# Future Drought FundExtension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program Grant Opportunity Guidelines

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| Closing date and time: | 9:00 pm AEDT on 9 January 2023 |
| Commonwealth policy entity: | Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry |
| Administering entity: | Community Grants Hub |
| Enquiries: | If you have any questions, contactCommunity Grants HubPhone: 1800 020 283 (option 1)Email: support@communitygrants.gov.auQuestions should be sent no later than 5:00 pm AEDT on 22 December 2022 |
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Contents

1 Future Drought Fund: Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program processes 4

1.1 Introduction 5

2 About the grants program 5

2.1 The Future Drought Fund 5

2.2 About the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program grant opportunity 6

3 Grant amount and grant period 9

3.1 Grants available 9

3.2 Grant period 9

4 Eligibility criteria 9

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant? 10

4.2 Additional eligibility requirements 11

4.3 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant? 11

5 What the grant money can be used for 11

5.1 Eligible grant activities 11

5.2 Eligible locations 12

5.3 Eligible expenditure 12

5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for 13

6 The assessment criteria 15

7 How to apply 17

7.1 Attachments to the application 18

7.2 Joint (Consortia) applications 18

7.3 Timing of grant opportunity processes 19

7.4 Questions during the application process 19

8 The grant selection process 20

8.1 Assessment of grant applications 20

8.2 Who will assess and select applications? 20

8.3 Who will approve grants? 21

9 Notification of application outcomes 21

9.1 Feedback on your application 21

10 Successful grant applications 21

10.1 The grant agreement 21

10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards 22

10.3 Multicultural access and equity 23

10.4 How we pay the grant 23

10.5 Grant payments and GST 23

11 Announcement of grants 24

12 How we monitor your grant activity 24

12.1 Keeping us informed 24

12.2 Reporting 24

12.3 Audited financial acquittal report 26

12.4 Grant agreement variations 26

12.5 Compliance visits 26

12.6 Record keeping 26

12.7 Evaluation 26

12.8 Acknowledgement 27

13 Probity 27

13.1 Enquiries and feedback 28

13.2 Conflicts of interest 28

13.3 Privacy 29

13.4 Confidential information 29

13.5 Freedom of information 30

14 Glossary 31

Appendix A. In-kind contributions 35

## Future Drought Fund: Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program processes

**The Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives to build long-term drought resilience and preparedness**

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry’s Outcome 3[[1]](#footnote-2) and the objects of the [*Future Drought Fund Act 2019*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00073) (the FDF Act). The department works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines) (CGRGs),the FDF Act, and [*Future Drought Fund (Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 to 2024) Determination 2020*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2020L00117) (the funding plan).

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**The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on the GrantConnect website.

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**You complete and submit a grant application**

You complete the application form and address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant.

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**We assess all grant applications**

We assess the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. If you are eligible, an assessment committee of assessors appointed by the department will undertake assessment of applications against the selection criteria and provide an initial ranking of applications to inform deliberations of the Selection Advisory Panel.

The Selection Advisory Panel will undergo further assessment of shortlisted applications including an overall consideration of value with money and compare it to other applications.

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**We make grant recommendations**

We provide advice, through a Selection Advisory Panel, to the decision maker, the Drought Minister (the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) on the merits of each application. The Drought Minister must request and have regard to advice from the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) Board in relation to making a grant.

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**Grant decisions are made**

The decision maker, the Drought Minister, decides which applications are successful.

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**We notify you of the outcome**

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.

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**We enter into a grant agreement**

We enter into a grant agreement with you if successful. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature or complexity of the grant and will be proportional to the risks involved.

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**Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.

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**Evaluation of the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program**

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

### Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program (the program).

The program is part of the Future Drought Fund (FDF) and will fund projects that help farmers take up practices and technologies that support drought resilience.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

* the purpose of the grant program
* the eligibility and assessment criteria
* how grant applications are considered and selected
* how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
* how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
* responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Community Grants Hub on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (the department).

## About the grants program

Australia is increasingly vulnerable to drought and the impacts of changing climate conditions. Whilst Australian farmers have traditionally become highly skilled at managing climate variability, the magnitude, intensity and frequency of drought and extreme climate events is an unprecedented challenge that requires additional support.

### The Future Drought Fund

The FDF is a long-term investment fund that provides a sustainable source of funding to help Australian farmers and agricultural-dependent communities and businesses become more prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of drought. From July 2020, $100 million is available each year from the Fund to invest in drought resilience programs.

The FDF programs will support farm businesses to be better informed, more productive, profitable, and adaptable, and to adopt more resilient land and natural resource management practices. The programs will also build capacity in agricultural-dependent communities and businesses to be less vulnerable to the socio-economic and environmental impacts of drought.

The FDF supports a range of drought resilience initiatives including:

* research and adoption of new and existing knowledge and technology
* improved farm business planning and decision making
* improved environmental and natural resource management
* a range of community resilience initiatives.

Further information about the FDF programs is on the [FDF](https://www.awe.gov.au/agriculture-land/farm-food-drought/drought/future-drought-fund#drought-resilience-funding-plan) website.

### About the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program grant opportunity

The objective of the program is to fund activities that support increased adoption, including through demonstration, of proven and existing (Australian and international) research and development (R&D) drought resilience practices and technology that:

* reduce the impacts of drought on agricultural productivity and/or enable a quicker recovery of farmers and their lands from drought
* have potential to be adopted at a large scale (either across multiple farms, a farming system, landscapes, regions or industries)
* can demonstrate public benefits.

The program will run over 24 months from late 2022–23 to 2024–25 and there will be one grant round opening in late 2022. Successful grantees will be funded to undertake on-ground activities during the period June 2023 to June 2025.

The program was announced in April 2022 as part of the FDF, with at least $14.3 million of funding being made available to applicants operating in Australia. The FDF is committed to supporting farmers through the delivery of grants for extending and promoting the adoption (including through demonstration for this purpose) of proven and existing R&D practices and technologies that assist farmers with building drought resilience.

