a 14-fold increase compared to a baseline of 197 subscribers.

Electronic Direct Mail (EDM)

Ten electronic direct emails were sent to the MHSA database throughout the project. The EDMs open rates and click through rates averaged 38% (23% - 57.4%) and 3% (0.5% - 7.5%), with most performing above the KPI open rate of 25%. See **Table 2** for results.

Table 2: EDM Open Rates

Theme/Content	Open rate (%)	Click Rate (%)
Welcome	57.4%	7.5%
Introducing our SAP	45.9%	4.8%
Resource Catalogue	47%	5.9%
Take the Quiz	43.5%	5.4%
Opinion Piece research	41%	1.7%
Welcome to the Hub! Hub overview	36%	2%
Exclusive Look: Farm to Fork & Culinary Tips	33%	1.7%
Case study:: Mushroom at Mater	36.2%	0.3%
Hot Topic: Mushrooms & Plant-Based Diets	29.5%	0.5%
Pro Tips: Culinary & Nutrition Insights	34.5%	1%
MOM Study just Published	24%	2%
Mushrooms for healthy aging	23.2%	2.3%

End of project Evaluation

Audience Sentiment Research (ASR) surveys were undertaken at project start and end. As independent cross-sectional surveys, direct comparison is limited but provides insight into directional shifts. The project end survey also sub-analysed respondents who had accessed the MHSA Hub compared with those who had not, providing an additional baseline style comparison. Full results are provided in Appendix 2. Key findings are summarised in Figures 1–9.

Key findings included:

- **MHSA perceived as credible and authoritative:** 68% overall viewed the hub as authoritative, increasing to 78% among subscribers and 80% among dietitians, but lower among GPs (50%).
- **Strong usability:** 70% found the hub easy to use, with only 12% reporting friction. GPs were more likely to report difficulty using the platform (23%).
- **High engagement:** Among those aware of the hub, 65% were using or intending to use resources (KPI: 50%), with strong dwell times across key pages (7–14 min).
- **Resources valued:** 82% of users found resources useful (KPI: 80%).
- **Greater engagement associated with stronger recommendation behaviours:** Subscribers were 1.7 times more likely to recommend mushrooms, while hub users were 5.1 times more likely.
- **MHSA valued for practical, evidence-based support:** Clinical summaries, condition led information and practical guidance were identified as the top resource needs.
- **Needs differed by profession:** Dietitians sought depth, evidence and tools; nutritionists preferred accessible summaries and research translation; GPs preferred fast, condition-led practical guidance.
- **Main barrier to usage is awareness & salience:** Only 46% aware of hub (KPI: 70%), low rejection.
- **Key opportunities:** Further optimise useability, visibility and practical guidance.



FIGURE 1: Proportion of health professionals agree with statement ‘MHSA is the authoritative, go to platform for nutrition and health information on mushrooms’

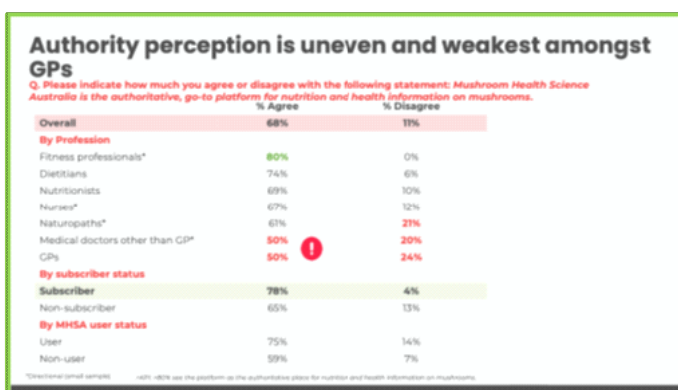


FIGURE 2: Proportion of health professionals agree with statement ‘MHSA is the authoritative, go to platform for nutrition and health information on mushrooms’ by professional group, subscriber and MHSA usage status.



