



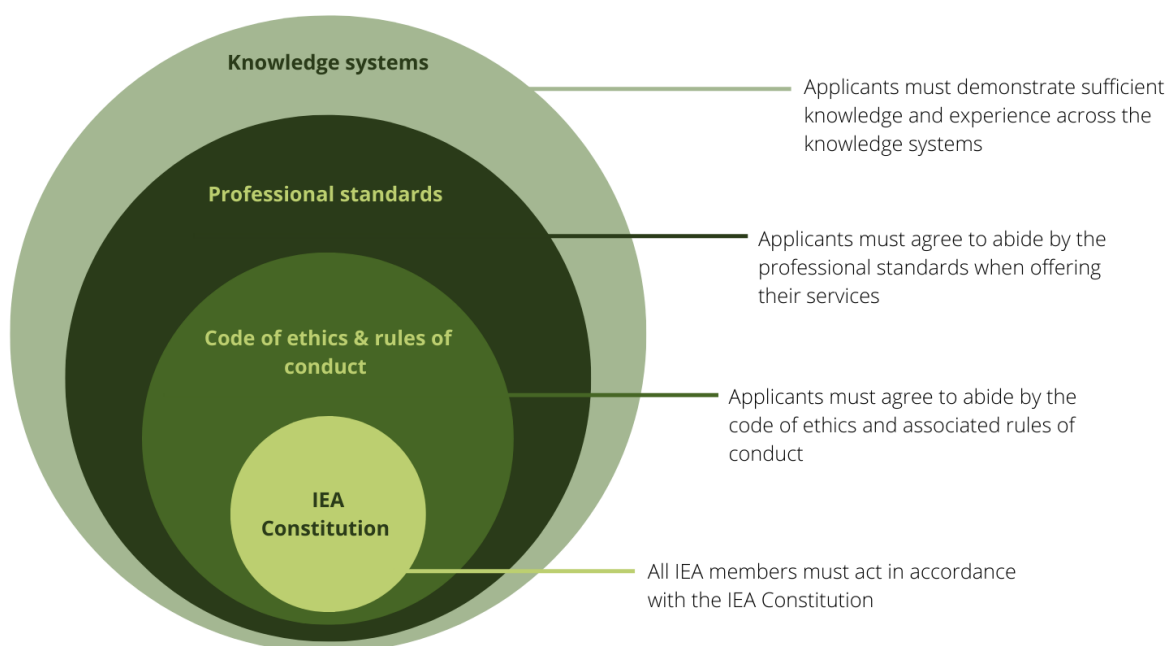
IEA Knowledge Systems and applying to be accredited

To become an accredited member of the IEA, applicants need to read and abide by the IEA Constitution, Code of Ethics, Rules of Conduct and Professional Standards (as per *figure 1*). They must also demonstrate sufficient knowledge and experience across the IEA's 'knowledge systems' – which are systems of knowledge and practice that frame an ecological approach to agriculture. These systems ensure that applicants have the knowledge and skills to offer sound advice. However, they also seek to attract those individuals who are genuinely interested in transforming food systems.

IEA is not accrediting a specific skillset. It is accrediting a broad range of ecological approaches to agriculture, each of which have their own goals and measurements for success. The core of this accreditation is to share and abide by ethical and professional standards as a community of educators, trainers and consultants – regardless of each applicant's specific background or training. The accreditation has been designed this way because IEA believes it is important that people with different (but still ethical and professional) approaches can be connected and learn from each other.

IEA Accredited Members are expected to have knowledge across at least seven of the knowledge systems (see *figure 2*); with a commitment to undertake professional development in those systems that they do not have expertise in. The purpose of this document is to explain the knowledge systems and application guidelines in detail.

Figure 1: IEA accreditation consists of five interconnected documents that must be read prior to applying for accreditation