The program recognises that there are existing R&D practices that present solutions, and assist farmers with building drought resilience, but the gap is in driving adoption through extension activities and achieving practice change at large scales.

The program will focus on extension and adoption of both Australian-generated R&D and/or internationally generated R&D projects being implemented by Australian entities. This will ensure practices and technologies supported through the program are applicable in the Australian context and conditions.

Under the program, eligible applicants will be able to apply for up to $3 million (GST exclusive) per application for projects up to 24 months. Applicants will be required to contribute funding
(co-contribution/s) to the delivery of the project. The extent of co-contribution offered will be taken into account in assessing the relative competitiveness of applications.

Publicly funded R&D organisations, including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), will need to partner with farming extension organisations and farmers to be eligible for a grant, and to ensure that their project outputs are implemented on farm (other than trial farms). This is to encourage farmer-focused practical approaches, and support collaboration between cross-cutting R&D organisations and regionally or locally focused on-ground organisations.

International entities are not eligible to apply for this grant, however, they may participate as part of a consortia led by an eligible Australian applicant (see section 4.1).

This program excludes funding for activities that could be funded through the private sector or that are designed to demonstrate established practices and technologies for the purpose of expanding their commercialisation.

This program also excludes funding for demonstrations to trial or prove R&D practices and technologies.

The desired outcome of the program is to achieve large scale practice change, through uptake of existing and proven drought resilience practices and technologies (Australian and international) by farmers.

The desired output is a greater number of farmers adopting existing and proven drought resilience farming practices and technologies.

This might be achieved through activities such as, but not limited to:

* local/regional events, extension and/or demonstration to promote large scale uptake by farmers of existing and proven practices and technologies
* extension materials produced and distributed at extension events/field days and so on
* training to facilitate large scale uptake of practices and technologies that improve drought resilience.

Projects funded through the program will report on their efforts to drive uptake of existing and proven practices and technologies that reduce the impacts of drought on agricultural productivity and/or enable a quicker recovery from drought.

Projects must explicitly target *improved drought resilience*

The practices and technologies to be extended/demonstrated must target improved future drought resilience as a primary focus. That is, they must seek to support:

* continued agricultural productivity and profitability during times of drought
* faster recovery of agricultural productivity and profitability following times of drought.

Projects can have non-drought resilience co-benefits, but drought resilience *must* be the primary focus of each project.

Practices or technologies used in projects must be *proven*

The proposed practices and technologies must have some evidence to show that they are proven or reasonably understood to reduce the impacts of drought on agricultural productivity and/or enable a quicker recovery of famers and their lands from drought.

This evidence may include, but is not limited to:

* journal article/s
* prior case study findings
* known generational First Nations land management, including Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property.

Projects must be targeted at driving adoption at large scales

The impacts of drought are felt across properties, farming systems, landscapes, industries, and regions. Our practice change needs to be applied at similar scales. In order to drive adoption of drought resilience practices at large scales, projects must explicitly work across multiple farms, a farming system, landscapes, regions and/or industries. Project sites may be at a more discrete scale where practicable (e.g. a single site that acts as a demonstration of the proven practice or technology), but in such cases must be coupled with other activities that collectively drive change at a larger scale.

Projects must focus on *adoption*

A key focus for projects must be about supporting adoption, with activities to be delivered during the project as well as considering longer term adoption once the activity/project has finished. These activities may include (but are not limited to):

* media and social media campaigns (including newsletters)
* demonstration farm visits
* workshops
* promotions at field days
* dissemination of case study findings.

Program administration

The Community Grants Hub administers the program according to [*Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*](https://finance.govcms.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf) (CGRGs).

This grant opportunity is part of the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program.

The grant is open to both Australian and International R&D drought resilience practices and technologies. You must be an eligible Australian applicant to apply for the grant opportunity. International entities are encouraged to participate as part of a consortia with an eligible Australian applicant.

Desired project features

We are interested in projects that drive adoption of proven and existing drought resilience practices and technologies at large scales, including those that:

* improve the growth of crops, including crop management and crop rotation, during and following times of drought
* improve pasture and soil health including the management of livestock, crops or using alternative crops that regenerate soil between seeding/while in drought
* map farmland, in particular mapping land health
* support supply chain continuity
* draw from, and share benefits with, Indigenous or culturally diverse people and communities.

## Grant amount and grant period

### Grants available

The Australian Government has announced total funding of at least $14.3 million over 2 financial years for the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants Program.

The grant opportunity will be open for applications from 11 November 2022 to 9 January 2023.

The maximum grant amount is $3 million (GST exclusive) per approved application. The minimum grant amount per approved application is $100,000. Successful projects must be carried out between June 2023 and June 2025.

You are required to contribute towards the grant activities. There is no minimum co-contribution amount mandated, however co-contributions will be considered as part of the grant assessment process. Co-contributions can include cash and in-kind contributions (refer to Appendix A: In-kind contributions for further information). You cannot use the grant for project activities or costs that have been, are being, or will be funded by other Commonwealth programs or state, territory or local government bodies.

Eligibility and assessment criteria are described in sections 4 and 6 respectively.

### Grant period

The maximum grant period is 27 months.

You must complete your on-ground project activities within the initial 24 months (June 2023 to June 2025). The remaining 3 months (July 2025 to September 2025) will allow you to evaluate and provide a final report on your project.

## Eligibility criteria

The decision maker can choose to waive the eligibility criteria, however they must be made aware of the risks. The decision maker may waive any eligibility criteria if the application:

* aligns with the FDF and the program’s objective
* is compliant with Australian legislation, including the FDF Act
* is in the interest of the public (public good)
* demonstrates that the applicant is able to manage the risks to a suitable level.

### Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must be one of the following entity types:

* Indigenous Corporation
* Company[[2]](#footnote-3)
* Corporate Commonwealth Entity[[3]](#footnote-4)
* Non-Corporate Commonwealth Statutory Authority[[4]](#footnote-5)
* Corporate State or Territory Entity
* Non-corporate State or Territory Statutory Authority
* Local Government Entity[[5]](#footnote-6)
* Cooperative
* Incorporated Association
* Statutory Entity
* Partnership
* Unincorporated Association[[6]](#footnote-7).

