QUEENSLAND RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Resilience and Risk Reduction
Funding Guidelines 2020-21

Australian Government

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PART A – OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

1. This document, the *Resilience and Risk Reduction Funding Guidelines 2020-21*, outlines the objectives and governance arrangements for grant funding available from the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund ($13.1 million) and the Managing Disaster Risk Fund ($6 million).

2. Part A of the Guidelines is an overview of the total amount of funding that is available, the program objectives, key dates, who can apply, the types of *projects* that are eligible, the types of *costs* that are eligible, and the key issues that will be considered in assessing and prioritising projects.

3. Part B of the Guidelines is an overview of the governance and administrative arrangements that will apply to successful projects, including progress reporting and progress claims, assurance activities, project acquittal requirements, record keeping, public acknowledgement requirements, and definitions of key terms.

Funding

4. The total amount of funding available is $19.1 million. This funding is from the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments.

5. Funding is comprised of:

    a. $13.1 million under the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF 2020-21) from the Queensland Government ($8.3 million) and the Commonwealth Government ($4.8 million)

    b. $6 million under the Commonwealth Government's Managing Disaster Risk program to support specific communities hardest hit by the 2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (see Appendix 1).

Objectives

6. This funding is to help reduce, mitigate and manage the risks of disasters and to make Queensland communities and infrastructure more resilient to disasters.

7. 'Resilience' is a system or community's ability to rapidly accommodate and recover from the impacts of hazards, restore essential structures and desired functionality, and adapt to new circumstances.

8. 'Disaster risk reduction, mitigation and management' is about taking preventative action to reduce the likelihood or severity of a disaster event. It is aimed at preventing new, and reducing existing, risk and managing residual risk. It also includes measures to understand disaster risk and equip decision-makers with capabilities and information they need. These measures contribute to strengthening resilience.

Relevant policies

9. The objectives to be achieved from this funding flow from the following policies and frameworks:

   a. the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience, and its implementation plan Resilient Queensland 2018-21
   b. event-specific recovery plans (for example the 2019 Queensland Bushfires State Recovery Plan 2019-2022, the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough – State Recovery Plan 2019–2021 and the Central Queensland Bushfires Recovery Plan 2018 – 2021)
   c. the Queensland Disaster Resilience and Mitigation Investment Framework
   d. the Queensland State Natural Hazards Risk Assessment
   e. the National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction, the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, and the National Guidance on Prioritisation
   f. the National Partnership Agreement on Grants Assistance to Primary Producers Impacted by the North Queensland Floods (Schedule 2D) and After the flood: A strategy for long-term recovery.

Key timeframes

10. Application stage

   a. Expression of Interests close on 7 April 2021.
   b. Short-listed applicants will then be invited to submit a detailed application.
   c. All applicants will be notified of outcomes by 30 June 2021.

11. Project delivery stage

   d. All projects must be complete by 30 June 2023.

12. Acquittal stage

   e. The project acquittal report is due within three months of the end of the financial year in which the project is complete.
   f. For projects completed in the 2021-22 financial year, the project acquittal report is due 30 September 2022.
   g. For projects completed in the 2022-23 financial year, the project acquittal report is due 30 September 2023.

Who may apply

13. Organisations that are eligible to apply for funding are called 'eligible applicants'.

14. Eligible applicants include:

   a. Local government bodies constituted under the *Local Government Act 2009* or the *City of Brisbane Act 2010*, and the Weipa Town Authority
   b. Regional Organisations of Councils
   c. Regional Natural Resource Management bodies
   d. River Improvement Trusts (constituted under the *River Improvement Trust Act 1940*)
   e. Water authorities and local water boards (Category 2 only)

f. Queensland Government departments and agencies and Government Owned Corporations
g. Incorporated non-government organisations (including volunteer groups)
h. Not-for-profit organisations, including universities.

Eligible projects

15. Projects must deliver resilience, risk reduction, risk mitigation and/or risk management outcomes for Queensland communities.

16. Projects may be infrastructure or non-infrastructure projects.

17. Examples of eligible projects that improve resilience and functionality of at-risk infrastructure and community assets, include:

a. roads, bridges, culverts, floodways, causeways, drainage management pump stations, stormwater systems, major drains
b. mitigation infrastructure, e.g. stormwater detention, levees
c. disaster management equipment, such as emergency generators (with evidence to support voltage required), portable communications kits, lighting towers and frequency radios
d. weather warning and monitoring systems and flood warning infrastructure

18. Examples of non-infrastructure projects include:

a. education programs to help communities plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters
b. capacity building programs for local volunteers
c. natural hazard modelling, risk assessments and studies, including risk reduction/mitigation options assessments
d. recovery capability and/or resilience building programs
e. activities to improve disaster-related information sharing, data collection and communication
f. strengthening the long-term resilience and wellbeing of disaster-affected residents
g. research/studies to identify and address resilience or risk reduction and/or risk management priorities
h. bushfire mitigation activities, such as fuel reduction activities and new/upgraded fire trails and breaks
i. building and supporting local disaster management and leadership capabilities
j. risk management studies suitable for complying with the State Planning Policy requirements for natural hazards, risk and resilience for making or amending planning schemes
k. salary of temporary risk reduction and resilience officers within program timelines, and up to no later than 30 June 2023.

