

Flexible Funding Grants

Joint (Commonwealth and Queensland Governments)
Guidelines



Australian Government



**Queensland
Government**

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Part A – Overview and objectives

Program Information

Funding Program – Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Category C

Purpose – Flexible Funding Grants are aimed at driving recovery and resilience in communities impacted by the *Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, Ex TC Seth SEQ Rainfall and Flooding, and Southern Queensland Flooding* events

Available Funding – \$19 million total funding. Round One \$6 million. Round Two \$13 million

Eligible Applicants – Queensland-based non-government organisations, research bodies, industry groups and peak bodies, community groups, and Local Governments within the 39 LGAs listed in **Appendix 1**

Administered by – Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE)

More information – email: qldfloods@chde.qld.gov.au

Overview

The Flexible Funding Grants (FFG) is an initiative of a jointly funded Australian and Queensland Government (50:50) exceptional circumstances Category C funding package approved under the *Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)*.

The FFG will provide funding for a range of recovery projects such as support for local governments and key partners to develop resilience strategies to support preparation, planning, response, and recovery from flooding events. This will drive economic recovery at the local level and build local government and community capacity for future events, providing continual improvement for recovery into the future.

The funding will allow local communities to provide programs that address issues as they arise, reduce future risks, and minimise the community's dependence on government financial assistance measures after disasters.

Objectives and outcomes

The objectives of the Flexible Funding Grants Program are to provide funding to non-government organisations, research bodies, industry groups and peak bodies, community groups, and Local Governments to implement projects that help the community become more sustainable and resilient after these rainfall and flooding events.

The Flexible Funding Grants Program assists communities to:

- reduce future risks and minimise community dependence on government assistance
- enhance self-efficacy and community-efficacy
- minimise negative impacts and embrace opportunities
- promote connectedness and encourage support networks and social inclusion
- support and promote opportunities for sustainable economic recovery
- support business and service provider continuity
- promote preparedness and resilience to future disasters.

Funded projects must contribute to 1 or more of the following disaster recovery outcomes:

- the needs of vulnerable groups are addressed in disaster recovery
- the community is aware of the disaster recovery processes
- the community can express its changing disaster recovery needs
- community members are aware of the risks of future disasters
- the community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters

- business and not-for-profit organisations have in place adequate mitigation practices for risks and threats
- government, private sector and civil society and organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery.

Key timeframes

Round 1 Flexible Funding Grants to be released in September 2022.

Round 2 Flexible Funding Grants to be released in April 2023.

All approved projects must be completed within 12 months of the project start date, and by no later than 30 June 2024.

All approved projects and expenditure must be acquitted to DCHDE by 31 August 2024.

Funding

A total of \$19.5 million in joint DRFA Category C funding is approved as a capped amount to deliver approved activities in response to eligible extraordinary events.

Additional funding rounds may be undertaken if funding is not exhausted. Eligible applicants may lodge multiple grant applications.

The following grant caps apply to each project application

- Small grants: Minimum \$2,500 up to a maximum of \$50,000
- Large grants: Minimum \$50,001 up to a maximum of \$100,000

All costs are to be fully expended and acquitted to DCHDE by 31 August 2024.

Eligible applicants

Non-government organisations, research bodies, industries groups and peak bodies, community groups, and Local Governments with eligible project proposals within the DRFA-activated local government areas for the *Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, Ex Tropical Cyclone Seth, SEQ Rainfall and Flooding* and *Southern Queensland Flooding* events (Appendix 1).

Refer to activation summaries on QRA's website: <https://www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations>

In exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to applicants who do not meet the eligibility criteria above, upon agreement between the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and the National Recovery and Resilience Agency (NRRA).

Eligible projects/activities

Eligible project examples include:

- a) small projects that facilitate community capacity and resilience building and assist communities to understand risk and how to be better prepared for hazards in the future
- b) neighbourhood and community strengthening activities that focus specifically on capacity building for future disaster preparedness
- c) workshops or education/information sessions on issues such as insurance awareness, disaster preparation, disaster proofing homes and developing person centred or household disaster plans
- d) establishing inclusive regional disaster resilience planning networks involving people at heightened risk of vulnerability during and after disasters and/or their representatives, local governments and key stakeholders such as industry and peak bodies, community and health service providers, chamber of commerce and emergency service agencies
- e) developing knowledge and skills across local governments and communities to improve recovery outcomes, and future disaster risk reduction and resilience

- f) focused recovery support services for impacted small businesses and primary producers, which will include business advisors and mentoring
- g) community group forums could provide access to individual support for recovery services, grants, insurance, business financial counselling, advice/and or mentoring Grants
- h) delivering community training and skills development, such as psychological first aid training or small business continuity/contingency planning or peer support networks to assist people with increased risk of vulnerability during and after a disaster or businesses to survive in the short to medium term
- i) establishing and building resilience in collaboration with other key disaster management stakeholders
- j) commemorative and reflective gardens or public memorials
- k) community events and other community arts, sporting, and cultural projects
- l) opportunities to support the community to reconnect and
- m) projects that can demonstrate how they contribute to the objectives outlined in event specific Recovery Plans or LGA Recovery and Resilience Plans.