If you are applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust[[7]](#footnote-8), the Trustee must have an eligible entity type as listed above.

Applications from consortia are acceptable, as long as you have a lead organisation who is solely accountable to the Commonwealth for the delivery of grant activities and is an eligible entity as per the list above[[8]](#footnote-9). Eligible organisations can form a consortia with ineligible organisations. Given the program’s objectives and focus, a person or sole trader will not be eligible to lead but can be part of a consortium.

In your application you will need to list the entities in your consortium and include the total dollar value of any co-contributions (cash and/or in-kind) that they will be committing to the project.

### Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications from entities that:

* have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
* have an account with an Australian financial institution.

If you do not meet these additional requirements, you will not be eligible.

In addition, a Corporate Commonwealth Entity, a Non-Corporate Commonwealth Statutory Authority, and Commonwealth funded Rural Research and Development Corporations must partner, or enter a consortium, with an on-farm entity/ies to ensure that the extension and adoption activities are relevant to farmers in the region.

### Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

* an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the National Redress Scheme’s website on the list of ‘Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme’ (www.nationalredress.gov.au)
* Non-corporate Commonwealth Entity
* Non-corporate State or Territory Entity[[9]](#footnote-10)
* Person[[10]](#footnote-11)
* Sole Trader [[11]](#footnote-12)
* International Entity[[12]](#footnote-13).

## What the grant money can be used for

### Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your grant activity must:

* Align with the objectives of the program as outlined in section 2 above, notably:
* deliver activities that will drive the large scale adoption of an Australian or international R&D drought resilience practice or technology that is proven to reduce the impacts of drought on agricultural productivity and/or enable a quicker recovery from drought, at a large scale.
* This may include[[13]](#footnote-14), but is not limited to targeted extension services or demonstrations for groups on-farm or off-site, for example at agricultural field days or conferences
* can demonstrate public benefits and why activities cannot be funded from private sources.
* Be delivered within 24 months from the grant activity start date.
* Seek grant funding up to $3 million (GST exclusive) and use co-contributions in addition to the grant funding provided to deliver the project.

### Eligible locations

Your grant project can include activities at multiple locations, as long as they are all in Australia.

### Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement. To be eligible, expenditure must:

* be a direct cost of the project; and
* be incurred by you for required project activities.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and completion date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

Eligible expenditure items are:

* purchase (or hire or lease) of equipment and materials to support eligible project activities, for example: building materials, ICT cabling, infrastructure (for example fences), fixed furniture, landscaping
* salaries and on-costs for personnel directly employed in delivering the project activities (this should be calculated on a pro-rata basis relative to their time commitment). This excludes project management or project co-ordination costs which are covered under administrative support below
* staff training that directly supports the achievement of project outcomes (maximum 5% GST exclusive of the grant)
* rental of land for demonstrations
* contract expenditure, the cost of any agreed project activities that you contract to others directly relating to the program objectives
* workshops and conferences, including venue hire, catering and networking costs
* community events, including field days, exhibitions and cultural heritage events
* domestic travel, limited to transport, accommodation, meals and incidental costs as per the [Australian Public Service Travel Allowance Rate](https://www.ipea.gov.au/travel/employees#:~:text=The%20current%20motor%20vehicle%20allowance,5%2C000km%20per%20financial%20year.) required to conduct the agreed activities
* international travel as agreed in the project proposal, limited to transport, accommodation, meals and incidental costs as per the [Australian Public Service Travel Allowance Rate](https://www.ipea.gov.au/travel/employees#:~:text=The%20current%20motor%20vehicle%20allowance,5%2C000km%20per%20financial%20year.), required to conduct the agreed activities (only applicable where international practices and technologies are promoted)
* the total cost of both domestic and international travel must be limited to a maximum 10% GST exclusive of the grant
* administrative support and overheads additional to the normal day to day running costs of the organisation, including project management or project co-ordination (maximum 10% GST exclusive of the grant)
* costs you incur in order to obtain planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals during the project period. However, associated fees paid to the Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments are not eligible
* direct costs related to the involvement of an international organisation in your consortium. Any costs that related to an international organisation are required to be identified in the budget
* small-scale infrastructure that is clearly justified by public benefits and is required specifically for project activities. Generally speaking, the presumption is against funding for infrastructure, unless it is a necessary input to support on-ground land management practices that are being demonstrated. For example, the construction of essential fencing where the project is taking place or a small shed to store equipment related to the project
* financial auditing of project expenditure
* reporting on project outcomes including the development of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan for the project (maximum 5% GST exclusive of the grant), see section 12.7.

We may update the guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your grant activity.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The decision maker makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure.

You must incur the expenditure on your grant activities between the start date and end or completion date for your grant agreement for it to be eligible. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until such time as a grant agreement is executed and your grant activity starts. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

### What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

* activities not agreed to as part of your grant agreement
* practices and ideas that are not ready for large-scale demonstration and adoption
* basic research and early-stage innovation through this process. We are focused on driving adoption of relatively mature practices (or combinations of practices) to improve agricultural productivity
* subsidies for commercial operations, business start-ups or where the primary activity is for commercial gain, or activities designed to raise revenue for an organisation or individual
* large scale infrastructure
* repair or replacement of existing infrastructure where there is no demonstrated significant increase in benefit to the community
* purchase of land or existing infrastructure
* purchase of vehicles
* overseas travel, unless explicitly agreed to as part of the project proposal
* activities that have commenced before execution of the grant agreement
* ongoing operating costs, including utilities
* ICT equipment, including software or hardware that is not an integral part of the funded project
* payment of salaries for the applicant’s employees where the activity is not directly related to the project
* business case development and feasibility studies
* costs related to registered training organisation training activities
* writing the application
* making donations, gifts and sponsorships
* administration costs (including office equipment) valued at more than 10% GST exclusive of the grant amount sought
* fees paid to the Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments to obtain planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals
* costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
* activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility
* activities that may be characterised as demonstrating a commercial opportunity, such as:
	+ proving commercial viability of a novel product, process or service to a customer, investor or strategic partner
	+ developing a business model and intellectual property strategy
	+ attracting investors/capital (for example, developing an information memorandum)
	+ developing commercial capability (including engaging a senior management team)
	+ production design
* activities that may be characterised as realising a commercial outcome, such as:
	+ activities related to making the first sales of a novel product, process or service
	+ scaling production and/or marketing activities to make first or further sales of the novel product, process or service
	+ commercialising the next version or iteration of an existing product, process or service where updates and changes are minor and therefore does not qualify as a novel product, process or service
* costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to visas, relocation costs, professional membership fees, purchase of alcohol, insurance, mobile phones (purchase or call charges) and other indirect costs
* fees for patent applications
* fees for international students or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities for students
* pay for staff or other resources committed as an in-kind contribution (Appendix A) under the grant agreement.

