

October 2024

Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program – Pilot Implementation Grant

Program Guidelines

Message from the Minister

Although seasons have improved in recent years, we know drought is an inevitable part of living in Australia and this is why we must plan for greater drought resilience across all aspects of regional and remote communities.

The communities of regional NSW are proven to be resilient and capable but the government is committed to ensuring they have the support they need to thrive.

With the Regional Drought Resilience Planning (RDRP) Program the NSW and Australian governments have supported identified local government consortia to develop drought resilience plans for their communities.

Now that program has been extended to help those groups implement actions identified in their region's approved drought resilience plan.

The RDRP Implementation Grants will provide additional funding to kick start approved resilience plans and support eligible activities.

The focus of these implementation grants will be ensuring that communities are able to grow self-reliance and drought resilience, strengthen their wellbeing and improve agricultural landscapes for better environmental outcomes.

This can be achieved by building sustainable and diverse regional economies, reducing the vulnerability of communities to changing economic conditions and accelerating recovery after drought.

By grouping councils into consortia this program has allowed local communities to come together and collaborate across their region.

This has also ensured the program reaches multiple regions while identifying local drought preparedness needs.

This regional approach to drought planning is a core element of the RDRP Program.

The last few years have not been easy for regional communities, but this program will help strengthen local approaches to building resilience and cohesion.

I look forward to seeing and hearing how regional councils and their communities collaborate on drought planning that will ensure a better future.

The Honourable Tara Moriarty MLC

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional NSW

Minister for Western NSW

Background

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning (RDRP) Program is co-funded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the NSW Government. It supports identified regions in NSW to develop drought resilience plans that can be implemented by councils and their communities to manage future risks.

The RDRP Program commenced in 2021 with a pilot program in 3 NSW regions. The program has been extended to 30 November 2025 with 2 additional rounds of funding provided to eligible regions to develop plans. These plans are currently being developed by 25 consortia on behalf of the regions. See Appendix A for a list of consortia approved for funding.

Councils have been grouped into consortia primarily based on their Functional Economic Region (FER) boundaries. The consortia are eligible because their regions have been identified as vulnerable to drought, with a strong reliance on income from agriculture. Other multicriteria community resilience indicators have been used to inform the groupings and the staging of implementation.

The purpose of grouping councils into consortia is allow local communities to come together and collaborate across their region. This also ensures the program reaches multiple regions while identifying local drought preparedness needs. Applying a regional approach to drought planning is a core element of the RDRP Program. The program is also sequenced with a pilot and 2 rounds to allow for lessons learnt to be shared across regions as planning occurs.

The RDRP Program Pilot Implementation Grant is a component of the RDRP Pilot Program. It will provide an additional \$750,000 across the 3 existing approved pilot program consortia participants, to implement actions identified in the region's approved Drought Resilience Plan.

The RDRP Program Pilot Implementation Grant is a closed, non-competitive grant that provides a fixed maximum amount of funding available to approved program participants for eligible activities. This fixed amount of \$250,000 per consortia has been communicated to the pilot round participants. There is a requirement to review and approve what actions are funded with the implementation grant. This is to ensure they meet the requirements of the RDRP Program

including that implementation activities exist within plan approved by the NSW and Federal ministers.

Eligible consortia will be able to apply for the RDRP Program implementation grant through a one-stage process. Pilot consortia will be invited to submit an implementation proposal detailing a proposed project from their approved Regional Drought Resilience Plan (plans must be approved by the NSW and Federal ministers responsible for this program prior to consortia submitting an application seeking an implementation grant).

If approved, the RDRP Program Pilot implementation grant will be administered and monitored through an established funding deed with set milestones derived from the consortia Drought Resilience Plan. This will enable tracking of the delivery of approved implementation activities between the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (the department) and the lead council nominated for the consortia.

Activities funded under an implementation grant need to be completed by 30 November 2025.

The fund is administered by the department.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read all program details and speak to their RDRP Program contact at the Department before applying. To contact the RDRP Program team email drought@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au.

Program purpose and objectives

The RDRP Program aims to build local capability and empower regional communities to plan and act early to reduce and respond to drought risks.

The program is designed to support the development of regional drought plans which will consider:

- growing the self-reliance and drought resilience of regional communities including the agricultural sector
- improving natural capital of agricultural landscapes for better environmental outcomes
- strengthening the wellbeing and social capital of rural, regional and remote communities.