FIGURE 3: Health professional ratings of overall MHSA Hub usability

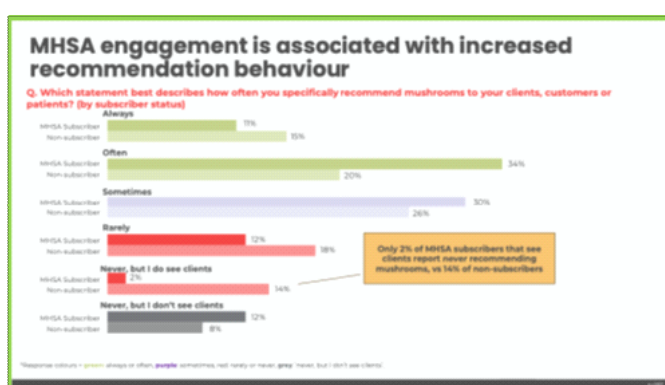


FIGURE 4: Health professional recommendation behaviour based on subscriber status

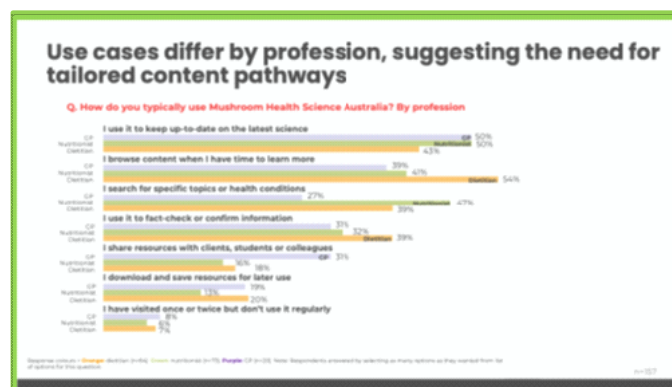


FIGURE 5: Typical usage pattern of MHSA by profession

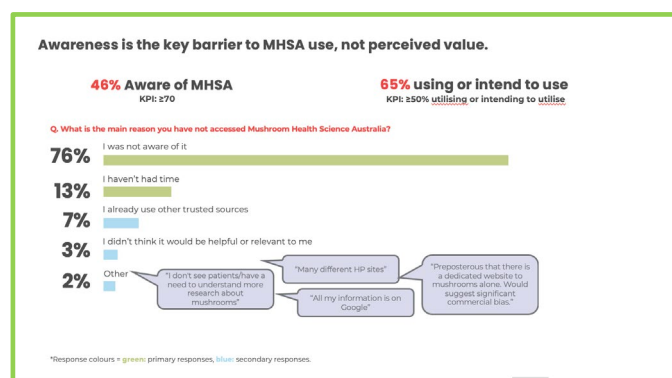


FIGURE 6: Main barriers to usage MHSa by health professionals



FIGURE 7: Most valued MHSa content types among health professionals



FIGURE 8: Preferred MHSa content types by profession



FIGURE 9: Key opportunities to improve MHSa content usefulness and engagement

Discussion

The project successfully established Mushroom Health Science Australia (MHSa) as a credible and authoritative platform for mushroom nutrition and health information. Findings demonstrated that when health professionals engaged with the platform, perceptions of usefulness, authority and recommendation behaviours were strong. Users showed high engagement with content, positive platform perceptions and strong dwell times, supporting the value of healthcare professional education and engagement as a pathway contributing to longer term mushroom demand creation outcomes.

The project also highlighted important differences between health professional groups and how they engage with information. Dietitians and nutritionists demonstrated particularly strong engagement with the MHSa platform, with higher perceptions of credibility, usefulness and authority. This audience was more likely to spend time exploring

evidence-based and practical resources, particularly when content aligned closely with clinical application and patient education needs.