**Activities cannot be funded more than once**

You cannot use the grant for project activities or costs that have been, are being, or will be funded by other Commonwealth programs or state, territory or local government bodies.

If any of your proposed activities are included in an application for funding that is under consideration through another program at the time of submission, you must declare this and identify the program/s in question. If more than one application is successful, you cannot receive funding for this grant program for the same activities.

## The assessment criteria

You must address all of the following assessment criteria in the application.

We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion detailed below.

The application form includes character limits – up to 6,000 characters (approximately 900 words) for criterion 2, and 3,500 characters (approximately 525 words) for remaining criteria. The application form will not accept characters beyond this limit. Please note spaces are included in the character limit.

**Criterion 1: Relevance of the project to the drought resilience of Australian agriculture (25%)**

Describe the project’s potential contribution to the drought resilience of Australian agriculture in accordance with the program objectives.

When addressing the criterion, strong applicants will identify:

* the existing research and development, practice or technology that is to be the focus of the project, and why you are confident it can support improved resilience to droughts.
* the potential of the practice to improve drought resilience in the context of the Australian agriculture sector – for example, is it potentially relevant to a broad range of producers, large value of production, or otherwise have large relative potential socio-economic benefits?
* that the drought resilience practice or technology in the project is proven, not new or novel
* that the primary focus of the project, including for demonstrations, is adoption of the practice, not research and development into the practice
* alignment with 2 or more of the Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub’s regional priorities (see below) as relevant for the region/s that your project will be implemented in.

**Criterion 2: Methodology and scalability (35%)**

Describe how the project will increase adoption of the practice and technology at a large scale.

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

* the methodology for the project – what activities will you deliver, and how? Why will these lead to increased practice change at a large scale?
* what do you expect the reach of the project to be and how will this translate into uptake (for example, number of farmers adopting new drought resilient practices)?
* how will the project lead to increased adoption beyond the life of the funding? How will project outputs support longer term practice change?
* who will you collaborate with on the project to promote adoption and greater utilisation of the new practice or technology?

**Criterion 3: Demonstrate value for money (20%)**

Describe how your proposed activities represent value for money in the use of public funding.

When addressing the criterion, strong applicants will outline:

* the anticipated scale of impacts and benefits of the project relative to the funding sought
* the level and nature of co-contributions from the lead organisation, collaborators and
end-users
* any leveraging of related government, private, philanthropic or other investments
* what the public good[[14]](#footnote-15) benefits of the project are (such as for industry and First Nations people and communities) and how they outweigh any private benefits
* what are the benefits for project participants and providers of the practice or technology
* why the required funding cannot be sourced privately or through commercial avenues.

**Criterion 4: Capability to deliver the project (20%)**

When addressing the criterion, strong applicants will outline:

* the skills and expertise of project participants, including established stakeholder relationships, project management, scientific rigour, monitoring and evaluation and communications
* project risks and capability to manage those risks.

**Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs**

The Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs (the Hubs) support farmers and communities to be prepared for drought. They connect farmers with regional agricultural experts, innovation and new practices. The Hub’s have worked with the agriculture communities in their region to identify what their region’s drought resilience priorities are. Links to each Hub and their priorities are available below:

* [Southern New South Wales Hub](https://cdn.csu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/4083097/Hub-priorities-graphic.pdf)
* [Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales Hub](https://www.unisq.edu.au/research/sqnnsw-hub/priorities)
* [South-West WA](https://www.gga.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/20220923_SW-WA-Hub_Priority_Project_Lists.pdf)
* [Victoria](https://vicdroughthub.org.au/resources/stakeholder-priority-areas)
* [Northern WA and NT Hub](https://nwanthub.org.au/index.php/priority-funding-areas/)
* [Tropical North Queensland Hub](https://www.tnqdroughthub.com.au/hub-priorities/)
* [South Australian Drought Hub](https://sadroughthub.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/SA-Drought-Hub-Priorities-List.pdf)
* [Tasmania](https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1612618/220812_TAS-HUB-Regional-Priorities.pdf)

## How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, questions and answers, sample Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement and the Commonwealth terms and conditions.

These documents are found on the [GrantConnect](https://www.grants.gov.au/?event=public.home) website. Any changes to grant documentation are published and addenda[[15]](#footnote-16) will be published on GrantConnect. By registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

You may submit more than one application form – for instance for separate grant activities or for an alternative consortium seeking funding for alternative grant activities. A separate application form must be submitted for each proposed project. If more than one application is submitted for the same project proposal the latest accepted application form will progress.

To apply you must:

* complete the online application form on the [GrantConnect](https://www.grants.gov.au/) website
* provide all the information requested
* address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
* include all necessary attachments
* submit your application(s) to the Community Grants Hub by 9:00 pm AEDT on 9 January 2023.

We will not provide application forms or accept applications for this grant opportunity by fax or mail.

The application form includes help information. You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you need more help about the application process, submitting an application online, have any technical difficulties or find an error in your application after submission, but before the closing date and time, you should contact the Community Grants Hub immediately on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub does not have to accept any additional information, or requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

We reserve the right at any point in the process to request additional information from you, however we are not obliged to do so.

If we find an error or something missing, we may ask you for clarification or additional information.