It will enable eligible consortia to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from drought. The program will provide funding for consortia to:

- Phase 1: Develop a Regional Drought Resilience Plan following a partnership and co-design process with communities, and
- Phase 2: Begin implementation activities identified within the approved Regional Drought Resilience Plan with seed funding for approved activities.

The RDRP Program Pilot Implementation Grant outlined in these program guidelines supports delivery of Phase 2.

Key dates

The RDRP Program Pilot Implementation Grant is a one stage grant application process.

| | |
|---|---|
| Implementation grant proposal | |
| Implementation proposals open | 4 October 2024 |
| Implementation proposals close | 28 November 2024 |
| Assessment process commences | 2 December 2024 |
| Application outcome commences | 19 December 2024 |
| Funding deeds executed with successful applicants | Contracting will commence once the successful applicant has signed and returned their Letter of Conditional Offer with a signed Confidentiality Undertaking. |
| Project completion | All approved implementation planning and activities must start within 3 months after outcome notification. All approved implementation planning and activities must be completed by 30 November 2025. |
| Evaluation | Successful applicants will be required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• continue any evaluation and reporting requirements from funding deeds signed to develop the Regional Drought Resilience Plan, and• participate in evaluation and reporting for the RDRP Pilot Implementation Grant program. |

In extenuating circumstances, applications submitted after the deadline may be accepted at the sole discretion of the department.

Program funding

The total funding available for the RDRP Program Pilot Implementation Grant program is \$750,000.

Grant amounts

The funding amount available to eligible applicants is up to \$250,000 for delivery of eligible implementation actions from finalised Regional Drought Resilience Plans.

Consortia may apply to use up to \$50,000 of the \$250,000 for a resource to support delivery of the eligible action/s from the finalised Regional Drought Resilience Plans. Otherwise grants will only be provided up to \$200,000 for the project.

The funding amount shown in Appendix A is the total maximum amount available from this grant to the individual consortium and not an amount available to each Local Government member in the consortium.

No GST is payable on the individual grants.

Co-contributions

Co-contribution from regional consortia will help to maximise the reach and effectiveness of the implementation grant. A co-contribution is encouraged but is not mandatory.

Unspent Funds

If an eligible consortium has unspent grant funds from the development of a finalised Regional Drought Resilience Plan, the department may approve carry over of those funds as part of this grant to support planning or delivery of implementation actions. Requests for carry over of funds must be included in the implementation grant proposal.

If the situation arises where a grant recipient's project is completed and there are unspent funds remaining from the grant allocation, the department may require the grant recipient to return the unspent funds. If the grant recipient requests to use the funds to extend the scope of the project, the department may assess that request if it aligns to the objectives of the grant program and the RDRP Plan. The department may require the grant recipient to provide supporting information such as revised economic or social impact data.

Selection criteria

Eligibility criteria

Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for the implementation grant, applicants must be an existing contracted participant in the RDRP Program Pilot, funded to develop a Regional Drought Resilience Plan in NSW.

All Pilot regions that have a Regional Drought Resilience Plan approved by the Australian Government Minister responsible for Drought are eligible to apply.

Only one application for an implementation grant (which may include multiple activities) can be approved per consortium. This will ensure that the application reflects the collective needs of the consortium and region as identified in the Regional Drought Resilience Plan. The lead council or Joint Organisation for each consortium is currently the eligible applicant. However, under extenuating circumstances, if the Project Control Group for a consortium would like

another council in the consortium to apply for the implementation grant, then written approval from the Project Control Group is to be provided with the application as well as evidence of the extenuating circumstance.

The lead applicant must enter into the funding deed (or sign a variation to an existing funding deed) and is responsible for the delivery of the project. The funding should be used to deliver actions within approved RDR plans and agreed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Eligible projects

The RDRP Implementation Grant must only be spent on implementation of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan to:

- grow the self-reliance and drought resilience of regional communities including in the agriculture sector
- improve natural capital of agricultural landscapes for better environmental outcomes
- strengthen the wellbeing and social capital of rural, regional and remote communities.