19.   Collaborative projects are encouraged. Examples of past collaborative projects include:

      a.   a local government and a university undertaking research to identify and mitigate flood risks

      b.   a group of local governments collaborating to deliver capacity building programs for volunteers

      c.   a not-for-profit organisation and a private company developing an app for children to use in a disaster event

      d.   a group of local governments and other asset owners working together on a catchment-focussed project to mitigate against natural hazard/s.

Ineligible projects

20.   Examples of ineligible projects include:

      e.   projects that have already commenced or are already complete

      a.   projects that involve purchasing an asset or conducting works to an asset that will not be owned and/or controlled by an eligible applicant

      b.   projects that involve the purchase of land or buildings

      c.   projects that involve works on private land (unless demonstrably for public benefit)

      d.   projects of a commercial nature for the applicant or any partner applicant

      e.   projects that are not undertaken in Queensland or that do not benefit Queensland communities.

Eligible costs

21.   Eligible costs are costs directly associated with delivery of the project and are able to be funded through this program.

22.   Examples of eligible costs include:

      a.   costs associated with the delivery of training and education programs, such as facilities hire, planning and facilitation, design and publication of materials, community/public messaging such as radio, print media and billboard space, and reasonable travel costs (calculated on the basis of your organisations' travel policy)

      b.   construction costs, such as all site works required as part of the construction, and construction-related labour, materials and equipment hire

      c.   detailed design, for example, production of Final or Tender Design drawings and/or specifications

      d.   costs of conducting a tender for the proposed project

      e.   project management costs including remuneration of additional technical, professional and/or administrative staff for time directly related to managing the construction or delivery of the proposed project (does not include ordinary wages, executive duties or overhead charges)

      f.   purchase and installation of fixed plant and equipment, such as generators.

Ineligible costs

23. Total project costs are likely to include a mix of eligible and ineligible costs.

24. Ineligible costs are not funded by the program and will need to be met by the applicant.

25. Examples of ineligible project costs are:

    a. core business of the applicant (or a partner if a collaborative project)
    b. legal costs
    c. catering and official opening expenses (excluding permanent signage)
    d. purchase of core business capital equipment such as motor vehicles and office equipment
    e. vehicle and office equipment leasing, unless directly related to the delivery of the project
    f. remuneration of executive officers
    g. remuneration of existing employees for work not directly related to the project
    h. costs that are incurred prior to project approval, unless prior agreement has been reached with QRA to incur such costs
    i. duplication of existing initiatives, for example costs already approved through other funding streams
    j. statutory fees and charges, and any costs associated with obtaining regulatory and/or development approvals
    k. costs of internal furnishings and supplies
    l. costs beyond the project period, for example ongoing costs for administration, operation, maintenance or management
    m. costs not supported by the general ledger, including on-cost charges.
    n. profit margin of applicant
    o. Goods and Services Tax.

Applying for funding

26. Eligible applicants are invited to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI). Once EOIs have been considered, short-listed applicants will be invited to submit a detailed application.

Stage 1: Expressions of interest (EOI)

27. Applicants may submit more than one EOI.

28. EOIs can be lodged via MARS, or downloaded from the QRA website and emailed to submissions@qra.qld.gov.au.

29. The EOI requires applicants to provide information about the proposed project, including:

    a. Applicant name and details
    b. project name
    c. an indication of whether the project's primary focus is resilience or risk reduction
    d. an indication of whether the project is an infrastructure or non-infrastructure project
    e. an indication of the main objectives the project will deliver
    f. a description of the project
    g. how the project aligns to relevant policies, plans and strategies
    h. the geographic location of the project
    i. the amount of funding requested (maximum $2 million)
    j. the amount the applicant will contribute to the project, how that will be demonstrated, and an explanation if no contribution is proposed
    k. the estimated total cost of the project
    l. the proposed start date and duration of the project
    m. if an applicant is submitting more than one EOI, the priority of that project (i.e. if submitting three EOIs, whether the project is the applicant's first, second or third priority)
    n. whether funding is being sought from other sources for the same project
    o. whether the project is a collaborative project, and if so, the details of collaborating partners.

30. Collaborative projects require one EOI to be submitted by the lead applicant. The lead applicant will be responsible for the project application, delivery, reporting and acquittal.