GPs, however, presented a different engagement profile. Evaluation findings showed GPs experienced greater friction with the website experience and reported lower perceptions of MHSA as an authoritative source compared to dietitians. Importantly, the main reason cited was not lack of interest in mushroom health, but that GPs already rely heavily on established trusted clinical information sources and have limited time to explore new platforms. Despite this, the findings also suggested significant opportunity within the GP audience. When GPs were successfully engaged face-to-face with concise, clinically relevant messaging, particularly around vitamin D, recommendation interest increased strongly. This indicates the challenge is less about relevance and more about visibility, accessibility and delivery through trusted clinical education pathways. A key finding was that awareness and visibility remain the major growth opportunity. Engagement quality was strong once users reached the platform, however broader health professional penetration remains at an early stage. Hub traffic and engagement were strongly linked to activation activities, highlighting the importance of ongoing communication and visibility efforts to maintain awareness and keep mushroom nutrition and health benefits top of mind over time

These findings reinforce that different health professional groups require different engagement strategies, formats and communication channels. Importantly, they also demonstrate the significant long-term potential of increasing mushroom visibility within mainstream healthcare conversations. Evaluation findings demonstrated that different engagement channels served different strategic purposes. Social and digital activities effectively drove scalable reach and database growth, while conferences and face-to-face engagement generated stronger trust building and deeper engagement. Overall, the project established strong foundational infrastructure, audience pathways and engagement assets to support future mushroom nutrition and health communication activities and long-term industry value.

Outputs

Table 3. Output summary

Output	Description	Detail
Audience Sentiment Research Baseline	Baseline findings used to help set M&E targets and direct project strategy. Target audience: Hort Innovation	Date conducted: September 2023 Survey responses: 197 (KPI: >200) Report (Appendix 1) submitted to Hort Innovation on 13 th December 2023.
Audience Sentiment Research Project End	Project End findings used to assess impact, guide insights, learnings and recommendations for future planning. Target audience: Hort Innovation	Date conducted: February 2026 Survey responses: 663 (KPI: >200) Report (Appendix 2) submitted to Hort Innovation on 22 nd May 2026.
Strategic plan 2022-2026	FOODiQ proprietary strategic planning process to develop collaborative robust strategic plan for project. Target audience: Hort innovation, Industry stakeholders	Strategic workshops with key stakeholders took place on 6 th October and 7 th November. Strategic Plan 2023-25 completed and presented to stakeholders 12 th December 2023 (Appendix 3)
Brand Identity & Assets (1 x logo & brand guideline)	Development of the MHSA brand identity, including logo, visual identity and brand guidelines to support consistent communication and positioning of the platform as a credible and authoritative healthcare professional resource. Target audience: Industry stakeholders and project partners.	Logo and brand guidelines have been co-designed in consultation with AMGA through a multistage workshop process and shared with Hort Innovation. (Appendix 4). Assets were used across the website, presentations, digital communications, conferences and activation activities throughout the project.
Website content and map outline	Development of the MHSA website architecture, content map and user journey to support intuitive navigation and access to mushroom nutrition and health information. Target audience: HP	Developed through strategic content mapping, review of existing resources and stakeholder consultation. The site structure informed development of the MHSA Hub and associated resources (Appendix 5). Content architecture was implemented within the live website and refined throughout the project based on user engagement data and stakeholder feedback.
MHSA Website	Central online resource hub for HPs Target audience: HP	The MHSA website was developed, launched on October 15th 2024. https://mushroomhealthscienceaustralia.org/
KOL launch event	1-hour professional development webinar. Target audience: HP	Webinar was held on 21st November 2023. See Appendix 6 for evaluation.
Digital outreach campaign	Communications outreach campaign targeted to HP to drive reach for the awareness of the resources, utilising social media, channel advertising and KOL activation. Target audience: HP	One paid social media campaign took place April-June 2025 (8 week) along with advertisement to Dietitian Connection (DC) membership, Australian Practice Nurse Association (APNA), AusDoc membership, Healthy Food Guide Pro Membership. See Appendix 7 for evaluation.