Activities eligible to be funded through the RDRP Implementation Grant must:

- be outlined in an independently assessed and approved Regional Drought Resilience Plan
- be included in the approved Implementation Plan as priority actions or components of actions identified in the approved Regional Drought Resilience Plan.
- be endorsed/approved by the consortium and Project Control Group
- take place within, or apply to, the region for which the Plan exists
- aim to improve drought resilience in the agricultural sector, and/or its supporting communities and supply chains
- deliver a public benefit.

Eligible implementation planning activities may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- detailed feasibility studies, cost benefit analysis, implementation action prioritisation, transition planning, or more extensive integration of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan and drought resilience into other regional and local strategic planning processes.
- reviewing regional services and capability relevant to drought preparedness, response or recovery, and improving the availability, targeting or coordination of those services.
- development of local water demand reduction/conservation strategies or plans to enhance water security or conservation, or detailed investigations of current water use.

Eligible implementation actions from Regional Drought Resilience Plans may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- projects or initiatives that support the collection, management, public accessibility, analysis and/or application of data and information to improve regional drought preparedness.
- development or application of land management practices or strategies for improving soil health, land cover, water and biodiversity, including those based on or integrating Indigenous knowledge. These activities must have a public benefit.
- further investigation, analysis and planning to address the business challenges facing industry and the local community affected by drought such as supply/demand, skills shortages or gaps, training, migration etc.
- development of local water demand reduction/conservation activities to enhance water security or conservation of current water use.
- projects, initiatives, or events that increase skills, knowledge and understanding of the risks posed by drought and climate change to the region such as a communication/awareness campaign, an annual drought resilience event, drought resilience education programs or targeted information sessions for specific industries/sectors.
- activities that seek to build community capacity, capability or connectedness, for example, establishment of a drought resilience support community organisation or community network/event to share and/or catalyse drought resilience ideas.
- seed funding or pre-work to an infrastructure project related to drought preparedness.
- small-scale infrastructure projects that provide a public benefit and aims to improve drought resilience in the region.
- community programs that aim to support community wellbeing, improve connectivity and increase knowledge sharing about drought preparedness.
- administrative costs, to support the coordination and delivery of planned activities. This should constitute no more than 10% of the total grant funding.

Eligible project locations

The implementation activities must take place within the geographical region for which the approved RDRP plan exists. If specific projects are identified in the plan, the projects must be located in a participating LGA (Local Government Areas) in the consortium. The project must be designed to benefit the LGAs within the consortium.

Activities may also take place outside of the region, if the activity *applies* to the region (for example, a feasibility study conducted for the plan's region by a consultant outside of the region)

Inclusion and accessibility

The NSW Government is seeking to support regional communities by providing dignified and equitable inclusion to social and community programs for people with a disability.

Applicants must demonstrate consideration of accessibility and inclusion measures in their application. Projects should demonstrate the provision of fit-for-purpose, accessible and safe facilities, or increased participation opportunities by increasing accessibility and inclusion/universal design. This applies to both infrastructure projects and community or social programs aiming to improve existing accessibility and inclusion to encourage greater participation.

Ineligible applicants

Only approved consortia groups are eligible to apply for an implementation grant. The lead applicant for the consortia needs to have an ABN and the capacity to enter into a funding deed with the department.

Ineligible projects

Ineligible project types include those that:

- use the funding for anything other than drought resilience, and preparation for activities that contribute to drought resilience
- are not located in the applicant LGAs or do not provide direct benefit to applicant LGAs
- are for the day-to-day delivery of essential, business as usual or core local council services, and/or
- duplicate grant funding from another NSW or Australian Government grant program for the same project
- use the funding to run a grant program
- provide payments direct to farmers or individuals for on-farm infrastructure. These provide a majority private benefit, which is contrary to the purpose of the Future Drought Fund. Further, the objectives of the RDRP program are to build drought resilience on a regional scale.

RDRP Pilot Implementation Grants are just one pathway available for regions to implement approved plans. Regions should explore and utilise other available funding and opportunities (such as other grants programs) to implement their plans, where possible. To achieve maximum benefit from available funding opportunities, grants made available through the RDRP program should prioritise activities that cannot be more readily and appropriately funded through other mechanisms.

Ineligible project costs

Ineligible project costs include:

- financing, including debt financing, insurance, or rental costs.
- non-project related staff training and development costs.
- ongoing or recurrent funding that is required beyond the stated time of the project.
- large infrastructure projects.

