

# Rural Research and Development (R&D) for Profit Program Guidelines

Opening date: **10 August 2018**

Closing date and time: **2.00pm on 5 November 2018**

Commonwealth policy entity: **Department of Agriculture and Water Resources**

Enquiries: If you have any questions, please contact **Rural R&D for Profit Program, 02 6272 5603 or [ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au)**

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Type of grant opportunity: **Restricted competitive**

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# 1. Rural R&D for Profit program grants processes

## **The Rural R&D for Profit program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives**

This grant opportunity is part of the Rural R&D for Profit program which contributes to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources' (the department) Outcome 1:

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.

The department works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*.



## **The grant opportunity opens**

The department publishes the grant guidelines and advertise on the [GrantConnect](#) website.



## **You complete and submit a grant application**



## **The department assesses all grant applications**

The department assesses all applications against eligibility criteria. An Expert Assessment Panel then assesses the grant applications against assessment criteria. Key considerations include the merits of the application compared to the grant guidelines, how the application compares to other applications, and an overall consideration of value for money.



## **The department makes grant recommendations**

The department provides advice to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources on the merits of each application.



## **Grant decisions are made**

The minister decides which grant applications are successful.



**The department notifies you of the outcome**

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



**Successful applicants and the department enter into a grant agreement**

The department will negotiate and enter into standard grant agreements with successful applicants.



**Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. The department and the Community Grants Hub where relevant, actively manages the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



**Evaluation of the grant and the Rural R&D for Profit program**

The department evaluates the specific grant activity and program as a whole. The department bases this on information you provide to us and that the department collects from various sources.

## 2. About the Rural R&D for Profit program

The Rural R&D for Profit Program (the program) is a competitive grants program providing grants to rural research and development corporations (RDCs) for collaborative research which enhances farm-gate profitability and supports the continued innovation of Australia's primary industries.

The program began in 2014-2015 as a four year program with funding of \$100 million. As part of the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper the Government committed to expand the program. The total program value is \$180.5 million over eight years. The program will conclude on 30 June 2022.

The program funds research which focuses on delivering cutting edge technologies and making research accessible for primary producers, and aims to strengthen coordination and cooperation between partners.

Australia's primary industries have a strong tradition of innovation and adapting to change. Today, our agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors face a number of national and global challenges including rising input costs, growing world food demand, the threat of pests and diseases and climate variability. Recent studies also suggest the growth rate of productivity in Australian agriculture has slowed. The Australian Government is responding to this with additional investment in nationally coordinated, strategic research that delivers real outcomes for primary producers.

Evidence shows that research and development (R&D) makes a significant contribution to growth in agricultural productivity. Since the 1930s, the Australian Government and industry have jointly invested in research for the benefit of industry and the community, most recently through the RDCs. The government also works with the state and territory governments, universities and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) through the National Primary Industries Research Development and Extension (RD&E) Framework to encourage greater collaboration and coordination in the investment of RD&E resources nationally. The government currently provides funding of approximately \$250 million per year to the RDCs to match the funding provided through industry R&D levies.

The program is administered by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (the department) and the Community Grants Hub on behalf of the department under a Whole of Australian Government initiative to streamline grant processes across agencies.

The program will be undertaken according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#).

Under the program, grants are available to the RDCs, as established national R&D funding bodies, to provide national industry benefits as well as benefits to the wider community. The *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Act 1997* and the *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997* provide legislative authority for expenditure under this program.

For the purposes of the program, 'primary producers' and 'primary industries' refer respectively to producers and industries in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors.

## 2.1 Objective of the program

The objective of the program is to realise significant productivity and profitability improvements for primary producers, through

- a) generating knowledge, technologies, products or processes that benefit primary producers
- b) strengthening pathways to extend the results of rural R&D, including understanding the barriers to adoption
- c) establishing and fostering industry and research collaborations that form the basis for ongoing innovation and growth of Australian agriculture.

The expected outcomes of the program are

- a) realisation of productivity and profitability improvements for primary producers
- b) seamless extension of the results of rural R&D
- c) industry and research collaborations form the basis for the ongoing innovation and growth of Australian agriculture.