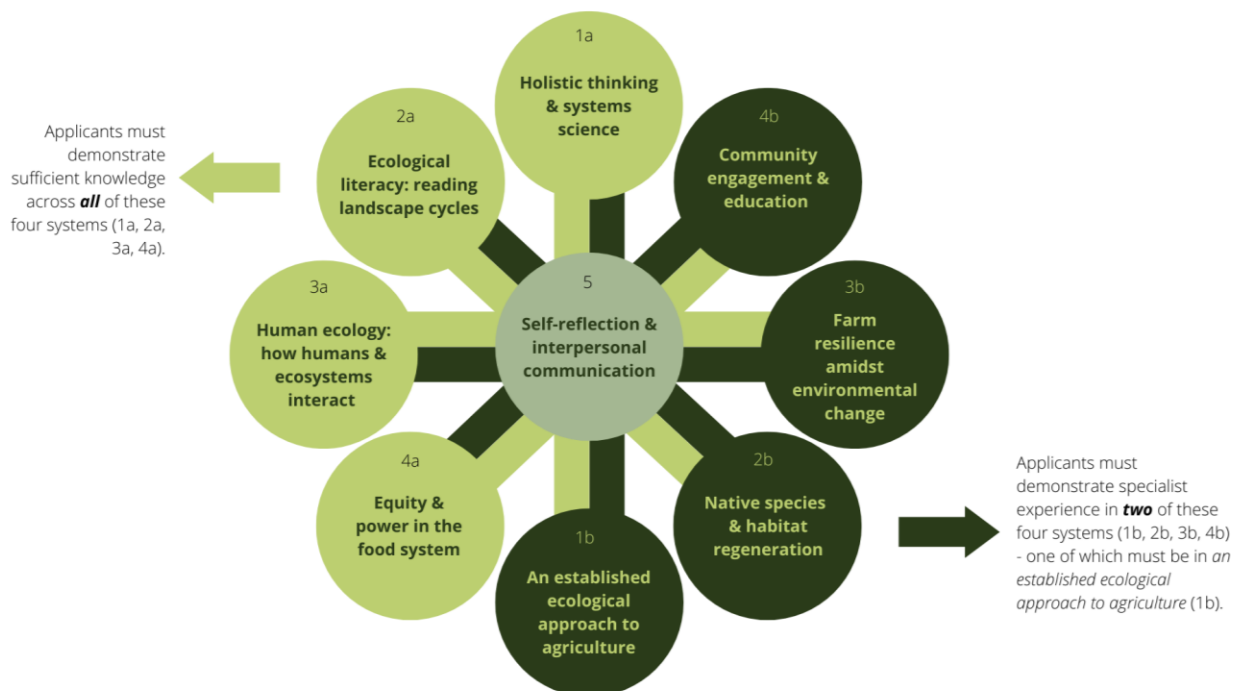
Meeting the requirements of the knowledge systems

As per *figure 2*, applicants are expected to have knowledge across systems 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a and 5. They need to demonstrate experience in system 1b (an established ecological approach to agriculture) and at least one other system from 2b, 3b and 4b.

- If the applicant has relevant tertiary or vocational qualifications, they will need at least four years of experience working in the field. For example, an applicant might have one year of experience in permaculture (1b), but three years of experience as a qualified ecologist (2b).
- If the applicant has no qualifications, five to nine years of relevant experience will be required subject to their application and interview.

The IEA values previous experience from non-agricultural sectors/industries. Please do not exclude experience from your application that you believe is relevant. Those who have not completed the required amount of relevant experience will have the opportunity to become an IEA Associate.

Figure 2: IEA knowledge systems



The accreditation committee will assess applicants based on the criteria developed for each knowledge system (see *table 1, 2 and 3*). Applicants need to demonstrate how they meet the criteria or seek further training to meet the criteria. Examples are provided of how applicants can meet the criteria.



Becoming an IEA Associate Member

If the applicant does not meet the application criteria or has not yet completed the required amount of experience; they will have the opportunity to become an IEA Associate Member. This is a stepping-stone category. IEA can help facilitate mentorship opportunities for Associate Members and work with them to meet the accreditation requirements in time. If an applicant is purely interested in becoming an IEA Associate Member, this can be noted in their cover letter.

Application guidelines

Applicants can apply [here](#) on the IEA website. The following documents will be required:

- **Cover letter:** this should briefly explain why you hope to be accredited with IEA; which agricultural alternative you have experience in; and which other knowledge circle you have experience in – with examples. Highlight any parts of your application that are particularly noteworthy.
- **Resume:** this should be an overview of your experiences and qualifications to date, including contact details. It will also need to include a character referee and a professional referee; these will be contacted by the accreditation committee.
- **Portfolio:** IEA recognises that the written word is a particular approach to understanding knowledge that might not be accessible to all applicants. IEA does not want to marginalise applicants who do not normally engage with this medium. A portfolio will be required, which goes deeper into an applicant's experience using a format that is comfortable for them. The only requirement is that it is digital so that it can be shared with the accreditation committee. For example: a video, sound recording, PDF, external website or links to news articles, social media or other sources promoting the applicant's work. The portfolio is important for all applicants to show the accreditation committee who they are with more detail and flexibility. It is also important that the applicant uses the portfolio as an opportunity to address the criteria for each knowledge circle.

Once an application is submitted, an IEA representative will be in touch. All successful applicants will be required to attend an interview with the Accreditation Committee.

Who is on the IEA Accreditation Committee?

The IEA Accreditation Committee will convene to assess applications. There are three fixed positions on the Committee:

1. IEA President



2. IEA Vice President
3. Board Member (Accreditation)

In addition, Members of the Board who express an interest in the Accreditation Program may join the Committee.

In future, there will be a requirement for two IEA Accredited Members (at least one with similar expertise to that of the applicant), to participate in the application assessment process, including any interviews.