This will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your application after the closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

You will receive an automated notification acknowledging the receipt of your application.

### Attachments to the application

All of the following documents **must** be attached to your application for it to be considered compliant and for it to proceed to assessment. Templates are provided for your use with the grant opportunity documents as specified.

* Proposed project budget – **mandatory template provided**:
* Include information about the cost of each of the proposed project activities and the overall project.
* Trust deed and any subsequent variations, if applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust.
* A letter of support signed by each of the consortia partners (required for joint (consortia) applicants only – refer to section 7.2 for details) – **optional template provided**.

Your application will be considered non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment if the required attachments are not provided and/or mandatory templates are not used.

You must attach supporting documentation according to the instructions provided within the application form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments we have not asked for.

**Please note:** There is a 2MB limit for each attachment.

### Joint (Consortia) applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a grant activity or project.

In these circumstances, you must appoint a ‘lead organisation’. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The lead organisation must also be an eligible entity type as outlined in section 4.1. The application must identify all other members of the consortium and include a letter of support from each of the partner organisations. You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the agreement.

Organisations included on the [National Redress Scheme’s](https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/) website on the list of ‘Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme’ will not be eligible to be members of a consortium arrangement.

International entities cannot be the lead organisation, however they can be part of the consortium.

Each letter of support from consortia partners (as required in section 7.1) should include:

* details of the partner organisation
* an overview of how the partner organisation will work with the lead organisation and any other partner organisations in the group to successfully complete the grant activity
* an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the partner organisation will bring to the group
* the roles/responsibilities of the partner organisation and the resources (co-contributions) they will contribute (if any)
* details of a nominated management level contact officer.

The maximum grant amount remains $3 million for applications from consortia.

### Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates.

**Late applications**

We will not accept late applications under any circumstances.

**Expected timing for this grant opportunity**

If you are successful, you will be expected to start your project around June 2023.

**Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity**

| **Activity** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- |
| Assessment of applications | Within 8 weeks from the closing date |
| Approval of outcomes of selection process | Within 12 weeks from the closing date |
| Notification to unsuccessful applicants | Within 20 weeks from the closing date |
| Negotiations and award of grant agreements | Within 20 weeks from the closing date |
| Earliest start date of grant activity | June 2023 |
| Latest end date of grant activity | June 2025 |

### Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact the Community Grants Hub on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within 5 working days. Answers to questions will be posted on the GrantConnect website.

The question period will close at 5:00 pm AEDT on 22 December 2022. Following this time, only questions about using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

## The grant selection process

### Assessment of grant applications

Applications will be assessed based on the eligibility and assessment criteria as set out in these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

We will assess all applications for eligibility and compliance against the requirements of the application process. Eligible applications will then be considered through an open competitive grant process.

### Who will assess and select applications?

The department will conduct a general check of your application for compliance against these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

Assessors appointed by the department will then undertake a preliminary assessment against the selection criteria. The preliminary assessment will provide an initial ranking of applications to inform the deliberations of the Selection Advisory Panel (SAP). Any assessor, who is not a Commonwealth official, will be required/expected to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

The SAP will be established by the department, to be chaired by a Senior Responsible Officer from the department and may include a mix of employees of the department, experts from the sector, and other Commonwealth officers with relevant specialist expertise.

Any expert/advisor who is not a Commonwealth official will be required/expected to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs. Any potential conflicts of interest by any member involved in the assessment or SAP processes must be declared, and members will either be excluded from the process, or managed in accordance with appropriate probity guidance.

The department will provide secretariat support to the SAP.

The SAP will assess each shortlisted application on its merit and compare it to other eligible applications before recommending which grant applications should be awarded a grant.

The SAP will assess whether the application represents value with money and will make final recommendations to the decision maker by taking into account the following factors:

* the initial preliminary score against the assessment criteria
* the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
* whether the proposed project is in scope
* alignment with both the FDF’s Funding Plan and the program’s objectives and outcomes
* the relative value of the grant sought
* the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives of the program
* how the grant activities will target groups or individuals
* the risks, financial, fraud and other, that the applicant or project poses for the department
* the risks that the applicant or project poses for the Commonwealth.

The SAP may seek additional information about you or your application to assist in making its final recommendations. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if the sources are not nominated by you as referees. The SAP may also consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

The SAP recommends to the Drought Minister which applications to approve for a grant.

The Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) Board must also provide advice to the Drought Minister about whether an arrangement under the FDF Act should be made. This advice considers whether the entering into the grant is consistent with the Drought Resilience Funding Plan. The RIC Board has in place mechanisms to manage conflicts of interest.

### Who will approve grants?

The Drought Minister, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, (or delegate) decides which grants to approve considering the recommendations of the SAP, any further information that may become known, the advice of the RIC Board and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

The Drought Minister (or delegate)’s decision is final in all matters, including:

* the approval of the grant
* the grant funding amount to be awarded
* the terms and conditions of the grants.

There is no provision in the FDF Act for review by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal of decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

## Notification of application outcomes

We will write to you about the outcome of your application. If you are successful, you are advised of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

You can submit a new application for the same grant (or a similar grant) in any future grant opportunities under the program. You should include new or more information to address any weaknesses that may have prevented your previous application from being successful.

### Feedback on your application

A feedback summary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website to provide all organisations with easy access to information about the grant selection process and the main strengths and areas for improving applications.

Individual feedback will be available. Applicants seeking individual feedback should submit requests to DroughtResilience@agriculture.gov.au. Requests for individual feedback will only be accepted within 20 business days of receipt of the outcome of your application. We will provide feedback within 30 business days of receipt of the request.

## Successful grant applications

### The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We will offer successful applicants a Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement for this grant opportunity.

Each agreement has standard grant conditions that cannot be changed. Sample grant agreements are available on the [GrantConnect](https://www.grants.gov.au/) website as part of the grant documentation. We will use an Activity Work Plan (AWP) to outline the specific grant requirements.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed.

Your grant agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the decision maker. These are identified in the grant agreement

Sub-contractors may be engaged under your grant agreement, provided you have obtained the written agreement of the department and you maintain responsibility for delivery of the grant.