## 2.2 About grant opportunities under the Rural R&D for Profit program

These guidelines contain information for the fourth and subsequent grant opportunity rounds under the Rural R&D for Profit program.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

You must read this document before filling out an application.

The opening and closing dates for each round and other key dates will be publicised on [GrantConnect](#).

This is a co-investment program – the applicant and/or partner organisation(s) must provide cash contributions to each project. In-kind contributions will also be accepted.

The requested Commonwealth grant must not exceed 50 per cent of the total project cost (grant, cash and in-kind contributions). Where in-kind contributions are used, they must be specified and justified within the context of the proposed project.

Projects may run over multiple years, and the department may release guidance on Australian Government preferences for project funding profiles for each round on the department's website and [GrantConnect](#). Projects will not be funded beyond 30 June 2022.

Adoption of research outputs is key to the success of the program. Applicants must consider how primary producers will use the outcomes and must build pathways to adoption or benefit into projects.

See Section 8 of these guidelines for information about how applications are assessed.

## 2.3 Program priorities

Through the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, the Australian Government developed a set of clear, farmer-oriented priorities to target rural RD&E funding.

Applications must address one or more of the following program priorities:

1. **Advanced technology**, to enhance innovation of products, processes and practices across the food and fibre supply chains through technologies such as robotics, digitisation, big data, genetics and precision agriculture.

For example, RD&E relating to sensors, GPS technology, drones, soil data and information accessibility and interoperability across government and industry sectors, data utilisation, software tools or autonomous systems.

By applying advanced technology, including technologies from other industries, the project should help primary producers increase yields, reduce costs, manage risks, benchmark performance and/or exploit opportunities in the supply chain or markets to increase returns.

2. **Biosecurity**, to improve understanding and evidence of pest and disease pathways to help direct biosecurity resources to their best uses, minimising biosecurity threats and improving market access for primary producers.

For example, RD&E relating to surveillance systems, diagnostics, pre- and post-harvest controls, disinfestation treatments, data management and interpretation or sterile insect technology.

By improving biosecurity measures the project should help primary producers reduce costs, increase productivity and competitiveness, and help industries manage risks or gain, maintain or regain market access.

3. **Soil, water and managing natural resources** to manage soil health, improve water use efficiency and certainty of supply, sustainably develop new production areas and improve resilience to climate events and impacts.

For example, RD&E relating to integrated management practices at a farm or regional level, including understanding of plant and soil microbiome processes that underpin regenerative farming practices, nutrient use efficiency, managing soil and water efficiency and constraints, managing soil carbon, or weed and/or pest animal management.

The project should help producers improve soil, water and natural resource management practices for productivity, long-term use and profit, and improved environmental outcomes.

4. **Adoption of R&D**, focusing on flexible delivery of extension services that meet primary producers' needs and recognising the growing role of private service delivery.

For example, RD&E that strengthens the on farm adoption of research outcomes through activities such as:

- consolidating knowledge of extension and adoption, identifying barriers to extension and developing methods to improve extension services

- identifying ways to stimulate private sector extension, particularly to fill current gaps in extension services
- identifying ways to coordinate extension services for producers, including by developing tools and/or platforms.

Projects that address the adoption priority must also outline research activities into extension and adoption. Simply providing an extension plan for project outcomes does not automatically mean that the project is addressing the adoption priority.

This priority is not intended to replace existing state or privately provided extension services.

### 3. Grant amount

The Australian Government has allocated a total of up to \$180.5 million over eight years to 30 June 2022 for the Rural R&D for Profit program. Grant funding of almost \$114.7 million has been awarded to date for 36 projects.

### 4. Grant eligibility criteria

The department cannot consider your application if it does not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

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

Only the 15 rural RDCs are eligible to apply for funding under the program. The RDCs are:

- Australian Eggs Limited
- Australian Livestock Export Corporation Limited (LiveCorp)
- Australian Meat Processor Corporation Limited
- Australian Pork Limited
- Australian Wool Innovation Limited
- Cotton Research and Development Corporation
- Dairy Australia Limited
- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
- Forest and Wood Products Australia
- Grains Research and Development Corporation
- Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (Hort Innovation)
- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (AgriFutures Australia)

- Sugar Research Australia Limited
- Wine Australia.

