

Rural Economic Development Grants Guidelines

Round 7: Commencing 26 September 2024

1. About the Scheme

The objective of the Rural Economic Development Grants Scheme is to strengthen primary production sectors and bolster rural communities.

The scheme will achieve its objective by assisting eligible applicants to carry out projects which will create employment relating to primary production value chains in *relevant rural areas*.

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.

Expressions of Interest for Round Seven open on 26 September 2024.

2. Available funding

- 2.1 Grants are available up to \$200,000 as a co-contribution to be matched by applicants.
- 2.2 Applicants can only receive one grant per round and the funded purposes must be significantly different to projects the applicant has received in past or future rounds.
- 2.3 An amount of up to \$3,300,000 has been made available to fund grants under Round Seven of the Scheme, with \$400,000 of the funding allocated to *First Nations agribusinesses*.
- 2.4 Grants are subject to the availability of funding and applying for a grant is no guarantee funding will be approved.

3. Applicant criteria

- 3.1 You can apply for a grant if you are one of the following:
 - a) a *medium sized business*;
 - 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) a *primary producer*;
 - f) an entity established to represent either:
 - i. *primary producers*; or
 - ii. *primary production enterprises*;
 - g) a university in Queensland;

- h) a tertiary education institution, or another institution or organisation that provides vocational training in Queensland;
- i) a local government under the *Local Government Act 2009*; or
- j) a combination of the above.

3.2 To be eligible applicants must also:

- a) be able provide an equal cash contribution to the grant requested;
- b) have adequate experience or qualifications and have reasonable prospects of successfully carrying out the project;
- c) demonstrate sound prospects for long term commercial viability;
- d) have not received other government funding (local, state or federal) for the project activities;
- e) have not previously received a Rural Economic Development Grant for a substantially similar project activity.

4. Project eligibility criteria

4.1 To be eligible for funding projects must:

- a) generate jobs, provide value for money and significant economic benefit to a rural area;
- b) be related to primary production value chains.

5. How funding may be used

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

- a) capital expenditure on buildings, 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) travel and accommodation where supported by a full itinerary and travel outcomes
- e) training costs and technical support that are project specific
- f) salary and on-costs for staff and professionals working solely on activities for the funded project

6. How funding may not be used

6.1 Grants may not be used for the following activities

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

7. Funding arrangements

- 7.1 If your application is successful, you will be required to enter into a legally binding letter of offer with the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA). This agreement includes undertakings relevant to disclosure of the approval, agreed set of milestones and reporting requirements, including a completion report.

- 7.2 Payments towards the project will be made to agreed milestones within the funding agreement.
- 7.3 Projects should commence within 90 days of entering into a funding agreement.

8. How to apply

- 8.1 To be considered for a grant you must submit an expression of interest (EOI) form available from QRIDA's website before the EOI closing date (see Section 11).
- 8.2 If your EOI is successful QRIDA will invite you to submit a full application and provide you with an application pack by mail.
- 8.3 EOIs or applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered.
- 8.4 QRIDA may request further information to help assess your EOI or application.
- 8.5 Penalties apply for providing false and misleading information in accordance with the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994*.

9. How EOIs and applications are assessed

- 9.1 EOIs and full applications will be assessed on a competitive basis and there is no guarantee of approval at any stage of the assessment process.
- 9.2 Funding amounts offered will be determined by QRIDA and offers may not be to the full amount requested.
- 9.3 Projects will be assessed and selected by QRIDA on considerations including:
 - a) compliance with applicant and project eligibility criteria;
 - b) the extent of the project creating employment related to primary production;
 - c) the value for money and significant economic benefit generated by a project, including productivity benefits, value-adding, regional diversification or contribution to low-emissions agriculture and supply chains;
 - d) the prospect of project success and long-term commercial viability; and
 - e) the remoteness of the project's location as defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard.

10. How applications are decided

- 10.1 Eligible projects which demonstrate the highest economic benefit will be selected for funding until available funds for the round are exhausted.

11. Key dates for Round Seven

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 26 September 2024 | Expressions of Interest open. |
| 22 November 2024 | Expressions of Interest close at 11:59 pm. |
| 31 January 2025 | EOI outcomes will be advised, and successful submissions will receive an invitation to submit a full application including an application pack. |
| 28 March 2025 | Applications to apply close at 11:59 pm. |
| 30 May 2025 | Applicants will be notified of application outcomes. Following this, successful applicants will be announced by the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries. |
| Upon approval and funding agreement | Successful applicants will receive funding to agreed milestones as their project progresses. |

12. Conflict of Interest

12.1 A conflict of interest may arise due to a business dealing with QRIDA, if your private interests conflict with your obligations under the Scheme. Conflicts of interest could affect your eligibility for conditional approval. A conflict of interest can be:

- real (or actual);
- apparent (or perceived); or
- potential.

12.2 We will ask you to declare, as part of your application, any business dealings that may be considered an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest 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 your application, you must inform us in writing immediately.

13. Fraudulent Applications

13.1 QRIDA takes fraud and corruption seriously. Suspected fraud will be referred to Queensland Police Services (QPS) and/or the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC).

13.2 Fraud and corruption is a criminal offence under Sections 408C, 408D and 87 of the Criminal Code 1899 (Qld). For corporations, directors and company officials, Section 596 and 184 of the Australian Corporations Act 2001 (Clth) will also apply.

13.3 Providing false or misleading information or documents in the QRIDA application process is an offence. Penalties may apply under Section 41 and 42 of the Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994.

13.4 By signing the application form, you acknowledge that the information you provide is true and accurate, and agree to be bound by the Scheme's guidelines and provisions.

13.5 QRIDA reserves the right to pursue and recover funding provided under fraudulent and dishonest circumstances.

14. Your privacy

14.1 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

14.2 The application portal for this Scheme contains specific information on how personal information will be collected, used, and disclosed.

15. More information

12.1 For more information on the Rural Economic Development Grants Scheme contact QRIDA on **Freecall 1800 623 946** or email redgrants@qrida.qld.gov.au

16. Definitions

First Nations Agribusiness is either a sole trading business / partnership / incorporated entity or trading through a trust which holds a current ABN and is 50% or more Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander owned and generates revenue from the provision of goods or services (related to agriculture or the agriculture supply chain).

Medium sized business is 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 FTE equivalents) and is not operated by a public company.

Primary producer means:

- a) a sole trader who spends the majority of his or her labour on, and derives the majority of his or her income from a primary production enterprise; or

- b) in relation to a partnership, proprietary company or trust that carries on a primary production enterprise, any partner in the partnership, shareholder in the company or trustee of the trust who spends the majority of their labour on, and derives the majority of their income from, the primary production enterprise.

Relevant rural area means an area in Queensland, other than any of the following local government areas:

- a) City of Brisbane
- b) Ipswich
- c) Logan
- d) Redland.