We may manage the grant agreement through our Grant Recipient Portal. Accepting the agreement through the Grant Recipient Portal is the equivalent of signing a grant agreement. After you have accepted it, we will execute the agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have entered into the grant agreement. We will notify you when this happens and a copy of the executed agreement will be available through the portal. The agreement will not become binding until it is executed.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement or if you choose to terminate the agreement prior to project completion.

**Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement**

We will use a Commonwealth Standard grant agreement.

You will have 20 business days from the date of a written offer to sign and return the grant agreement. The grant agreement is not considered to be executed until both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application.

The department will negotiate the AWP with you following execution of the grant agreement.

### Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, you may be requested to demonstrate compliance with the following legislation and policies:

* [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf), paragraph 2.9 refers to third parties who undertake grants administration on behalf of the Australian Government
* [FDF Act](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00073), successful grantee/s will be engaged to deliver the project in accordance with terms and conditions outlined in a grant agreement agreed to by the Drought Minister, or their delegate under section 21 of the Act.
* [*Future Drought Fund (Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 to 2024) Determination 2020*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2020L00117)
* [*Privacy Act 1988*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2022C00199)
* [*Corporations Act 2001*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2022C00306)
* [*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00269).

### Multicultural access and equity

The Australian Government’s Multicultural Access and Equity Policyobliges Australian Government agencies to ensure their policies, programs and services – including those provided by contractors and service delivery partners – are accessible to, and deliver equitable outcomes for, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Grant applicants should consider how they will ensure their services will be accessible to people from CALD backgrounds. For example, service delivery partners may require cultural competency skills. In addition, services, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with clients who have limited English proficiency. Based on an assessment of the client target group, costs for translating and interpreting services should be factored into grant applications (to assist with identifying these costs, see the Translating and Interpreting Services costing tool in the grant opportunity documents).

### How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

* maximum grant amount to be paid
* proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
* co-contributions you will make
* co-contributions provided by a third party.

Any additional expenditure incurred by you above the approved amount specified in the grant agreement, or as otherwise varied by us, is your responsibility. The Commonwealth will not reimburse for such costs under any circumstances.

You are responsible for all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds. We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the grant activities and paid on acceptance by the department.

The first payment will be made within 30 days of the department accepting the first milestone.

### Grant payments and GST

Payments will be GST inclusive unless the recipients are GST exempt. If you are registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable, we will add GST to your grant payment and issue you with a [Recipient Created Tax Invoice](https://www.ato.gov.au/Forms/Recipient-created-tax-invoices/).

If a government related entity is deemed successful, GST will not apply. Universities (except the Australian National University) are not a government related entity as outlined by the Australian Taxation Office, and we will add GST to your grant payment if successful.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](http://www.ato.gov.au). We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

## Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on:

* the department’s website as soon as practicable as required by section 27A of the FDF Act
* the [GrantConnect](https://www.grants.gov.au/) website within or no later than 21 calendar days after the execution of the grant agreement as required by section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](https://finance.govcms.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf).

## How we monitor your grant activity

### Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activities or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due because of these changes.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

* name
* addresses
* nominated contact details
* bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately.

You also must notify the department of:

* events relating to your grant and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend
* any approaches by the media for comment on program related topics/issues within one business day of the approach
* the publication of research findings relevant to the program at least 10 business days prior to their release
* any proposed political engagement within 15 business days of the proposed engagement.

The grant agreement will include other specific media and communication requirements of the FDF.

### Reporting

You must have systems in place to meet your data and information collection and reporting obligations outlined in the grant agreement. You must submit reportsin line with the grant agreement, including progress and final reportsin line with the timeframes in the grant agreement. We will provide sample templates for these reports with the grant agreement.

We will expect you to report on:

* project activities described in your application
* progress against agreed project milestones and outcomes
* evidence of change (positive or negative) against the intended outcomes
* cash and in-kind co-contributions of participants directly related to the project
* eligible expenditure of grant funds.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor progress by assessing reports you submit. Occasionally, we may need to re‑examine claims, seek further information, or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

**Activity Work Plan**

If your grant application is successful, you will need to enter into a grant agreement and then submit a detailed Activity Work Plan (AWP). A template for your AWP will be provided with your Grant Agreement. Your AWP would include the specific grant requirements such as your budget, any partner co-contributions, deliverables, milestones and outputs and indicators of performance for the funded project. The AWP also documents risk management and community engagement relevant to the funded project.

Successful applicants’ progress and outcomes against the AWP will be monitored throughout the grant through regular reports.

**Progress reports**

At 6-monthly intervals through your project you will be required to submit a progress report (on a template that will be provided). The progress report must:

* include evidence of your progress toward completion of agreed activities and outcomes
* show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
* include evidence of expenditure
* be submitted on the template supplied and by the report due date in the grant agreement (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant activities).

You must tell us of any reporting delays as soon as you become aware of them.

**Ad-hoc reports**

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your grant. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the grant activities.

**Final report**

When you complete the grant activity, you must submit a final report by the due date in the grant agreement and on the template provided to successful grantees.

Final reports must:

* identify if and how outcomes have been achieved
* include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement and the Activity Work Plan
* identify the total eligible expenditure incurred
* be submitted on the template provided and by the due date.

### Audited financial acquittal report

We will ask you to provide a financial declaration at the end of the first 12 months, and an independently audited financial acquittal report at the end of the grant. A financial acquittal report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement, and met your committed in-kind contributions.

We may ask that your project partners and any subcontractors provide a financial declaration or an independently audited financial acquittal report to demonstrate that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and that they met their committed in-kind contributions.

The financial acquittal report template will be provided by the department.

### Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement by contacting your Funding Arrangement Manager in the Community Grants Hub. You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

### Compliance visits

We may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

### Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

We may contact you up to 2 years after you finish your grant for more information.

### Evaluation

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) for the program will be undertaken to see how the outcomes and progress toward objectives of the grant have been achieved, and how they contribute toward the overall program objectives.