RDCs must partner with one or more researchers, research agencies, RDCs, funding bodies, businesses, producer groups or not-for-profit organisations. Partners may be international organisations; however grant funding must expect to achieve demonstrable benefits for Australian primary industries. Project partners will be treated as subcontractors for the purposes of the grant agreement.

Where two or more RDCs seek a grant as a consortium, one RDC member of the consortium must be appointed as the applicant. The applicant will submit the application and be the legal entity that, if successful, enters into a grant agreement with the department.

## 4.2 Eligible applications

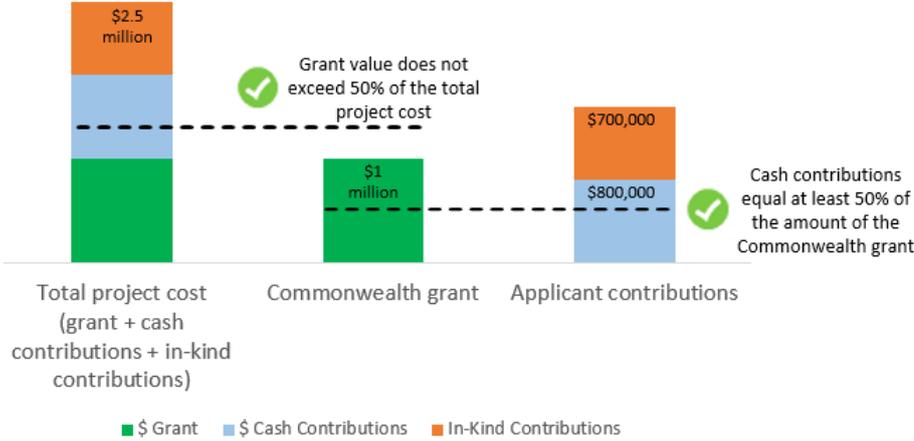
To be eligible, a project application must meet each of the requirements below.

- Requirement 1. Program priorities: the application and the research and development to be undertaken in the project must address one or more of the program priorities set out in clause 2.3 of these guidelines.
- Requirement 2. Partnership: the applicant must partner with one or more researchers, research agencies, RDCs, funding bodies, businesses, producer groups or not-for-profit organisations.
- Requirement 3. Co-investment: the applicant and partner organisations must contribute to the project as follows:
- a) The requested Commonwealth grant must not exceed 50 per cent of the total project cost (grant, cash and in-kind contribution).
  - b) The applicant and/or partners must contribute cash to the project. The cash contributions must be equal to at least 50 per cent of the amount of the Commonwealth grant (see examples below).
  - c) In-kind contributions will be accepted subject to compliance with eligibility criteria 3.a and 3.b above. In-kind costs must be specified and justified within the context of the project.
  - d) Commonwealth funding under other programs can't be considered as part of co-investment contributions.

*Example 1:* The applicant RDC is seeking to undertake a \$2.5 million research project. The applicant RDC plans to fund this research through:

- a \$1 million Commonwealth grant
- \$800,000 in cash contributions from the applicant RDC and its research partners
- \$700,000 of in-kind contributions from the applicant RDC and its project partners.

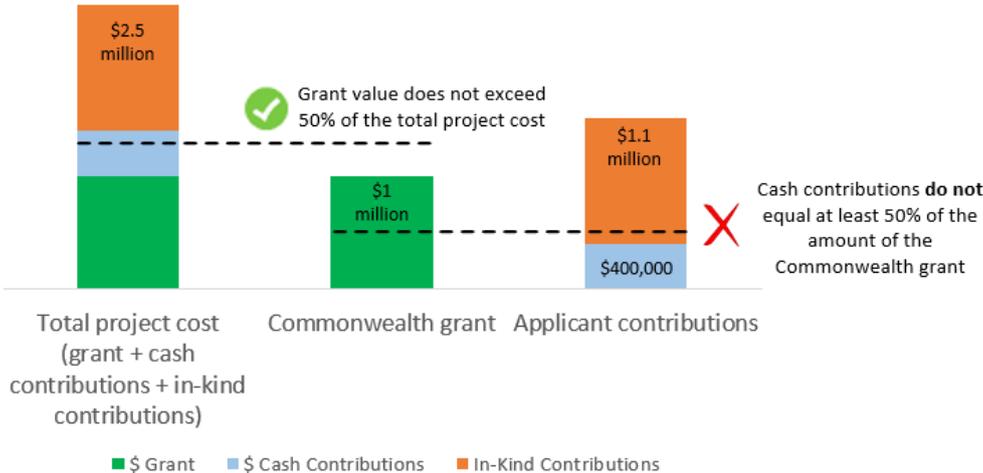
Co-investment arrangements meet eligibility requirements as the grant does not exceed 50 per cent of total project costs and cash contributions are greater than 50 per cent of the grant.