Projects may be targeted to address specific recovery and resilience needs for:

- children and families
- young people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- people with a disability
- seniors
- small businesses
- primary producers
- service providers.

Costs

The applicant will be responsible for all costs over and above the approved funding amount and for ineligible costs.

Eligible costs

Eligible costs must be directly associated with delivery of approved eligible projects/activities. All costs directly associated with delivering the approved project and excluding ineligible costs.

Ineligible costs

Ineligible costs may include, but not limited to:

- costs associated with ineligible project activities
- costs of preparing applications, reports or associated supporting material
- legal costs
- in-kind contributions
- purchase of land or property and restoration of infrastructure such as buildings, roads, or bridges
- salaries or general operating costs not directly associated with delivering an approved project
- cash prizes or commercial gifts
- work already commenced or completed prior to grant approval
- core business for an organisation
- purchase of core business capital equipment such as motor vehicles and office equipment

- remuneration of permanent employees or executive officers for work not directly related to funded FFG projects
- existing staff positions
- land acquisition costs
- duplication of existing initiatives
- furnishings and supplies
- temporary works, other than those required to enable completion of the proposed project
- ongoing costs for administration, operation or maintenance
- remuneration of employees for work not directly related to the proposed project
- unsupported on-cost charges and non-specific indirect and overhead costs
- vehicle leasing, unless directly related to the delivery of the project
- replacing losses covered by insurance or claimable through other funding sources
- privately owned cultural assets, including collections, buildings, and spaces
- capital works/places/objects owned by a State or Commonwealth Government department, agency, or authority
- profit/margin of applicant
- environmental restoration
- projects benefiting individuals or individual businesses or primary producers.

Part B – Application process

How to apply

All applications are to be submitted via the [SmartyGrants](#) grant administration system. Applications submitted outside of SmartyGrants will not be accepted.

Applicants may apply for a grant for more than one project.

Small grant applications (Min. \$2,500 up to \$50,000) should meet the Program objectives and eligibility criteria, and:

- a) demonstrate how the project contributes to the recovery of the community from the impact of the disaster and/or contributes to the future disaster preparedness and resilience of the community
- b) include evidence of community support and participation in the project.

Large grant applications (Min. \$50,001 up to \$100,000) should meet the Program objectives and eligibility criteria, and:

- a) demonstrate how the project contributes to the recovery of the community and/or how it contributes to the future disaster preparedness and resilience of the community
- b) include demonstrated evidence (additional to support letters) of significant community support for the project, evidence of endorsement by the Local Recovery Groups and/or Local Disaster Management Group and outline how it contributes to local recovery and/or resilience priorities
- c) outline approach to ensure the recovery and resilience initiative is inclusive of the diversity of the community and/or relevant stakeholder groups including any demonstrated evidence (additional to support letters) of community participation in the development and implementation of the proposed project
- d) include confirmation of alternative funding source of any ongoing costs (e.g., maintenance of facilities)

- e) include a light project plan noting significant milestones supporting the objectives of the proposal.

A detailed project plan, detailing the deliverables, milestones, and timelines etc., will be required within the first quarterly funded period to support all approved Large Grant projects.

Progress reporting

Applicants with approved grant projects are required to provide quarterly progress reports to DCHDE including:

- actual expenditure reported against the approved capped amount
- percentage of activities completed
- project milestones, start and finish dates
- any variances in activities, cost or time.

Applicants may also be requested to provide a case study which may be published on QRA's website and social media.

Project reporting

Applicants with approved Small Grant projects are required to provide:

- quarterly progress reports outlining achievements and deliverables completed within the reporting period (i.e., against what was identified in the application).

Applicants with approved Large Grant projects are required to provide:

- quarterly progress reports outlining achievements and deliverables completed within the reporting period (i.e., against what was identified in the application).
- a detailed general ledger or transaction report supporting actual expenditure incurred in delivering the funded project in that quarter.

Acquittal

A Final Project Acquittal report must be submitted to DCHDE **within three months of project completion**, or at the latest by the end of the financial year in which the works were completed.

Acquittal reports must be certified by the Chief Executive Officer (or an equivalent delegate) and must include:

- completion report outlining achievements and deliverables against what was identified in the project application
- actual costs reported against the capped amount and evidence of expenditure claimed, linked to the activities, including:
 - detailed general ledger or transaction report in editable format to support all claimed expenditure
 - all source documents (e.g. tax invoices, timesheets) supporting the claimed
- photographs and/or case studies are desirable, if appropriate.

Additionally, **Large Grant project acquittal reports must also include:**

- final progress report
- evidence demonstrating the completed project achievements against the deliverables identified in the project application
- an independently-audited financial statement and detailed general ledger / payroll report or invoice evidencing the final actual expenditure claimed.

QRA will undertake a final assessment of each project to ensure approved scope is delivered within timeframe, expenditure is eligible and assurance requirements are satisfied.