- funding for any ongoing staff or operational costs.
- retrospective funding to cover any project component that has already commenced or complete before the funding deed is executed and the Regional Drought Resilience Plan is approved. Costs related to implementation planning, incurred as part of the development of a Regional Drought Resilience Plan, may be eligible costs. See ‘Program funding – grant amounts’ for more information.
- costs associated with business-as-usual activities for the applicant.

Assessment criteria

All applications that meet the eligibility criteria must also meet the relevant assessment criteria to receive funding.

| Criteria categories | Evidence requirements |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Improves drought resilience | How the activity links to the Regional Drought Resilience Plan and aims to build resilience or preparedness and the resilience resource improved (economic, community and environment). |
| Delivers a public benefit | Who will benefit from the activity and how? Ability to demonstrate community support. |
| Deliverability and capability | Project management plan, evidence of qualified personnel (including capability, experience and skills of the applicant), timeframe to deliver, feasibility assessments and financial arrangements for the project and commitment to monitoring, evaluation and learning. |
| Partnerships | Partnerships in place to deliver the activities and evidence the activity will not duplicate an activity previously funded and is supported by the consortia. |

Improves drought resilience

Funded activities must explicitly aim to improve drought resilience in the region’s agriculture sector and/or the region’s supporting communities and supply chains. Drought resilience is defined in the *Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020–2024* as the ability to adapt, re-organise or transform in response to changing temperatures and increasing variability and scarcity of rainfall, for improved economic, environmental and social wellbeing.

Delivers a public benefit

Funded activities must be able to demonstrate an expected public benefit. This means the benefits generated by the funding must be able to be accessed and/or shared by many (public

benefits), rather than be captured solely by individual businesses or industries solely for private commercial gain (private benefits).

Public benefits can include contribution to economic, 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.

Questions to assess if the activity would provide a public benefit include:

- Is the benefit able to be accessed/shared by multiple people or stakeholders in the region?
- Do the expected benefits outweigh the costs?
- Has the market underprovided or failed to provide the activity?
- Do public benefits outweigh any (minor) private benefits?
- Does the benefit apply to the RDRP program and the approved Regional Drought Resilience Plan?

Deliverability and capability

All applications should demonstrate a clear delivery method to implement the activity within the required timeframe and resources available. Activities that require longer than 12 months to implement may not be suitable for funding under this implementation grant.

Partnerships

It is strongly encouraged that all activities should be implemented in partnership with other councils, agencies and community. Evidence of partnerships or letters of support to implement the activities should be provided. However, the applicant will be responsible for ensuring the activities are implemented as specified in the approved RDRP plan.

Application process

The application process for an RDRP Pilot Implementation Grant has one stage:

- Consortium with approved plans submit project proposal for implementation funding.
- Proposals are assessed by the department and consortia are notified of the outcome.
- If successful, eligible consortia will enter a deed with the department prior to work commencement.

Conflicts of interest

There may be a requirement for a conflict-of-interest declaration to be submitted with all applications.

Where a conflict-of-interest detrimental to the assessment process is identified (by either an applicant or the department), the department will establish mitigation measures, including

removing a departmental official from participating in the application, assessment and/or delivery stage of the process.

How to apply

All applicants are required to submit the implementation grant proposal through the SmartyGrants online portal. Proposals can be started when the Regional Drought Resilience Plan is still in draft. However, a proposal cannot proceed to application stage until a final draft of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan has been submitted for approval.

Proposals cannot be reopened or amended once the closing date has passed. Acceptance of late submissions will be at the sole discretion of the Department.

Visit <https://rgf.smartygrants.com.au/RDRPPProgramPilot> to submit a proposal for an RDRP Pilot Implementation Grant.

What needs to be included in the proposal?

All proposals must include (at a minimum):

- a completed response to the eligibility criteria.
- evidence of support from the Project Control Group of the consortium for the proposed activities.
- a list of activities proposed for funding under the implementation grant, including a brief:
 - description of each activity (include budget, scope, outcomes and partners, timeline for completion),
 - response to the selection criteria for each activity and
 - explanation of reason(s) for selecting each activity
- evidence of \$20 million public liability insurance in the name of the applicant.
- a detailed project plan with details on how each activity meets the assessment criteria (improves drought resilience, delivers a public benefit, deliverability and capability, and partnerships),
- a plan detailing resourcing to implement the activities, any partnership arrangements and implementation timeframes,
- a detailed project budget based on quotes or detailed estimates, reasonable assumptions or previous experience with similar projects,
- evidence such as letters of support or quotes.