*Example 2:* The applicant RDC is seeking to undertake a \$2.5 million research project. The applicant RDC plans to fund this research through:

- a \$1 million Commonwealth grant (does not exceed 50% of total project costs)
- \$400,000 in cash contributions from the applicant RDC and its research partners
- \$1.1 million of in-kind contributions from the applicant RDC and its project partners.

Co-investment arrangements do not meet eligibility requirements as the cash contributions (\$400,000) are not equal to or greater than 50 per cent of the \$1 million Commonwealth grant.



### 4.3 Ineligible applications

Projects that duplicate or replicate activities that have previously received funding from the Commonwealth or from another source (e.g. a state or local government or private sector program) will not be funded under the program.

## 5. Eligible grant activities

### 5.1 What can the grant money be used for?

The grant can only be used for costs that are directly incurred in carrying out or administering the project. These include (but are not limited to):

- Costs of laboratory and/or field analyses, including non-capital equipment and costs of running equipment.
- Data analysis.
- Field work costs.
- Travel where it is directly related to carrying out the project.
- Development of communications material as required to make project information available.
- Work to implement the results of research, which may include:
  - Publication of research and promotion of the research (such as at conferences or trade shows).
  - Further research to turn the results of research from an idea into a workable product or service, eg. producing a commercial prototype.
  - Further research on how a product might need to be modified so that it can be rolled out on a commercial scale.

You can only spend grant funds on eligible grant activities as defined in the grant details in your grant agreement.

### 5.2 What can't the grant money be used for?

Costs incurred that are not directly related to carrying out or administering the project are ineligible for funding. These include (but are not limited to):

- Preparation of application materials.
- Protecting or patenting intellectual property.
- Activities of a distinctly commercial or proprietary nature that are aimed at selling or attracting investment.
- Creation of new institutions.
- Establishing new commercial ventures.
- Core business expenses not directly related to carrying out the project, including administrative, overhead and infrastructure costs, staff salaries and relocation costs, living allowances, and travel.
- Financial support for feasibility studies.
- Hospitality or catering beyond costs for providing refreshments at project workshops or field days.

- Purchasing of infrastructure, major equipment or activities that could be considered part of normal business or ongoing operations, unless integral to delivery of the project.

## 5.3 Funding 'phase two' Rural R&D for Profit projects

In order to build on the success of projects funded under previous rounds of the program, applications to fund a second phase of previously funded projects will be considered.

This may include further research and/or work to implement the results of projects funded under previous rounds. An application for a phase two project must demonstrate how the research and/or implementation activities will directly apply the outcomes of the earlier project and describe the pathway to make those outcomes available to primary producers. This could include commercialising products developed through previously funded projects.

Applications for 'phase two' projects must address all eligibility and assessment criteria and will be considered as part of the competitive assessment process alongside other applications for funding under the program.

## 5.4 Budget

Applications must include a project budget, using the template provided through the application form.

Applicants should consider all aspects of their project and ensure their applications include all relevant costs, as items not budgeted for in the original application will not be funded.

Applicants should also note that additional funds will not be available to meet costs that have increased after the application is submitted.

Successful applicants are required to have the necessary levels of insurance in place for their project.

The budget will also need to detail the value of any co-contributions (see Section 4.2).

It is anticipated that the first payment will be in the first half of the 2018-19 financial year.

## 6. The assessment criteria

Assessment criteria will be used to determine a project's relative ranking and suitability for funding and relevance to achieving the program objective. Applications that meet the assessment criteria to a high level are more likely to be funded.