The grant agreement will set out the MEL requirements of the grantee. Grantees will be required to develop a MEL plan for the grant and to undertake MEL activities, including the monitoring of progress toward outcomes. Where possible, grantees will be expected to incorporate the learning from their MEL activities into program implementation, throughout the duration of the grant. The MEL plan will outline any requirements of the grantee to contribute towards evaluations of the program, and of the FDF. Relevant MEL activities take place at 3 levels:

* MEL activities in your project, which is primarily your responsibility
* MEL reporting and evaluation of the program, to be undertaken by the department
* MEL reporting and evaluation of the FDF and Drought Resilience Funding Plan, to be undertaken by the department and the Productivity Commission.

Evaluations will be guided by the [FDF MEL framework](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/mel-framework.pdf) and the key evaluation questions identified within the framework, and by any relevant program-specific evaluation questions identified in the program MEL plan.

The department will assess information provided through MEL reporting. We may use information from your application and MEL and other reports for program- and FDF-level MEL and reporting purposes. We may also interview you and the project participants or ask you for more information to help us understand the impact of the grants and how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes. We may contact you up to one year after you finish your grant for more information to assist with this evaluation.

### Acknowledgement

The FDF logo should be used on all materials related to grants under the program. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the Commonwealth by saying:

‘Future Drought Fund – an Australian Government initiative’.

If you make a public statement about the project activities funded under the program, we require you to acknowledge the grant by using one of the following:

* ‘This project received funding from the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund’
* ‘This project is supported by [project providers name], through funding from the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund’.

If there has been more than one funding body, the following statement should be used:

* ‘This project is supported by [project providers name], through funding from the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund and [other funding bodies name].’

If the project participant has also provided funding, the following wording should be used:

* ‘This project is jointly funded through the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund and the [organisation name].’

The department will provide co-branding and acknowledgement guidelines to successful applicants.

## Probity

The Australian Government will make sure the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

These guidelines may be changed by the department. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on the [GrantConnect](http://www.grants.gov.au/) website.

### Enquiries and feedback

**Complaints about this grant opportunity**

The department’s [complaints procedures](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/contact/client-feedback/form) apply to complaints about this grant opportunity. All complaints about this grant opportunity, including grant decisions, must be made in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to DroughtResilience@agriculture.gov.au.

**Complaints about the selection process**

Applicants can contact the complaints service with complaints about the Community Grants Hub’s service/s or the selection process.

Details of what makes an eligible complaint can be provided by asking the Community Grants Hub. Applicants can use the [online complaints form](https://www.dss.gov.au/contact/feedback-compliments-complaints-and-enquiries/feedback-form) on the [Department of Social Services](https://www.dss.gov.au/contact/feedback-compliments-complaints-and-enquiries/complaints-page) website, or contact the Department of Social Services complaints line.

Phone: 1800 634 035

Email: complaints@dss.gov.au

Mail: Complaints

 GPO Box 9820

 Canberra ACT 2601

**Complaints to the Ombudsman**

If you do not agree with the way the Community Grants Hub or the department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually investigate a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Community Grants Hub or the department.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: [www.ombudsman](http://www.ombudsman).gov.au

### Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the department and the Community Grants Hub staff or contractors, any assessors, member of a committee/panel/board or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has a:

* professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of the SAP
* relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
* relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interest or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the department and the Community Grants Hub in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct (section 13(7))](http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/cth/consol_act/psa1999152/s13.html) of the [*Public Service Act 1999*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00538). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the [Community Grants Hub website](https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/conflict-intrest-policy).

### Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [*Privacy Act 1988*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2022C00199)and the[Australian Privacy Principles](https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy-law/privacy-act/australian-privacy-principles). This includes letting you know:

* what personal information we collect
* why we collect your personal information
* who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and give out information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the Privacy Act and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the department would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Privacy Act.

### Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to give out to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the 3 conditions below:

1. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential.
2. The information is commercially sensitive.
3. Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

* Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
* employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
* employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
* other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
* Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs in program reports and consultations
* the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
* the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary
* a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### Freedom of information

All documents that the Australian Government has, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [*Freedom of Information Act 1982*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02562) (FOI Act)*.*

The purpose of the FOI Act gives people the ability to get information held by the Australian Government and its organisations. Under the FOI Act, people can ask for documents the Australian Government has. People may not be able to get these documents if these documents need to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons who the information relates to.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Team
Government and Executive Services Branch
Department of Social Services
GPO Box 9820
Canberra ACT 2601

By email: foi@dss.gov.au

## Glossary

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| accountable authority | see subsection 12(2) of the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00269) (PGPA Act). |
| administering entity | when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes. |
| adopted at large scale | a large number of farmers adopting farming practices to support improved drought resilience. |
| assessment criteria | are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings. |
| cash contributions | is the actual money that an individual, group or organisation provides to the project. Cash contributions should be recorded as entries into a bank account. This needs to be included as part of the project budget. |
| commencement date | the expected start date for the grant activity. |
| Commonwealth entity | a department of state, or a parliamentary department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act. |
| [*Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*](https://finance.govcms.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf) (CGRGs) | establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration. |
| completion date | the expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by. |
| co-sponsoring entity | when 2 or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it. |
| date of effect | can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable. |
| decision maker | the person who makes a decision to award a grant. |
| drought resilience | is the ability to adapt, reorganise or transform in response to changing temperatures and increasing variability and scarcity of rainfall, for improved economic, environmental and social wellbeing ([Future Drought Fund (Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 to 2024)](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2020L00117)) |
| eligibility criteria | refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria. |
| Funding Arrangement Manager | is the officer responsible for the ongoing management of the grantee and their compliance with the grant agreement. |
| grant | for the purposes of the CGRGs, a ‘grant’ is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:* 1. under which relevant money[[16]](#footnote-17) or other [Consolidated Revenue Fund](https://www.finance.gov.au/about-us/glossary/pgpa/term-consolidated-revenue-fund-crf) (CRF) money[[17]](#footnote-18) is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth
	2. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government’s policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
 |
| grant activity/activities | refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake. |
| grant agreement | sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant. |
| grant opportunity | refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process. |
| grant program | a ‘program’ carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio Budget Statement program. |
| GrantConnect | is the Australian Government’s whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs. |
| grantee | the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant. |
| in-kind contributions  | are goods, services, equipment loans or labour that others provide to the project. An in-kind contribution may include, for example, contributed ‘time’ for a project manager, availability of office space, trial land, equipment that would otherwise need to be hired. Applicants should substantiate the value of the in-kind contributions based on reasonable market value of the resources brought to the project. This will need to be included as part of the project budget. Additional information is provided in Appendix A. |
| National Redress legislation | means the [*National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021C00567). |
| Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) program | described within the entity’s [Portfolio Budget Statement](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/reporting/budget), PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be grant programs. A PBS program may have more than one grant program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities. |
| proven and existing  | reasonably mature practices or technologies, rather than basic research and early-stage innovation. |
| public good benefits  | the benefits of the project that are not captured by a particular business, individual or other entity. Public good benefits can include contribution to economic and productivity and profitability growth, improvements to the environment that are valued by the community and government, and increased social connection and resilience in regional communities. Projects can involve private benefits, but private benefits should be more than offset by public benefits and/or co-contributions from non-government sources. |
| Selection Advisory Panel | provides strategic oversight, advice and recommendations to the decision maker on assessed applications from the program specific, service provider composition and service location perspectives. |
| selection criteria | comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria. |
| selection process | the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria. |
| value for money | refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to the:* quality of the project proposal and activities
* fit for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives
* absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved
* potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.
 |