Conference activations (NSA, GPCE Melb, DFN, GPCE Syd*)	4 x conferences attended to build awareness, support healthcare professional engagement and drive MHSA Hub database sign up. Target audience: HP	FOODiQ Global staff, on behalf of Hort Innovation, exhibited at Nutrition Society Australia (NSA) (3–6 December 2024), GPCE Melbourne (11–13 July 2025), Doctors for Nutrition (8–9 November 2025) and GPCE Sydney (15–17 May 2026). Activities included an engaging exhibition booth, incentivised competition to join the hub, MHSA branded resources and education on the nutrition and health benefits of mushrooms. Conference activations supported awareness, healthcare professional engagement and database growth. See Appendix 8 for evaluation. See Appendix 8 for evaluation.
HP Database	A final database built during the project to enable an ongoing conversation with HP. Target audience: HP	At project end the HP database (Appendix 9) sent separately to AMGA) had 2916 subscribers.
EDM program	Ongoing automated sequenced electronic direct mail (EDM) communications delivered to the MHSA healthcare professional database to support awareness, engagement and ongoing education on mushroom nutrition and health benefits. Target audience: HP	EDM communications (Appendix 10) were distributed throughout the project to keep mushrooms and the MHSA Hub top of mind with healthcare professionals. Content included mushroom nutrition and health benefits, new research, practical resources, recipes, webinar promotion and links to MHSA Hub content. The EDM program also supported ongoing database engagement and traffic to the MHSA Hub.
Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) Meetings	6-monthly meeting with appointed project stakeholders/advisors to inform and consult on project. Target audience: HP, KOLs	6 x Meetings (Appendix 11) were held where project deliverable outcomes and learnings discussed and consultation for future plans were discussed and aligned. 12th December 2023, 11th March 2024, 11th November 2024, 16th April 2025, 27th October 2025, 1st May 2026
Project Reference Group (PRG) meetings	6-monthly meeting with appointed project stakeholders/advisors to inform and consult on project. Target audience: HP, Industry, Hort Innovation	6 x Meetings (Appendix 12) were held where project deliverable outcomes and learnings discussed and consultation for future plans discussed and aligned. 24th October 2023, 18th March 2024, 5th November 2024, 1 May 2025, 5th November 2025, 8th May 2026
Mushroom Link Updates	Industry communication updates published through Mushroom Link to support stakeholder awareness, visibility and engagement with MHSA activities and resources. Target audience: Mushroom industry stakeholders and partners.	Mushroom Link updates were published throughout the project to communicate MHSA activities, resources and key initiatives to industry stakeholders. See podcast and Appendix 13 for mushroom articles.
Strategic evaluation report	End of project strategic evaluation report summarising project outcomes, learnings, evaluation findings and future recommendations to support long term planning for MHSA. Target audience: Hort Innovation and industry stakeholders.	The report synthesised website analytics, ASR findings and activation insights to evaluate project effectiveness and identify future opportunities and strategic considerations for ongoing platform growth and sustainability. Provided in Appendix 14.

User Manual and training AMGA	User guidance document developed to support AMGA in the ongoing management, updating and continuity of the MHSA Hub post project. Target audience: AMGA and platform administrators.	AMGA was consulted throughout the process to identify user needs and platform management requirements. A user manual (Appendix 15) was developed and provided to AMGA (Leah Dennis and Kura Antonello), including website management processes and basic operational functionality to support ongoing platform continuity following project completion. An online Zoom handover session was conducted on 18 th May 2026.
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Outcomes