You will need to address the following assessment criteria in your application. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. The application form includes word limits for each section of the form.

All assessment criteria will be weighted equally.

### Criterion 1: **Contribution to program objective**

In providing a response to this criterion applicants must outline how the project:

- aligns with the Rural R&D for Profit program objective.
- will deliver clear and measurable achievements against the selected priority or priorities.

### Criterion 2: **Scientific or technical basis**

In providing a response to this criterion applicants must outline:

- the demonstrated need for the project including how published literature relates to the proposed research, any assumptions, and the strengths and weaknesses of previous work
- the extent to which the project is new and innovative, takes into account existing research and addresses a research or knowledge gap
- how the project builds on or complements (and not duplicates) existing activities, particularly for projects undertaking a 'phase two' of previously funded projects
- roles and responsibilities of the project team and how their expertise will contribute to the delivery of the project.

### Criterion 3: **Benefits and path to impact**

In providing a response to this criterion applicants must outline:

- the expected productivity and profitability improvements for primary producers, including (if appropriate):
  - a quantified expected return on investment
  - whether and how the project will provide benefits for multiple industries.
- the plan for extending, communicating and sharing project outcomes, and the likelihood of adoption
- whether and/or how industry supports the project
- why the project would not be funded through the usual RDC funding model.

### Criterion 4: **Collaboration**

In providing a response to this criterion applicants must outline:

- how the project forms new collaborations, and/or sustain existing collaborations developed through previously or currently funded projects, which contribute to the ongoing innovation and growth of Australian agriculture
- whether the project includes direct involvement of industry participants and/or primary producers.
- the plan for managing and coordinating collaborative arrangements, including the project's governance model.

### Criterion 5: **Risk and value for money (including proposed budget)**

In providing a response to this criterion applicants must outline:

- how the project outputs will be delivered on time and within budget (project management arrangements), including how partnerships will be managed
- project risks (using the template provided through the application form), including the level of risk and how risks will be managed and mitigated, in particular:
  - projects that rely on approvals (such as approval to import or release biocontrol agents) must factor in appropriate risk management strategies for these approvals
- project budget (using the template provided through the application form), including:
  - budget items that are eligible, reasonable and relevant to the project activities (taking into account the scale of the project and nature of proposed research)
  - the value and composition of the cash co-investment and/or in-kind contribution of applicants and project partners.

## 7. The grant application process

### 7.1 Overview of application process

You must read these grant guidelines and the application form before you submit an application.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information will exclude your application from further consideration.

You must address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant. Please complete each section of the application form and make sure you provide the information the department has requested. All requested attachments to the application form to be provided are listed at section 7.4.

Please keep a copy of your application and any supporting papers.

The department will acknowledge that your grant application has been received.

Applications must be received by the deadline for the grant opportunity published on the [GrantConnect](#) website.

The department may post Frequently Asked Questions on the application process on the [GrantConnect](#) website.

### 7.2 Application process timing

For each round of the program, key dates will be published on [GrantConnect](#). The key dates will indicate when:

- the program guidelines will be released
- applications will open
- applications will close

- the assessment period is expected to begin and end
- the outcome of the round is expected to be announced
- projects are expected to begin.

Project milestone and final payment dates will be defined in grant agreements with successful applicants.

Submit your application/s to the department via the online application form by the closing date indicated.

Late applications will not be accepted. If an application is late or a request is made to accept a late application the department may determine that there were exceptional circumstances beyond the applicant's control that meant they could not meet the deadline. Examples of exceptional circumstances could include, but may not be limited to:

- ICT failures associated with the application form
- natural disasters
- power outages affecting the ability of the applicant to submit their application by the deadline
- death or disability of key personnel.

The expected key dates for round four of the program are set out in Table 1 below. Final dates will be listed on [GrantConnect](#) and the department's website.

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

Activity	Timeframe
Application period (12 weeks)	Open: 10 August 2018 Close: 2.00 pm 5 November 2018
Assessment of applications	November 2018 – March 2019
Approval of outcomes of selection process	March 2019
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	April 2019
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	March 2019
Project commences	April 2019
Project end date	No later than 30 June 2022

## 7.3 Completing the grant application

You must submit your grant application on the application form, which can be downloaded at [GrantConnect](#). The application form includes help information.