Review process

Eligibility assessment

The department will assess all submitted applications against the eligibility criteria identified in these guidelines. Where there is uncertainty or unintended outcomes arising from the eligibility

requirements, the department will review all the information provided and will plan that, in its opinion, best achieves the objectives of the grant program.

Any ineligible applications received will not be considered for further assessment.

Assessment criteria

Proposals will be assessed by the department to ensure they meet the eligibility and assessment criteria and will implement activities identified in the Regional Drought Resilience Plan. Criteria will be assessed as a yes/no basis and not be compared to other applications but assessed on the applications own merit.

Applicants may be contacted during this step to clarify information provided in their application. The department will notify applicants if additional information and supporting material is required and the timeframes in which it is required.

Advice may also be sought from the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, other NSW Government agencies or probity advisors dependant on the types of activities submitted for an implementation grant.

Assessment process

Merit-based assessment

The department will assess eligible applications against the assessment criteria outlined in these guidelines. The department may ask applicants to provide additional information to assist in the assessment process.

Subject matter experts and/or technical advisors may be consulted to assist in the assessment of projects. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.

Decision making

The decision maker for the implementation grant is the Executive Director, Programs and Partnerships of the department in consultation with the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The decision maker will review the availability of grant funds and the departments' assessments of the applications before deciding which grant applications to approve.

The decision maker may take other factors into account that may result in an application being considered unsuitable for funding, including outcomes of the eligibility and assessment criteria, issues that could cause reputational or other risks to the NSW Government.

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

- the approval of the grant
- the grant funding amount to be awarded, and
- the terms and conditions of the grant.

Probity advice

Independent probity advisors will provide guidance to the department on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

Successful applications

The department will advise applicants of their success in writing. The applicant will be required to enter into a legally binding funding deed (or sign a variation to an existing funding deed) with the department prior to receiving funding.

Important information applicants should note:

- there is no commitment to funding until both parties execute a funding deed.
- costs should not be incurred until a funding deed has been executed.
- successful applicants must not make financial commitments for funded activities until funding deeds have been executed by both parties.
- grants will be paid via milestone payments set out in the funding deed for implementation of the approved drought plan.
- timing and requirements will vary at the NSW Government's discretion.
- the first instalment will be paid upon signing of a funding deed by both parties and provision of an invoice.
- the applicant is responsible for any costs beyond those agreed with the department within the funding deed.
- project spend will need to align with the funding deed and in accordance with the RDRP Program requirements and be reported to the department.
- evidence will be required in order for projects to be closed, for example, a completed final plan and report and financial evidence of grant expenditure.
- successful applicants may be required to submit progress reports to the department as outlined in the funding deed. The reports will be used by the department for acquittal purposes at the completion of the project milestones. This includes evidence of project expenditure that will need to be provided via the SmartyGrants portal within 30 days of project completion.
- plans and any lessons learnt about drought will be shared across regions (once finalised).
- applicants will be required to participate in evaluation activities conducted by the department, the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and/or third-party evaluators contracted by the department and/or Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and
- unspent funds will need to be repaid to the department before the project is finalised, within 30 days of the final milestone and report.

The department is required to publish information about grants awarded on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder at nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding. Announcements should not be made regarding grants awarded before successful applicants have been informed.

Confidentiality

Applicants must keep funding decisions and assessment outcomes confidential until announced by the NSW Government and/or Commonwealth Government, or the applicant is advised that announcement can proceed. Successful applicants will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Upon entering into a funding deed, details about the funding deed may be made publicly available (subject to information which the department/agency deems to be commercial in confidence)

The applicant agrees not to disclose any confidential information pertaining to the grant program application or funding deed without prior written consent of the department.