Table 4. Outcome summary

Outcome	Alignment to fund outcome, strategy and KPI	Description	Evidence
Intermediate Outcomes			
Strategic approach aligned with stakeholders	IQ ³ Strategy development & workshops completed and strategic plan completed, presented and approved. Plan submitted in MS103.	A comprehensive strategic planning process was undertaken with key stakeholders to align on project scope, target audience needs, success measures, implementation pathways and long-term vision for the hub. This included situational analysis of previous initiatives, comparable platforms, naming, design and engagement considerations, resulting in an approved strategic plan that established stakeholder alignment and a clear roadmap for delivery. This outcome ensured the project was strategically grounded, industry aligned and positioned for effective translation and long-term impact.	Stakeholder workshops, meeting records, strategic planning documentation, feedback and approval of final strategic plan.
Online hub platform built & live	Live and functional at www.mushroomhealthscienceaustralia.org	A contemporary, centralised online hub was successfully developed and launched to consolidate mushroom nutrition and health science resources into a single accessible platform for health professionals. The platform established foundational infrastructure to support ongoing education, stakeholder engagement and future translation of mushroom health research outcomes.	Website analytics, audience sentiment research, activation performance.
HCP target audience aware of hub	EDM and outreach campaigns completed, >200 valid follow up ASR responses, 70% awareness of online platform and 50% platform utilisation target	A multi-channel outreach and engagement strategy was implemented including launch webinar, conferences, a digital campaign and EDM communications to build hub awareness and utilisation. The project exceeded the ASR 2 response target (ASR1 n=197; ASR2 n=663). ASR2 indicated meaningful penetration and establishment of hub with 46% awareness of hub and 65% utilisation by those aware of it. This supported fund level outcomes relating to demand creation by increasing awareness and engagement with mushroom nutrition and health information amongst health professionals, supporting the recommendation pathways needed to positively influence consumer awareness and future mushroom consumption.	Audience Sentiment Reports, conference engagement records, EDM and digital campaign metrics, website analytics and healthcare professional database growth
Industry up to date	Annual MushroomLink content, AMGA and Hort Innovation informed of progress	Regular engagement and communication activities ensured industry stakeholders remained informed on project progress, strategic direction and emerging outputs throughout the project. This was undertaken via 6 monthly PRG meetings, regular adhoc consultation with AMGA, and presentations at the World Mushroom Day Breakfast and AU/NZ Mushroom Growers Conference, alongside MushroomLink articles and podcast updates. This supported fund level outcomes relating to industry alignment, transparency and awareness of activities contributing to mushroom demand creation objectives.	PRG meeting records and attendance, MushroomLink communications, AMGA email records, and milestone reporting.
End of Project Outcomes			
Increased understanding of the	Increase awareness of nutrition and	End of project ASR findings demonstrated increased familiarity, understanding and confidence relating to mushroom nutrition and health amongst health	Baseline and end of project Audience

nutrition, health and culinary benefits of mushrooms	health benefits of mushrooms, increase accurate identification of nutrition and health benefits, and increase HCP confidence in discussing mushroom health benefits as measured in the end of project ASR compared with baseline	professionals. There was a 63% increase in the proportion familiar or very familiar with and able to specify nutritional properties of mushrooms, and a 40% increase in familiarity with health properties. The proportion accurately identifying nutritional properties increased from 54% to 58%, and health effects from 68.9% to 70.7%, with higher familiarity observed amongst subscribers. There was also a 26% increase in respondents reporting they were “confident” or “very confident” discussing the health and nutritional benefits of mushrooms. This supported fund level demand creation outcomes by strengthening health professional knowledge and confidence pathways that may positively influence mushroom recommendation and consumer awareness.	Sentiment Reports (ASR1 and ASR2)
Increase in HCPs who are actively recommending mushrooms as measured in the project end ASR (compared with baseline).	Increase in HCPs who are actively recommending mushrooms as measured in the project end ASR compared with baseline).	MHSA subscribers are 1.7x more likely to regularly recommend mushrooms and 7x less likely to never recommend them (2% vs 14%). MHSA Users 5.1 times more likely to recommend mushrooms.	Baseline and end of project Audience Sentiment Reports (ASR1 and ASR2)
Development of an authoritative nutrition, health and culinary informational online platform for mushrooms	≥80% see platform as the authoritative place for mushroom nutrition and health information, ≥80% of users find platform useful, >2000 new database contacts, >1000 resource downloads and >1000 subscribers to online platform	The MHSA Hub was successfully established as a centralised online platform for mushroom nutrition, health and culinary information for health professionals. End of project findings demonstrated strong perceived value and growing authority of the platform, with 68% overall viewing the platform as authoritative and higher perceptions of authority amongst MHSA subscribers and users (78% and 75% respectively). In addition, 82% of users reported the resources as useful. The project exceeded subscriber and database growth targets by project end, demonstrating successful audience building and engagement, alongside strong platform usage with 2916 database subscribers, 9045 unique users, 10,356 sessions and 989 resource downloads. This supported fund level demand creation outcomes by establishing MHSA as a trusted and increasingly authoritative source of mushroom nutrition and health information, helping increase healthcare professional confidence, engagement and future recommendation of mushrooms to consumers.	Audience Sentiment Report 2, website analytics, database and subscriber records