This is an online application form that you must submit electronically. If you have any technical difficulties, please contact the department on **02 6272 5603** or **ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au**.

Application forms for this grant opportunity will not be accepted by fax or mail.

You must make sure that your application is complete and accurate and submitted in accordance with these Guidelines.

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

If you find a mistake in your application after it has been submitted, you should contact the department straight away on **02 6272 5603** or **ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au**.

The department may ask you for more information or clarification, as long as it does not change the substance of your application. The department does not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from applicants to correct applications after the closing time.

## 7.4 Attachments to the application

The following documents must be included with your application:

- a project budget using the template provided through the application form (mandatory) as this informs eligibility (refer to Section 4.2 and Section 5) and relevant to assessment of Criterion 5 under Section 6
- a risk assessment and risk management plan using the template provided through the application form (mandatory) and relevant to assessment of Criterion 5 under Section 6
- letters of support to demonstrate industry support for the project (optional) and relevant to Criterion 3 under Section 6).

Your supporting documentation should be attached to the application form. There will be instructions in the application form to help you. Only attach the documents you have been asked to include.

## 7.5 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period please contact **02 6272 5603** or email **ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au**. The department will endeavour to respond to emailed questions within three (3) working days.

Requests for clarification may form the basis of a response that will be posted on GrantConnect in the **Frequently Asked Questions** section. Any questions will be de-identified.

## 8. Assessment of grant applications

Successful projects will be selected through a competitive, merit-based process and approved by the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources based on the recommendations of the department, informed by an expert assessment panel (the panel).

### 8.1 Who will assess applications?

The department will assess your application against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage.

An expert assessment panel will assess each eligible application on its merit. The department will appoint a panel of up to eight (8) members to provide industry, technical and scientific expertise in the assessment of applications. Panel members will have relevant experience in science, research and development programs, innovation and rural industries. The department will provide secretariat support to the panel.

The panel will assess your application against the assessment criteria set out in section 6 and against other applications. Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value for money.

Eligible applications will first be assessed individually by assigned panel members.

Following individual assessment and scoring by panel members, the panel will then meet to determine a final overall merit assessment against all other eligible applications received.

The panel will make recommendations to the department on eligible applications which:

- could be funded without change
- could be funded subject to certain conditions being met
- should not be pursued further.

In making its overall recommendations on projects, the panel will consider availability of funding and the mix of applications to be recommended to achieve the best research investment in each round.

In cases where an application is recommended for grant funding, and the grant is approved, the department will negotiate with the applicant based on the conditions (if any) of funding approval. A grant may not be awarded where the applicant is unable or unwilling to meet the conditions of the funding approval.

The panel may seek information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if the sources are not nominated by you as referees. The assessment panel may also consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or explain the information.

## 8.2 Who will approve grants?

The expert assessment panel report will be the basis for the department to make recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources who will make the final decision to approve a grant.

The minister's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of the grant
- the grant funding amount to be awarded.

While delivery of funding will be primarily on a competitive basis, if after running each application process, emerging issues have been identified and/or there are priorities that have not been met, the minister may consider other projects to address these emerging issues or other forms of financial arrangements with partners and/or applicants, to otherwise further the objectives of the program. In these cases, the assessment criteria outlined in these guidelines will remain applicable.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant. The minister must not approve funding if s/he reasonably considers the program funding available across financial years will not accommodate the funding offer, and/or the application does not represent value for money.

## 9. Notification of application outcomes

The department reserves the right to negotiate with you on any aspect of the grant prior to the execution of the grant agreement, including supporting fewer projects/activities, offering less funding than the amount for which you applied, or seeking further outputs.

If you are successful, you will be advised of the outcomes of your application in writing, outlining the approved grant amount and any conditions of the approval, following a decision by the minister. The letter of offer does not constitute a grant agreement and you must not begin a project until you have negotiated and executed a grant agreement with the department.

If you are unsuccessful, the department will notify you in writing and give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome (see section 9.1).