Important terms and conditions of the grants program

Applicants should note the following:

- requests for variations or changes to the project will only be considered in limited circumstances.
- all awarded grants will be GST exclusive. If a successful applicant is registered for GST, this will be applied on top of the agreed grant value when payment is made.
- grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by taxation law. It is recommended applicants seek independent professional advice about taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The NSW Government does not provide advice on individual taxation circumstances.
- successful applicants will be required to pay back unspent funds or those funds which have not been spent in accordance with the funding deed.
- successful applicants will be required to participate in a program evaluation to determine the extent to which their projects have contributed to the objective of the fund. The evaluation will require applicants to provide evidence of how projects have resulted in a measurable outcomes and benefits that are consistent with the objective of the fund.
- any information submitted by an applicant may be used for promotional material prepared by the NSW and Australian governments, if the applicant is successful.
- the NSW and Australian governments may choose to publicly announce funding for individual applications. It may also use non-identifying information provided in the funding deed to develop case studies.

- all recipients of NSW Government funding must acknowledge this financial support as per the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Grants available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines.
 - the department reserves the right to undertake an audit of grant funding within a period seven (7) years from the signing of the funding deed.
 - applicants must advise the department of any changes to their legal status or of changes or delays to their project.
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Unsuccessful applications

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application and will be offered a feedback information session. This includes activities that have been unsuccessful for funding.

Additional information

Getting support

More information about the program can be found at Regional Drought Resilience Planning. For help preparing applications, information and resources are available from nsw.gov.au/RDRP Or contact the Drought Mailbox drought@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au.

Complaints

Any concerns about the program or individual applications should be submitted in writing to drought@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au. If applicants do not agree with the way the department handled the issue, they may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman via <https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/>

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)*. Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)* makes government information accessible to the public by:

- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available
 - encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible
 - giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information
 - restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.
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Ethical conduct

Applicants must not participate in any anti-competitive conduct.

It is a condition of the grant program application process that no gifts, benefits or hospitality are to be made to any department/agency employee at any time. Any inducement in contravention of this condition may result in an applicant's proposal not being considered.

Department rights

The department may, in its absolute discretion, and without limiting any other right which the department may have, do all or any of the following at any time without giving notice or reasons:

- require additional information from an applicant
- change any of the requirements of these guidelines
- alter or vary any process, procedure or timing related to the grant opportunity, including any process, procedure or timing regarding the consideration or the evaluation of any proposal or all applications
- suspend or terminate the grant opportunity
- negotiate with one or more preferred applicants without prior notice to any other applicant
- terminate any negotiations being conducted with any applicant
- readvertise for new applicants
- consider any non-conforming application
- terminate further participation in the grant opportunity by any applicant for any reason (including if the department reasonably considers an application to contain any false or misleading claims or statements)
- not proceed with any funding deed, or
- proceed with a funding deed in ways not contemplated in these guidelines.

Intellectual property

All intellectual property rights in these guidelines remain the property of the department and the Commonwealth. Applicants are permitted to use these guidelines for the purpose of preparing an application only, and if successful, managing grant expenditure in accordance with these guidelines. Applicants must not use these guidelines, or any information contained in these guidelines for any other purpose.

Applications and information submitted in response to these guidelines may be used by the department and the Commonwealth Government for promotional material if successful, unless otherwise agreed between the applicant and the department. The applicant agrees that the department and the Commonwealth Government may make copies and reproduce applications for any purpose related to the grant opportunity. In addition, the department will retain (electronic and hard) copies of all applications.

No offer

These guidelines are not an offer, recommendation or invitation by the department in respect of any contract or commitment and are subject to a funding deed being fully executed by the parties involved.

Addenda

The department may, in its absolute discretion, issue an addendum to these guidelines. In each case, an addendum becomes part of these guidelines.

Disclaimer

Information in this publication is provided as general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a qualified professional.

The department recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment when using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness, and relevance of such information. Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.

These guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Department.

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 2024. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing May 2024. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development or the user's independent adviser.

Appendix A

Eligible Pilot Consortia and implementation grant amounts per consortia

| | | Existing eligible applicant | Implementation grant |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| | | | <p>The maximum grant amounts listed below includes funding for implementation planning and implementation activities.</p> <p>Please see 'Program Funding – Grant amounts' for details on the use of the implementation grant.</p> |
| Pilot round | | Maximum grant available | |
| Tamworth Regional Council Walcha Council | Tamworth Regional Council | | \$250,000 |
| Upper Lachlan Shire Council Hilltops Shire Council | Canberra Region Joint Organisation | | \$250,000 |
| Gwydir Shire Council Inverell Shire Council | Gwydir Shire Council | | \$250,000 |