Appendix A. In-kind contributions

In-kind contributions are non-cash contributions. These can include labour contributions and facilities, equipment and services provided by project partners to the project. For in-kind contributions to count towards your total eligible grant project value, they must directly relate to eligible activities.

We will ask you to provide an independently audited financial acquittal report at the end of the grant. A financial acquittal report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement, and met your committed in-kind contributions. This requirement may also be extended to your project partners and any subcontractors (see section 12.3). In addition, and as required under section 10 of the Standard Grant Conditions, we will ask you to provide a financial declaration at the end of the first 12 months of the project.

In-kind contributions may include:

* Salaries and on-costs for Australian personnel directly employed for the project activities. Australian Government funds awarded (or contracted) to providers employed by partners, or to the partners themselves, for specific projects cannot be claimed as eligible expenditure. Labour calculations must reflect peoples’ salary packages, and the proportion of paid time spent on the project.
* Facilities, equipment and services provided by a partner to the project from its own resources. We do not prescribe a specific formula to determine the value of these contributions. You need to determine the value of these contributions. They must be realistic, justifiable and valued proportionally to their use on the project. For example, you should calculate the in-kind contribution of a capital item by the running costs and the depreciation of the item.

Examples of in-kind contributions include:

* If a resource has an annual depreciation value of $100,000 and the project was using 10% of the resource’s capacity, then the resource could be valued at $10,000 per year.
* If the fee for usage was $500 per use and the project was receiving 100 usages per year at no cost, the value of the resource could be valued at $50,000 per year.
* If your project receives office space as an in-kind contribution from a partner, you should value the contribution at the amount it would otherwise cost to rent equivalent office space.
1. Outcome 3: More sustainable, productive, internationally competitive and profitable Australian agricultural, food and fibre industries through policies and initiatives that promote better resource management practices, innovation, self-reliance and improved access to international markets. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Company is a company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth). Industry owned Rural Research and Development Corporation companies must partner or enter into a consortium with an on-farm entity/ies, see section 4.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. A Corporate Commonwealth Entity must partner or enter into a consortium with an on-farm entity/ies, see section 4.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. A Non-Corporate Commonwealth Statutory Authority must partner or enter into a consortium with an on-farm entity/ies, see section 4.2 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Local Government Entity is an entity established under state or territory local government legislation, for the purposes of governing local areas within state or territory. In the states, they are generally referred to as local councils. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Unincorporated associations may not be able to enter into the grant agreement, where successful an agreement can be made with either a legal parent organisation/Auspice organisation with the capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement on behalf of the unincorporated association, or a person representing the unincorporated association, who is legally responsible and liable for the Agreement. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Trusts are not legal entities in their own right – to be eligible, only the Trustee for the Trust can apply by providing the signed Trust Deed and any subsequent variations with the application form. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The Australian Government recognises that some organisations may seek to form consortia in order to apply for a grant under the program. Consortia are eligible to apply and the relevant conditions applicable to consortia are in section 7.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. The decision maker can choose to waive this eligibility criteria, particularly should such corporate structures be in place for the purposes of facilitating the delivery of end-user focussed agricultural or natural resource management services. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. A person is a natural person, an individual, a human being. Given the program’s objectives and focus, individuals, including Persons, will not be eligible to lead but can be part of a consortium. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Given the program’s objectives and focus, individuals, including sole traders, will not be eligible to lead but can be part of a consortium. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. International entities cannot apply for this grant directly, they can however take part through a consortia with an eligible organisation as the lead as listed in in section 4.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. use of trees and shrubs on farm to improve productivity and profitability, protect soils, improve water management, enhance biodiversity, sequester carbon and contribute to a range of other ecosystem services on and beyond farms. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Public good benefits are the benefits of the project that are not captured by a particular business, individual or other entity. Public good benefits can include contribution to economic and productivity and profitability growth, improvements to the environment that are valued by the community and government, and increased social connection and resilience in regional communities. The public good would not be enhanced by measures that solely benefit individual farm entities.

The explanatory memorandum of the Future Drought Fund Act gives examples of public good as follows:

The public good may be enhanced by reducing soil erosion and sediment run-off from the property. This would conserve soils, increase soil moisture and mitigate the effects of flooding, which in turn would increase drought resilience and enhance farm productivity and profitability. It would also contribute to the public good by arresting and reversing land degradation, improving animal welfare and improving biodiversity outcomes. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Addenda can include changes to existing grant opportunity documentation and/or publishing additional documents. Changes include but are not limited to corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications and system outage notices. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)