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

## 9.1 Feedback on your application

The department will provide feedback, based on the expert panel's assessment, to the RDC who submitted the unsuccessful application. The applicant RDC is encouraged to pass this feedback to partner organisations, or to invite partner organisations to the feedback session. Feedback on unsuccessful applications will be available on request by contacting the program manager at [ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au).

# 10. Successful grant applications

## 10.1 The grant agreement

If you are successful, your organisation must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. The department will use the *Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement*. Standard terms and conditions for the grant agreement will apply and cannot be changed. Applicants should read the grant agreement template before submitting their application and should seek independent legal advice before entering into a grant agreement.

A schedule will outline the work to be delivered in the project and the reporting requirements. Any additional conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer or during the grant agreement negotiations.

You will be required to:

- complete regular performance reports
- provide annual financial reports
- participate in the final program evaluation, and any interim evaluations
- complete a risk analysis for the project and actively manage the risks identified
- develop a communications plan and a monitoring and evaluation plan for the project.

The department will negotiate agreements with successful applicants. If there are unreasonable delays in finalising a grant agreement, the grant offer may be withdrawn and the grant may be awarded to a different applicant.

If you fail to comply with any requirements in the agreement, you may be required to repay some or all of the grant money received.

You should not make financial commitments in respect of the project which is the subject of the grant until a grant agreement has been executed by the Commonwealth.

## 10.2 How the grant will be paid

The grant agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid, the schedule of grant payments to be paid on achievement of milestones and the amount of cash and in-kind contributed by the lead RDC and each project partner over the life of the project.

Payments of the grant will be made progressively and based on your milestone reports. Details of payments will be provided in a schedule that forms part of the grant agreement.

The department will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra expenditure, you must cover those costs.

## 10.3 Grant agreement variations

The department recognises that unexpected events may affect the progress of a project. In these circumstances, you can request a project variation, including:

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but not beyond 30 June 2022
- changes to project partners and their contributions.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds
- reduction of cash contributed by partners that results in overall cash contributions of less than 50 per cent of Commonwealth funding provided
- an extension of the project beyond 30 June 2022.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement end date. Contact [ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au) for further information. The department will not consider changes after the grant agreement end date.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. The department's delegate will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

Variations will only be agreed in writing and may be implemented through a deed of variation to the grant agreement.

## 11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the [GrantConnect](#) website twenty-one (21) calendar days after the date of effect as required by Section 5.3 of the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*. This includes:

- name of the person or entity receiving the grant
- project title and purpose
- amount of funding received
- term of the grant
- funding location.

By submitting an application for funding under this grant program, the applicant consents to publication of the above information by the department should they be awarded funding under this grant program.

## 12. Delivery of grant activities

### 12.1 Your responsibilities

You must submit milestone and financial reports in line with the timeframes in the grant agreement. The department will provide a template for milestone reports. The department will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- contributions of participants directly related to the project
- eligible expenditure of grant funds
- communications and extension activities
- staffing, project materials and collaborations.

You will also be responsible for:

- meeting the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and managing the activity efficiently and effectively
- complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements as set out in the grant agreement.

### 12.2 Responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and Community Grants Hub

The department and/or the Community Grants Hub will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement

- manage the grant agreement and make decisions about variations during the life of the agreement
- monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to better understand projects.

Occasionally the department may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

Officials from both agencies and others may contact grant recipients during or after the grant as part of program evaluation.

## 12.3 Grant payments and GST

Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement. Payments will include GST where applicable.

Before any payments are made, you must provide:

- evidence that you have achieved the associated milestone to the satisfaction of the department
- any other conditions of payment (e.g. evidence of purchase of equipment, satisfactory progress report, approvals, and any other documentation as required under your funding agreement).

If you fail to comply with any requirements in the agreement, you may be required to repay some or all of the grant money received.

If you receive a grant, you should seek advice on the legal and tax implications of acceptance of a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the Australian Taxation Office website at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) for more information.

## 12.4 Evaluation

The department and/or the Community Grants Hub will monitor the administration of the grant rounds and projects as part of their usual grants management process and implement improvements and efficiencies as needed.

The department will also evaluate the Rural R&D for Profit program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved.

A final evaluation will be undertaken in the final year of the program (2022) to measure performance against outcomes and objectives and assess whether, and how, the activities funded had a positive impact on primary producers.