31. Applicants may wish for consideration to be given for relevant projects that have been proposed under different funding programs.

32. QRA will review EOIs and invite short-listed applicants to submit a detailed application.

Stage 2: Detailed Application

33. Short-listed applicants will be notified and a detailed application form made available.

34. The type of information sought in the detailed application will include supporting evidence, preliminary and/or detailed designs, options analysis, cost benefit analysis, details about the outcomes the project will deliver, results of investigation/consultation, project plans, demonstration of co-contribution, and confirmation of support from the local community, council and/or relevant agencies.

Funding available for each project

35. Funding under these Guidelines will be approved as a *capped* amount per project.

36. The maximum amount that can be sought under these Guidelines is $2 million per project. Although the total cost of a project may be more than $2 million, the maximum amount available under the program is $2 million per project.

37. Applicants are expected to provide a co-contribution towards the total project cost. There is no specific or minimum co-contribution amount required. The co-contribution can be financial or in-kind.

38. Applicants need to be able to demonstrate that their co-contribution can be met, and if the co-contribution is being provided by another source, documentation of that commitment may be required.

39. Unspent funds will be returned to the program and may be reallocated to other projects.

Assessment

40. QRA's assessment process is based on the *Queensland Disaster Resilience and Mitigation Investment Framework*.

41. In assessing whether a project is eligible, QRA will consider the following:

    a. Issue identification and alignment to broader government policy, i.e. does the proposed project address a need that has been identified and does it align with other policies and frameworks, for example, those in iv) Relevant policies?

    b. Cost-benefit analysis and evidence base, i.e. does quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of the costs and benefits support the forecast effectiveness of the project?

    c. Community benefit realisation, i.e. does the project inform and educate the community, or build capacity, or deliver social, cultural, health and environmental benefits, and/or make a service, infrastructure or the community more resilient?

    d. Project management, i.e. is the applicant able to deliver the project on time and within budget, and maintain any ongoing requirements associated with the project?

42. In prioritising projects, QRA will consider whether local and regional needs are balanced, whether duplication of effort and funding is avoided, whether vulnerable groups/diverse populations are supported, and whether alternative funding streams may be available for projects.

43. QRA will consult with relevant agencies and/or relevant Minister for review and/or endorsement of projects.

44. The QRA CEO provides final project approval.

45. Information about unsuccessful projects will be retained by QRA and may be re-considered should further funding become available.

PART B – GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

46. The following governance and administrative arrangements will apply to successful projects.

Detailed design review

47. Where there are material changes following detailed design and procurement for an approved project, applicants must provide QRA with updated project information.

Progress reporting and progress claims

48. Monthly progress reporting by applicants is mandatory throughout project delivery to update QRA on status against approved project scope, expenditure and timeframe. Monthly progress reports are created and lodged through QRA's Monitoring and Reporting System (MARS) Portal, detailing:

   a. actual expenditure reported against the approved capped amount
   b. percentage of scope of works completed
   c. delivery against project milestones
   d. reasons for, and details of, any variances in scope, cost or time
   e. details of complementary works.

49. Once actual expenditure has exceeded the initial 30 per cent advance, applicants can progressively claim expenditure incurred up to 90 per cent of the approved capped value or the Estimated Final Cost (whichever is the lowest).

50. Claims for expenditure must be lodged with a progress report, a general ledger or transaction report (or similar financial document produced from the applicant's financial system) demonstrating the actual expenditure incurred against the Recommended Value of the approved scope of works.

Extensions of time

51. Extensions of time to the approved project completion date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Applicants are required to formally request an extension of time, detailing the unforeseen circumstance impacting on project completion, the actions taken to minimise the impact, and the adjusted project plan and milestones.

Project acquittal report

52. Project acquittal reports must include:

   a. a final progress report detailing the completed scope reported against the approved project scope
   b. final actual expenditure reported against the approved capped amounts

      c.   detailed general ledger evidencing the final actual expenditure claimed (including details of contribution reduction) supporting documents to be made available for sampling by QRA if requested

      d.   evidence demonstrating the completed scope of activities or works –

- Infrastructure projects: JPG including EXIF metadata, (GPS coordinates and date taken) typical of the work that has been completed

- Non-infrastructure projects: a report on the completed activity outcomes against the approved project

53.   Acquittals must be certified by the Accountable Officer on lodgement.

Assurance activities

54.   Agencies/applicants may be required to provide documentation to support any assurance activities. These assurance activities may include, but are not limited to:

      a.   audit, site visits or inspections

      b.   obtaining relevant documentary evidence to support estimated costs and/or value for money assessments

      c.   verification reviews on measures or projects.