Monitoring and evaluation

Table 5. Key Evaluation Questions

Key Evaluation Question	Project performance	Continuous improvement opportunities
To what extent has the project achieved its expected outcomes?	The project successfully delivered a contemporary, user-friendly and credible HP online hub for mushroom nutrition, health and culinary information. The project demonstrated positive shifts in awareness, familiarity and confidence relating to mushroom health benefits, alongside strong platform engagement and database growth. End of project findings demonstrated increasing authority and usefulness of the platform, with strongest perceptions amongst engaged users and subscribers, supporting the project objective of building trusted pathway for mushroom health communication and recommendation. Findings indicated that when health professionals were aware of and engaged with the platform, perceptions of usefulness, authority and engagement were strong.	The project established a credible platform, sizeable audience base and strong foundations for future growth. The key opportunity moving forward is increasing awareness, visibility of the platform and to grow the database and help keep mushroom nutrition and health benefits top of mind over time. Continued investment in sustained multi-channel activation, regular communication activities and health professional specific content and engagement strategies will be important to support ongoing growth, repeat engagement and long-term impact. There is also opportunity to further optimise practical, condition led and clinically relevant content pathways tailored to the differing needs of health professional groups.
How relevant was the project to the needs of intended beneficiaries?	The project addressed a recognised gap in the availability of a centralised, evidence based online platform for mushroom nutrition and health information targeting health professionals, which became the primary target audience for the project during strategic planning and implementation. End of project findings demonstrated the platform was relevant and valuable to health professional users, with 82% reporting resources as useful and stronger perceptions of authority amongst engaged MHSA users and subscribers. The project also demonstrated positive shifts in familiarity, confidence and recommendation related outcomes, suggesting the platform supported the intended objectives. Evaluation findings also highlighted important differences between health professional groups. Dietitians and nutritionists demonstrated the strongest authority perceptions and deeper engagement with the platform, while GPs were more likely to report friction with platform use and lower authority perceptions, likely reflecting time constraints, differing information seeking behaviours and reliance on existing trusted clinical information sources. From an industry perspective, the project established foundational infrastructure, audience engagement pathways and measurable indicators of health	There is opportunity to further tailor content pathways, engagement approaches and communication strategies for different healthcare professional groups, recognising differing needs, motivations and preferred formats across audiences. Additional practical, condition-led and clinically relevant content may further strengthen relevance and repeat engagement for health professionals, particularly for time poor groups such as GPs who may require simpler, faster and more practice ready entry points. Continued optimisation of platform navigation, visibility and content discoverability may also support broader reach and ongoing utilisation over time.