The program evaluation is also designed to help identify research gaps and frame future investment. This will be supported by successful applicants meeting all requirements of their grant agreement, particularly reporting and providing project information. This will assist the

department in its evaluation of the program and each project's role in meeting the program objective.

You may be required to provide information to help with this evaluation.

## 12.5 Acknowledgement

The Rural R&D for Profit program is an initiative of the Australian Government. A project funded in full or part by the program must acknowledge the Commonwealth in all publications, promotional materials, signage and activities relating to the program and the project.

There are also occasions when it may be appropriate to brand material with the departmental logo.

Details of communications protocols will be included in your grant agreement.

## 13. Probity

The grant funding round will be conducted in accordance with the CGRGs and probity principles and practice. The government will make sure that the program 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.

**Note:** These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by the department. When this happens the revised guidelines will be published on the [GrantConnect](#) website.

### 13.1 Complaints process

If you are dissatisfied with the way an application has been handled by the department, you can contact the program manager at [ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:ruralresearch@agriculture.gov.au) and lodge a complaint. All complaints must be lodged in writing.

The department will not reconsider applications as part of the complaints process. Instead, the complaint will be considered internally within the department by a departmental officer independent from the original process, and the applicant will receive a response from the department.

If you do not agree with the way the department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the department and the department has been provided with a reasonable opportunity to respond.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

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

## 13.2 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant. There may be an actual, apparent, perceived or potential conflict of interest, if the department's staff, any member of a committee 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
- has a relationship with an organisation relationship with, or in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under the program; or
- has a direct or indirect interest which may influence the grant application selection process.

The above list is not exhaustive.

You must declare, as part of your application, any actual, apparent, perceived, potential or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to a grant application, you must inform the department in writing immediately. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

The chair of the Expert Assessment Panel will be made aware of any conflicts of interest and will handle them as set out in Australian Government policies and procedures. Conflicts of interest for Australian Public Service staff will be handled as set out in the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13(7)) of the *Public Service Act 1999*. The department publishes its conflict of interest policy on the department's website.

## 13.3 Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

The department treats your personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes letting you know:

- what personal information the department collects
- why the department collects your personal information
- who the department gives your personal information to.

You are required, as part of your application, to declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988*, including the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors you engage to assist with the activity. You must ask for the Australian Government's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else if you are given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the Program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

The department may reveal confidential information to:

- the committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so the department 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
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The department may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- *Public Service Act 1999*
- *Public Service Regulations 1999*
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act*
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Crimes Act 1914*
- *Criminal Code Act 1995*

You must identify any information contained within your application or in any documentation that you consider should be treated as confidential and provide reasons for the request. The department reserves the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential.

The department's Privacy Policy, including information about access to and correction of your personal information, can be found at: <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/accessing-information>

To contact the department about personal information or to make a complaint:

Telephone: Switchboard +61 2 6272 3933

Email: [privacy@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:privacy@agriculture.gov.au)

Post: Privacy Contact Officer, Department of Agriculture, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601.

## 13.4 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act)*.

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

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

By mail: Freedom of Information Officer

Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources  
GPO Box 858  
Canberra ACT 2601

Internet: [http://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/reporting/foi/foi\\_form](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/reporting/foi/foi_form)

## 14. Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the 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.
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
commencement date	The expected start date for the grant activity.
completion date	The expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
Co-sponsoring entity	When two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it.
date of effect	It can be the date in 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.
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
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.

Term	Definition
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (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.
grant	is defined by CGRGs paragraph 2.3 as an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: (a) under which relevant money or other CRF money is to be paid to a recipient other than the Commonwealth; and (b) which is intended to assist the recipient achieve its objectives as well as to help achieve one or more of the Australian Government' policy outcomes.
grant activity	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
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
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	Is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
grantee	An individual/organisation that has been awarded a grant. (Proposed definition in the grants taxonomy)

Term	Definition
PBS Program	Described within the entity's Portfolio Budget Statement, 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
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 with money	<p>Value with money in this document 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.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of the project proposal and activities;</li> <li>• fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives;</li> <li>• that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved; and</li> <li>• the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>