Certification

55.   All submissions, including progress reports, must be certified by the applicant in line with its delegations.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

56.   When claiming reimbursement of expenditure the amount to be lodged must be the GST exclusive actual cost incurred.

Funding Agreement

57.   It is a requirement that all recipients of QRA funding enter into a Head Agreement with QRA.

58.   Where a recipient is successful in its application for funding, QRA will issue a Project Funding Schedule which, when executed by both parties, will be considered a binding Project Funding Agreement under the terms and conditions of the Head Agreement.

59.   The Project Funding Schedule will detail the terms and conditions specific to the approved funding, including reference to the relevant funding guidelines that govern the program, funding type and amount, key date and milestone schedules, payment claim and reporting requirements.

Procurement

60. The procurement of goods or services must be in accordance with the applicant's procurement policy. When procuring goods or services, local governments must act in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* and the Local Government Regulation 2012 and their own procurement policy. State government agencies must comply with the Queensland Procurement Policy.

Record keeping

61. All successful applicants must keep an accurate audit trail.

62. Records must be available for seven years from the end of the financial year the claim is acquitted by the Queensland and/or Australian Government.

63. For assurance purposes, the Queensland and/or Australian Government may at any time, via QRA, request documentation from agencies to evidence the State's compliance with these Guidelines. This may include, but is not limited to, access to project level information to confirm acquittal in accordance with these Guidelines.

Public acknowledgment of funding source

64. Funding recipients must acknowledge relevant funding contributions in public materials. This includes, but is not limited to:

    a. Media releases regarding the approved project
    b. Acknowledgement or statements in project publications and materials
    c. Events that use or include reference to the approved project
    d. Plaques and signage at construction sites or completed works.

65. To comply with this requirement, all public advice and media releases should refer to the relevant funding source, as detailed in the Project Funding Schedule/Agreement.

66. Contact QRA for assistance and to coordinate approval for any materials by emailing media@qra.qld.gov.au.

Appendix 1 – Managing disaster risk in 14 communities impacted by the 2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough

i. Of the total $19.1 million funding pool for Resilience and Risk Reduction Funding 2020-21, $6 million in Commonwealth Government funding is earmarked for 14 local governments that were among those hardest hit by the 2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough.

ii. QRA is administering this funding for the Commonwealth Government, via Resilience and Risk Reduction Funding 2020-21. Applicants do not need to identify whether they are eligible for this funding. This will be managed by QRA through the Expression of Interest process.

iii. The relevant local government areas were activated for Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants for Primary Producers following the 2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, and are eligible to access specific Commonwealth Government funding related to the *National Partnership Agreement on Grants Assistance to Primary Producers Impacted by the North Queensland Floods* (Schedule 2D).

iv. The 14 local government areas are:
   a. Burdekin Shire Council
   b. Burke Shire Council
   c. Carpentaria Shire Council
   d. Charters Towers Regional Council
   e. Cloncurry Shire Council
   f. Douglas Shire Council
   g. Etheridge Shire Council
   h. Flinders Shire Council
   i. Hinchinbrook Shire Council
   j. McKinlay Shire Council
   k. Richmond Shire Council
   l. Townsville City Council
   m. Whitsunday Regional Council
   n. Winton Shire Council

v. The Commonwealth 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.

vi. 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.

vii. The Strategy has five strategic pillars, underpinned by 19 actions (refer Table 1), which reflect what communities, businesses and people said were essential to ensure future prosperity and resilience of the flood-affected regions.

Table 1: *After the flood* strategic pillars and identified actions

1. Broadening the economic base	2. Building more resilient infrastructure	3. Building prosperous enterprises	4. Fostering connected and cohesive communities	5. Supporting information enabled regions
Focus areas: • Broadening the base in the agricultural sector • Broadening the base outside the agricultural sector • Place-based approaches	Focus areas: • Water infrastructure • Supply chain infrastructure • Telecommunications and electricity	Focus areas: • Fostering innovation • Best practice management for improving business fundamentals • Rebuilding the herd and managing the environment	Focus areas: • Mental wellbeing • Leadership and local capability • Community services	Focus areas: • Improved collection and availability of information • Building skills and using information • Disaster planning and management
Actions: • Incentivise and facilitate investment • Improve information collection and sharing • Facilitate opportunities for collaboration	Actions: • Identify gaps and opportunities • Ensure collaborative planning • Incentivise and coordinate investment	Actions: • Connect business with the best available, regionally relevant information to secure long-term change • Create opportunities to innovate, share ideas and design regionally relevant solutions • Support innovation and technology that improves business natural disaster management • Invest in natural capital and business training to achieve long-term sustainability and profitability	Actions: • Ensure health services coordinate and increase cross-sector collaboration • Focus on preventive health measures • Support and fund community infrastructure and events • Support and invest in local leadership capability • Build disaster management capability • Encourage the delivery of innovative educational opportunities for regional areas	Actions: • Ensure information is captured and shared • Build skills and digital capability • Improve collection and use of disaster related information

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