	professional awareness, engagement and recommendation potential aligned with supporting longer term demand creation objectives.	
How well have intended beneficiaries been engaged in the project?	Healthcare professional engagement outcomes were strong across multiple channels including launch webinar, conferences, launch webinar, and digital campaigns. The KOL online launch event was highly positively received, with 95.7% of respondents rating the event as “Excellent” or “Very engaging”. Conference activities generated strong interest and engagement, with ~ 20–30% of conference delegates engaging with the MHSA Hub and sign-up activities. Social drove nearly 50% of database accrual. EDM campaigns demonstrated consistent engagement across content themes, with open rates and click through rates averaging 38% and 3% respectively. Strong online engagement was also observed through dwell times of 7–14 minutes on key content pages and 82% of users reporting resources as useful. Evaluation findings further suggested that deeper engagement with the platform was associated with stronger confidence and recommendation related outcomes, with subscribers 1.7 times more likely to recommend mushrooms than non-subscribers, and users 5.1 times more likely to recommend mushrooms than non-users. Regular communication activities including PRG meetings, MushroomLink updates, conference presentations and ongoing consultation ensured industry stakeholders and levy payer representatives remained informed on project progress and emerging outcomes throughout the project.	Future opportunities include strengthening conversion pathways from awareness and initial engagement through to ongoing platform use, subscription and repeat engagement. Continued optimisation of communication cadence, clinically relevant content themes and audience nurturing strategies may further strengthen ongoing engagement and recommendation related outcomes over time.
To what extent were engagement processes appropriate to the target audience/s of the project?	Evaluation findings demonstrated that engagement effectiveness differed across professional groups and engagement channels. Dietitians and nutritionists demonstrated the strongest authority perceptions and deeper engagement with the platform, likely reflecting a stronger alignment with evidence-based nutrition content and willingness to explore resources in depth. GPs demonstrated lower authority perceptions and were more likely to report friction with platform use, potentially reflecting time constraints and reliance on existing trusted clinical information sources. Face-to-face engagement approaches such as GPCE conferences appeared more effective for GP engagement than advertorial style digital approaches, highlighting the importance of credibility, practical relevance and trusted educational environments for this audience. Nursing engagement activities generated lower traction than anticipated, suggesting current formats or channels may not have aligned optimally with audience preferences. The launch webinar achieved strong engagement outcomes and positive feedback, indicating that expert led educational approaches were well	Future opportunities include further tailoring engagement strategies, formats and content pathways for different health professional groups. For GPs, there may be value in leveraging trusted education and CPD aligned channels and integrating mushroom messaging into broader clinically relevant topics. For nurses, alternative engagement pathways and channels such as APNA conferences warrant testing. Medical students and fitness professionals also emerged as highly relevant and future audiences for exploration in future phases if budget supports.

	aligned to audience expectations and learning preferences.	
What efforts did the project make to improve efficiency?	Project outputs were delivered within required timelines, within budget and to a high standard of quality, as reflected through positive stakeholder feedback from conferences, SAP, stakeholders and PRG members. Automated EDM onboarding sequences and reusable engagement assets were developed to support ongoing efficiency and continuity of communication activities beyond initial engagement. Reusable communication assets including conference materials, and online content were also developed for ongoing use across the project period. To maximise value across engagement activities, the project invested in win incentives and practical reusable branded items such as produce bags and tea towels that could be leveraged across multiple events and activities. These were consistently well received by attendees and popular among delegates. Evaluation through website analytics, EDM metrics, audience sentiment surveys and activation performance also enabled identification of future optimisation opportunities relating to audience engagement, channel performance and content priorities.	Future opportunities include continued optimisation of platform navigation, SEO and content discoverability to further improve audience reach and engagement efficiency. There is also opportunity to further prioritise high performing channels, content and engagement approaches based on conversion and engagement insights, helping focus future efforts towards activities with strongest audience relevance and impact.

Refereed scientific publications

Nil

Intellectual property

No project IP or commercialisation to report