Part C - Governance

Funding agreement

As a condition of accepting this funding, each Funding Recipient will be required to enter into a formal funding agreement with DCHDE. The funding agreement provides details on general and specific conditions of funding associated with the delivery of this Grant.

The agreement will include information about the Funding Recipient and approved Grants details including conditions of funding (timeframes for project completion, how funds can be spent, accountability and acquittal processes, forecast claim dates, reporting requirements and acknowledgement of government funding).

Grant funding payments will be made through a 90% release on execution of the contract, and the remaining 10% released on conclusion of the project with the submission of all required reports to the department's satisfaction. Applicants should ensure that their project is deliverable with this staged release of funding prior to applying.

All grant recipients will be required to register in the department's online reporting portal [Procure to Invest](#) (P2i).

Variations

All variations to a Project Funding Agreement, scope or change in control of a project are to be agreed formally in writing between the Funding Recipient and DCHDE.

Where there are material changes following a project approval, Funding Recipients must provide DCHDE with updated project information.

Procurement

The procurement of goods or services must be in accordance with the applicant's procurement policy. When procuring goods or services, local governments must align 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.

If expenditure is in breach of the applicant's procurement standards, then reimbursement of these costs is unable to be sought under the DRFA.

Record keeping

All grant recipients must keep an accurate audit trail. DRFA records must be available for seven (7) years from the end of the financial year the claim is acquitted by the Australian Government.

For assurance purposes, the Australian Government may at any time, via QRA, request documentation from grant recipients to evidence the State's compliance with any aspect of the DRFA. This may include, but not be limited to access to project level information including transaction listings of eligible expenditure that reconcile to the claimed amount, and support for each transaction (for example, contracts, invoices and timesheets) to confirm acquittal in accordance with the DRFA.

Extension of time

An extension of time (EOT) beyond the detailed eligible timeframes may be requested in exceptional circumstances.

Applicants are required to formally request an EOT and contact your DCHDE contract officer as early as possible, detailing the unforeseen circumstances impacting project completion, the actions taken to minimize the impact, and the adjusted project plan and milestones.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Flexible Funding Grants program may be evaluated by QRA against a series of key evaluation questions which cover the domains of Appropriateness, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability.

Assurance activities

Applicants may be required to provide documentation to support any assurance activities. These assurance activities may include, but are not limited to: audit, site visits or inspections, obtaining relevant documentary evidence to support estimated/actual costs and/or value for money assessments, verification reviews on measures or projects compliance with legislative and policy requirements.

Certification

All applications, including progress and acquittal reports, must be certified by the agency/applicant Chief executive Officer / Director in line with its delegations.

Good and Services Tax (GST)

All amounts claimed must exclude GST and be actual expenditure, paid prior to lodging the submission.

Public acknowledgement of joint Australian Government and State Government assistance

Eligible applicants must acknowledge DRFA funding contribution in public materials, which includes but is not limited to:

- a) media releases, social media, posters, advertising and signage associated with the approved project
- b) acknowledgement or statements in project publications and materials
- c) events that use or include reference to the approved project.

To comply with this requirement, all public advice and media releases should refer to the relevant funding source, as being “jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements”.

Prior agreement must be reached with DCHDE. DCHDE, through the QRA, will oversee approval of media events and associated materials, in consultation with the National Recovery and Resilience Agency.

All publications must also include both the State and Commonwealth Government logos and the following disclaimer: ‘Although funding for this product has been provided by both the Australian and Queensland Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either Government’.

As the funding programs are being delivered, DCHDE in conjunction with the funding recipients, will identify announcement, progress and finalisation of program media opportunities. DCHDE will communicate these opportunities to QRA, which will advise the National Recovery and Resilience Agency.

Appendix 1: List of LGAs activated for DRFA across events

1. Balonne Shire Council
2. Banana Shire Council
3. Barcaldine Regional Council
4. Barcoo Shire Council
5. Blackall-Tambo Regional Council
6. Boulia Shire Council
7. Brisbane City Council
8. Bundaberg Regional Council
9. Carpentaria Shire Council
10. Central Highlands Regional Council
11. Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire
12. Diamantina Shire Council
13. Flinders Shire Council
14. Fraser Coast Regional Council
15. Gladstone Regional Council
16. Gold Coast City Council
17. Goondiwindi Regional Council
18. Gympie Regional Council
19. Ipswich City Council
20. Isaac Regional Council
21. Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council
22. Livingstone Shire Council
23. Lockyer Valley Regional Council
24. Logan City Council
25. Longreach Regional Council
26. Maranoa Regional Council
27. Moreton Bay Regional
28. Murweh Shire Council
29. Noosa Shire Council
30. North Burnett Regional Council
31. Redland City Council
32. Rockhampton Regional Council
33. Scenic Rim Regional Council
34. Somerset Regional Council
35. South Burnett Regional Council
36. Southern Downs Regional Council
37. Sunshine Coast Regional Council
38. Toowoomba Regional Council
39. Western Downs Regional Council.