

+ North Queensland Economic Diversification Grants

(North & Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, 25 January - 14 February 2019)

Guidelines

1. About the scheme

The Australian Government's 'After the flood: A strategy for long-term recovery' (the Strategy) sets out a blueprint for a prosperous and secure future for North and North-West Queensland.

The Strategy aims to guide investment in actions that support the long-term recovery and prosperity of the affected communities, strengthen their preparedness for future challenges and help the regions adapt and transform in an ever-changing environment.

The Strategy has five strategic pillars, underpinned by 19 actions, which reflect what communities, businesses and people said were essential to ensure future prosperity and resilience of the flood-affected regions.

This scheme aligns with the *broadening the economic base* pillar which outlines the need to develop and enhance existing economic opportunities both within and outside the agricultural sector, and to harness opportunities based on unique place-based characteristics.

The objective of the scheme is to fund eligible projects to broaden and diversify into new industries and support projects that provide opportunities to generate new economic activity and employment. The scheme will achieve its objective by assisting eligible applicants to carry out projects which diversify businesses and create employment.

The scheme will be available over two rounds in 2021 and 2022, provided funding is not fully committed in the first round. The opening and closing dates for rounds will be published on QRIDA's website at: www.qrida.qld.gov.au.

The scheme is being run on a competitive basis with projects selected based on project criteria set out in this guideline.

The funding is available in two streams (with no set amount of funding allocated to either stream): projects related to agriculture and its value chain and non-agricultural related projects.

These guidelines contain information about the scheme including eligibility requirements, how to apply and your obligations as an applicant. Please read these guidelines before applying.



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2. Assistance available

- 2.1 Grants of not less than **\$10,000** and up to **\$500,000** are available under the scheme.
- 2.2 Applicants must provide a financial or in-kind co-contribution towards the project.
- 2.3 Grants are subject to the availability of funding and applying for a grant is no guarantee funding will be approved.

3. Required outcomes

- 3.1 Required outcomes for the scheme are:
 - a) economic activity in the *eligible area* has been diversified;
 - b) there has been an increase in employment opportunities in the *eligible area*;
 - c) increased opportunity to transfer skills across sectors in the *eligible area*;
 - d) the economy in the *eligible area* has become sufficiently flexible and adaptable to shocks.

4. Applicant criteria

- 4.1 To be eligible for a grant under the scheme an applicant must be one of the following:
 - a) a *small to medium sized business* (this includes primary production businesses);
 - b) an association incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*;
 - c) a cooperative registered under the *Cooperatives Act 1997*;
 - d) an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cwlth);
 - e) an industry organisation;
 - f) a tertiary institution including universities in Queensland;
 - g) a local government under the *Local Government Act 2009* within the *eligible area*;
 - h) a combination of the above including joint ventures and consortiums.
- 4.2 To be eligible applicants must also:
 - a) provide a financial or in-kind co-contribution (noting there is no set amount required), and demonstrate the availability of funds or in-kind support (this may include leveraging funding from other local, state or Commonwealth programs);
 - b) co-contributions must be used for eligible purposes;
 - c) financial co-contributions can include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. funds on hand including bank accounts, term deposits or other investments;
 - ii. finance raised from private or commercial sources on normal commercial credit terms; and
 - iii. finance raised from government concessional loan sources;
 - d) demonstrate sound prospects for medium to long term commercial viability;
 - e) be solely responsible for incurring the costs claimed in the application;
 - f) have not previously received a grant for a substantially similar project activity.
- 4.3 Ineligible applications or eligible applications submitted by ineligible applicants will not be assessed against the project assessment criteria.

5. Project assessment criteria

5.1 Projects will be assessed independently under two streams:

- a) projects related to agriculture and its value chain; and
- b) non-agricultural related projects.

5.2 Projects in each stream will be assessed competitively on the following criteria:

a) Public benefit

- i. The extent to which the project will help to diversify economic activity in the *eligible area* including the extent to which the project will:
 - grow an emerging industry, expand a small-scale industry, or intensify and add value to an existing industry and its supply chain;
 - generate jobs in the region, increase diversification in employment and transferability of skills in the workplace.

b) Co-contribution and value for money

- i. The level of financial co-contribution being contributed relative to project cost.
- ii. The reasonableness of costs with regard to quality and quantity of deliverables.

c) Capability and capacity

- i. Demonstrated capability and capacity to successfully carry-out the project on time, on budget and to the required standard.

d) Project attributes

- i. Demonstration of how benefits will be sustained beyond the period of construction.
- ii. Prospects for project success and long-term viability.
- iii. The investment readiness of the project; that it will commence within 12 months of entering into a funding agreement.
- iv. Appropriate planning, construction, zoning, environmental, heritage and/or native title approvals identified and are in place, or will be in place within six months of execution of a funding agreement;
- v. The assessed risk level of the project;
- vi. The type of entity applying with preference given to projects proposed by joint ventures and consortiums.

6. Information required

6.1 Applications should include the following documents, noting that supporting information should be commensurate with the size, scope and nature of the project:

- a) financial statements for the past two financial years;
- b) a project plan including details of:
 - i. how the project will provide public benefit
 - ii. project scope, implementation methodology, timeframes, proposed co-contribution and costings;

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- iii. risks and mitigation strategies including risks associated with project delivery and ongoing management;
- iv. relevant approvals associated with the project;
- v. the proposed procurement process for major items;
- vi. evidence to demonstrate capability and capacity to deliver the project.