The Committee will ask the applicant to demonstrate how they meet each criterion listed in *Table 1, 2 and 3* (see page 5).

Recognition

Successful applicants are able to use any of the following post-nominals (depending on which is most suitable for their work):

- IEA Accredited Consultant
- IEA Accredited Educator
- IEA Accredited Trainer

Those who are successful in gaining Associate status can use the post-nominals “**IEA Associate Member**”. The corresponding Accreditation Stamp will be provided by IEA.



Applicants must demonstrate sufficient knowledge across all of the following systems:

Table 1: Knowledge systems 1a – 4a

Knowledge system	Description	Accreditation committee criteria	Meeting the criteria
1a: holistic thinking and systems science	A capacity to use holistic decision-making frameworks and complex adaptive systems thinking. There are different approaches to holistic thinking in ecological (regenerative) agriculture. Applicants will need to demonstrate proficient knowledge in at least one. For example: Indigenous worldviews; the Savory holistic decision-making framework; the Goethe/Bortoft approach; nested or holarchic interpretations; and pattern recognition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates proficiency in complex, adaptive systems thinking • Demonstrates proficiency in at least one approach to holistic thinking; understands its philosophical origins and practical application • Demonstrates a general awareness of other approaches to holistic thinking • Has a healthy appreciation of reductionist ways of thinking, and can implement them when necessary, but recognises that they sit within an amalgam of knowledges 	The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in the portfolio. When it comes to holistic thinking, these experiences may not necessarily be an 'activity.' For example, they may entail a particular <i>way of being</i> on Country. If holistic or complex adaptive systems thinking has been explored in any tertiary or vocational subjects, or in a short course, that should be included in the application.
2a: ecological literacy – reading landscape cycles	An understanding of ecological processes and cycles in landscapes; and how each of these interrelate to generate ecological resilience. For example: the water cycle; carbon cycle; mineral cycle (including chemical and biological components of soils); solar-energy cycle; nitrogen cycle; and ecosystem dynamics / biodiversity. Also an appreciation of the specific landscapes within which one is working (associations of climate, geology,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates capacity to design and develop a landscape plan for the healthy functioning of ecological processes • Demonstrates an understanding of how to build resilience into landscapes; e.g. maintaining diversity and functional redundancy; supporting slow variables and feedbacks • Demonstrates sufficient understanding of what ecological processes are; and how they interrelate 	The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in a portfolio – this may include farm planning or NRM experience. The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma); or short course relevant to agriculture, environmental science, ecology, botany, forestry, geology, soil science or similar should be included.



	geomorphology, soils and native vegetation) and how these specific landscapes function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a capacity to develop an in depth knowledge of specific landscapes and their functioning as required 	
3a: human ecology – how humans and ecosystems interact	An understanding of how humans and ecosystems interact and impact one another. For example: disrupting the carbon cycle (climate change) through agricultural expansion, overgrazing, excessive nitrogen runoff etc. This includes knowledge of operating a business that is dependent on both economic and ecological systems (e.g. understanding how supply chains and markets impact farm ecology).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of the positive role humans and agriculture can play in ecosystems; and the negative role they are currently playing • Is able to comfortably communicate how financial security, social wellbeing and environmental health are not mutually exclusive • Demonstrates an understanding of supply chains and markets on farm decision making • The capacity to provide sound economic advice to farmers is not required; but beneficial 	The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in a portfolio – such experience may include cultural practices and perspectives. The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma); or short course relevant to social or human ecology, rural science, sociology, community development, human geography, health, psychology, business or similar should be included.
4a: equity and power in the food system	An understanding of issues related to equity and power in the food system. For example: indigenous sovereignty; racial parity; land accessibility; the unequal distribution of resources; concentration of ownership; and over-reliance on external inputs. Displays a commitment to help rectify these issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a commitment to engage in conversations about equity and power in the food system; recognises how they themselves might be benefitting from the oppression of others • Is committed to addressing issues of equity and power in the food system; and, therefore supports the need for restructuring that system • Acknowledges the contributions of First Nations worldviews to ecological (regenerative) agriculture • Recognises that reconciliation with First Nations people is not a separate issue from damaged and 	The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in a portfolio – this may include advocacy work. The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma); or short course relevant to food justice, food sovereignty, communications, political science or similar should be included.



		degenerating ecosystems; that 'regeneration' requires addressing these issues simultaneously	
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Applicants must demonstrate specialist experience in at least two of these knowledge systems (one of which must be 1b); with a commitment to undertake professional development in the remaining systems:

Table 2: Knowledge systems 1b – 4b

Knowledge system	Description	Accreditation committee criteria	Meeting the criteria
1b: specialist experience in at least one established ecological approach to agriculture	An established ecological approach to agriculture includes (but is not limited to): Indigenous foodways; holistic/adaptive management; agroecology; community supported agriculture; carbon farming; permaculture; natural farming; organics; biodynamics; keyline farming; natural resource management; agroforestry; bioregionalism; urban / peri-urban agriculture; biological farming; conservation agriculture; no-till; syntropic agriculture; subsistence agriculture; marine permaculture; natural sequence farming; etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of the philosophy, practices and processes behind said ecological approach • Demonstrates an understanding of the desired outcomes of said ecological approach, and how they can be achieved • Can produce evidence of training in said ecological approach; either tertiary, vocational, short courses or mentorship • Knowledge is not just theoretical. Demonstrates experience working with communities, clients, students or on their own property in said ecological approach 	There are many short courses that can be recognised in the application. For example: the Farming and Grazing for Profit School, <i>Resource Consulting Services</i> ; Holistic Management, <i>Inside-Outside Management</i> ; the Regenerative Practitioner, <i>Institute for Regenerative Practice</i> ; or the Permaculture Design Certification, <i>Permaculture Research Institute (or other reputable organisation)</i> . The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); or vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma) relevant to the specific ecological approach should be included. Experience should be documented in a portfolio showing your history with the relevant ecological approach.



<p>2b: native species and habitat regeneration</p>	<p>Has a context specific understanding of Australian ecosystems. Applicants must have knowledge of how to recognise, protect and regenerate native species and their habitats in agricultural landscapes. This includes threatened species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the capacity recognise, protect and regenerate native species and their habitats in agricultural landscapes • Has an in-depth knowledge of native Australian flora and fauna • Demonstrates the capacity to ask the right questions about threatened species in the landscapes applicants are working with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the threatened species/habitats? ○ Who do I need to collaborate with to develop a plan for threatened species/habitats? ○ How can we ensure our work and training contributes to the regeneration of these species/habitats? 	<p>The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in a portfolio – this may include cultural practices and approaches for protecting species or research fieldwork. The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma); or short course relevant to environmental science, biology, ecology, botany, forestry, veterinary or animal science or similar should be included.</p>
<p>3b: farm resilience amidst environmental change</p>	<p>Natural and socio-economic disasters are becoming more frequent and increasing in severity alongside environmental change. Applicants need to demonstrate that they have experience building ecological, social and financial resilience into farming systems. This includes disaster planning, preparation and recovery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of what ‘resilience’ means and how to build socio-ecological resilience into farming systems • Can produce evidence of training in disaster preparedness; either tertiary, vocational, short courses or mentorship • Can produce evidence of experience with disaster preparedness / response and can articulate basic measures farmers can take to build resilience on and off farm 	<p>The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in a portfolio – this may include bush fire recovery, planned burns or flood mitigation as examples. The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma); or short course relevant to disaster preparedness and management, emergency response or socio-ecological resilience should be included.</p>



<p>4b: community engagement and education</p>	<p>Has a commitment to regenerating communities and building community resilience through engagement and education in ecological (regenerative) agriculture. This includes communities already involved with these initiatives, and the wider community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the capacity to provide sound community engagement, education and development advice (e.g. past experience) • Can produce evidence of training in community engagement and/or education; either tertiary, vocational, short courses or mentorship • Can articulate the importance of community organising in the context of ecological (regenerative) agriculture 	<p>The applicant should address any criteria that is particularly relevant to them in their cover letter. Any experience should be documented in a portfolio – such experience may include building communities of practice or sharing knowledge. The completion or partial completion of a tertiary degree (Bachelors, Honours, Masters, PhD); vocational degree (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma); or short course relevant to community development, governance, health, psychology, communications or similar should be included.</p>
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Applicants must demonstrate that they have the capacity for self-reflection and good interpersonal skills:

Table 3: Knowledge system 5

Knowledge system	Description	Accreditation committee criteria	Meeting the criteria
<p>5: self-reflection and interpersonal communication</p>	<p>Applicants represent the IEA and as accredited members are part of a diverse community. It is therefore important that applicants can demonstrate a capacity to interact responsibly with people who are different to them, and reflect critically on their own knowledge, advice and position. When representing the IEA, it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a capacity to deal with conflict respectfully, both within IEA and out in the field • Has good interpersonal skills – responding to questions respectfully, can articulate themselves well, eye contact etc. • Has, or is willing to explore, a practice of self-reflection to allow for ongoing learning and development – and is open to accepting constructive critique 	<p>This criteria will be addressed during the interview when the accreditation committee has the opportunity to speak with the applicant directly and get a sense of who they are. The committee will ask for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of conflict resolution • An example of maintaining an open mind when challenged by ideas different from their own



	<p>is also important that applicants know how to behave respectfully with their clients, students or mentees and have good conflict resolution skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has an open mind about the different approaches and goals of land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An explanation of any reflexive practice
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