7. How funding may be used

7.1 Grants may be used for activities including, but not limited to:

- a) capital expenditure on building, plant and equipment for the exclusive use of the project;
- b) new or used plant and equipment for the exclusive use of the project;
- c) consumables used for the project;
- d) significant refurbishment of accommodation;
- e) salary and on-costs for staff and professionals when working solely on activities for the funded project.

8. How funding may not be used

8.1 Grants may not be used for the following activities:

- a) travel and accommodation;
- b) funding a project which has already commenced;
- c) repairing or replacing existing capital infrastructure;
- d) making payments towards debt;
- e) purchasing land;
- f) undertaking training and paying professional costs which are not related to the eligible project activity being applied for;
- g) conducting feasibility studies;
- h) paying administration costs.

9. How to apply

- 9.1 To be considered for a grant you must submit an expression of interest (EOI) form available on QRIDA's website at www.grida.qld.gov.au and submit to QRIDA by email, post or fax before the EOI closing date.
- 9.2 If your EOI is successful QRIDA will invite you to submit a full application and provide you with an application pack by email or mail.
- 9.3 EOIs or applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered.
- 9.4 QRIDA may request further information to help assess your EOI or application.
- 9.5 Goods or services being funded under the scheme should be purchased from properly accredited or qualified suppliers or contractors.
- 9.6 Suppliers or contractors of goods and services should not be employed by an entity owned or partially owned by the applicant.
- 9.7 Penalties may be applied under the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994* (Qld) if any information provided in an application is found to be untrue, false or misleading. Applicants

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should be aware that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cwth).

10. How applications will be assessed and decided

- 10.1 Upon receiving applications, QRIDA will acknowledge receipt in writing and advise if any further information is required to commence assessment of the application.
- 10.2 EOIs and full application will be assessed on a competitive basis and there is no guarantee of approval at any stage of the assessment process.
- 10.3 In assessing applications QRIDA may seek expert or additional advice on any grant application.
- 10.4 Funding amounts offered will be determined by QRIDA and offers may not be to the full amount requested.
- 10.5 QRIDA will provide outcomes of the assessment process to the National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency and may also provide copies of application information to this agency.
- 10.6 QRIDA will be the final decision maker on grant applications and make a grant offer in writing to approved applicants.

11. Funding arrangements

- 11.1 Approved applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with QRIDA. This agreement includes an agreed set of milestones and reporting requirements and a completion report.
- 11.2 Payments towards the project will be made to agreed milestones with the funding agreement.
- 11.3 Projects should commence within 90 days of entering into a funding agreement (unless agreed otherwise in writing by QRIDA). All projects must be completed, and available funding drawn by 30 June 2022 for the first round and 30 June 2023 for the second round.
- 11.4 To draw on approved grant, grant recipients may either:
 - a) submit official invoices and QRIDA will pay the invoice amount to suppliers; or
 - b) submit fully paid invoices and official receipts and QRIDA will reimburse the receipt amount to the grant recipient.
- 11.5 Grant recipients are able to make multiple requests to draw against the approved amount of monies until such time as the cumulative grant funding totals the grant amount approved.

12. Terms and conditions

- 12.1 Successful applicants will be required to agree to subsequent audits under the scheme to confirm that grant funding has been expended on approved purposes.
- 12.2 These guidelines may be reviewed or varied by the National Partnership Agreement Steering Committee at any time. Any revised guidelines will be published on QRIDA's website at www.qrida.qld.gov.au.

13. Your privacy

QRIDA's Privacy Policy available at: www.qrida.qld.gov.au/privacy, sets out general information on how QRIDA collects, uses and discloses individuals' personal information.

14. More information

For more information on the Economic Diversification Grants Scheme contact QRIDA on **Freecall 1800 623 946** or email contact_us@qrida.qld.gov.au.

15. Public acknowledgement of Australian Government assistance

The announcement of successful projects under this Scheme will occur as an Australian Government media statement unless otherwise agreed by the Australian Government. In addition, prior agreement must be reached with the Australian Government on the nature and content of any subsequent events, announcements, promotional material or publicity relating to an eligible measure under the arrangements. This includes but is not limited to: media releases, events, social media, signage and advertising.

16. Evaluation and review

Evaluation and review activities will be undertaken by the National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency.

17. Definitions

Eligible area means the areas covered by the Queensland local government authorities of Burdekin Shire Council, Burke Shire Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Charters Towers Regional Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, McKinlay Shire Council, Richmond Shire Council, Townsville City Council, Whitsunday Regional Council and Winton Shire Council.

Small to medium sized business means a sole trader, partnership, trust or private company which holds an ABN, is registered for GST, employs fewer than 200 full time employees (or 200 full time equivalents) and is not operated by a public company. A small to medium sized business includes primary production businesses.

Official invoice means an invoice including the name, address and ABN (if applicable) of the entity that issued the invoice and a description of each item to which the invoice relates which is clearly identifiable as being related to approved expenditure for the applicant

Official receipt means a receipt including the name and address and ABN (if applicable) of the entity that issued the receipt and a description of each item to which the receipt relates.