

Questions and Answers

Smart Farms Small Grants

1. What is the closing time and date for applications?

The Application Form/s must be submitted by **2.00pm AEDT on Thursday 7 December 2017**. It is recommended that you submit your application/s **well before the closing time and date**.

2. If I am not able to submit my application by the due time and date, can I be granted an extension?

No, extensions will not be given. If an application is late or the Community Grants Hub is requested to approve a lodgement after the closing date the [late application policy](#) available on the Community Grants Hub website will apply.

3. Can an applicant make changes to the application after it has been submitted?

If you find a mistake in your application after it has been submitted, you should contact the Community Grants Hub by phone on 1800 020 283 or by email at support@communitygrants.gov.au straight away. The Community Grants Hub may ask you for more information, as long as it does not change the substance of your application. The Community Grants Hub does not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from applicants to correct applications after the closing time.

4. How do I know that my application has been received?

When you submit your application you should receive an acknowledgement email, so that you know that your submission has been received. This may take a few moments, depending on your internet connection. Please wait for the acknowledgement email before closing the application form.

5. Are not for profit organisations eligible to apply?

Yes, not for profit organisations eligible to apply. Please refer to section 4.2 of the guidelines for further information about who is eligible to apply for a grant.

6. What attachments do I need to include in my application?

A requirement for the funding round is that attachments specified in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (section 7.4, noting there are different requirements for the two Tiers) **must** be provided with your application (using the mandatory templates available as part of the grant opportunity documents available on GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites – either Tier 1 or Tier 2).

(Note: One of the attachments is a plan to deliver a communications strategy. You are **not** being asked for a detailed communication strategy, which will all be an early deliverable through the grant agreement if you are a successful applicant. What you are asked to deliver through the attachment is a brief outline of how and when you will prepare the communications strategy.)

There will be instructions in the application form to help you. Only attach the documents you have been asked to include.

If you do not attach these documents using the specified templates in the application form your application will not be assessed.

7. How much funding is available for this Program?

Smart Farms Small Grants is offering up to \$50 million over six years (2017-18 to 2022-23) through annual grant rounds. The available funding for the 2017-18 round is up to \$5 million. There will be two categories of projects—Tier 1 and Tier 2.

1. Tier 1 – grants for these projects will be between \$5 000 and \$50 000 (GST exclusive).
2. Tier 2 – grants for these projects will be between \$50 001 and \$100 000 (GST exclusive).

8. Why is the funding categorised into Tier1 and Tier 2?

Previous sustainable agriculture small grants, which had more limited total funds to offer, focused on small on-ground projects up to \$50 000. With the substantial increase in total funds now available (up to \$50 million over six years) there is opportunity to also look at funding some of these types of projects at a larger scale.

9. Are research projects eligible for funding?

No. Smart Farms Small Grants is focused on on-ground delivering of tools and practices to improve the sustainable management of natural resources, not to fund basic research. Some demonstration and trial work would likely be eligible, and there are some examples under section 5 of the guidelines.

10. What is a Consortium?

A consortium is two or more organisations who are working together to combine their capabilities when developing and delivering a grant activity.

A lead organisation must be an incorporated body which is able to enter into the Grant Agreement. If you submit a joint application, you must nominate a lead organisation for the application. The lead organisation for the project will, if your application is successful, sign the Grant Agreement, receive the funding and take legal responsibility for performing the activities and meeting the outcomes of the Grant Agreement.

11. Would the Department prefer a consortium (joint) arrangement?

Individual and consortia/joint applications will be considered equally.

12. Is there a limit to the number of applications that applicants can submit?

No. There is no limit to the number of applications that an applicant can submit before the closing date for applications. As per section 7.6 of the grants guidelines, applicants are asked to complete a new application form for each project that they submit. Applicants should keep a copy of each submitted application.

13. I have an idea for a project for the Small Grants Round. Can the department provide me with advice about my planned activities whether they meet the grants objectives?

During the application process, the department cannot provide advice to potential applicants about specific project ideas. This includes making any comments about the merit of a project or any of the planned activities and whether they meet the grants objectives. This is to ensure that the process remains fair and impartial, not advantaging one applicant above another.

14. What are the contract conditions for this grant?

A copy of the Terms and Conditions for the Grant Agreement is included as part of the grant opportunity documents available on GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites.

15. When will I know the outcome of my application?

You will be notified of the outcome of your application in writing, at the end of the selection process. For probity reasons, to treat all applicants fairly and equally, it is not possible to give you information about the status of individual applications during the assessment process.

16. Where should I go for further information?

If you have any questions, please call 1800 020 283 or Text Telephone / Teletype Terminal / TeleTyperwriter (TTY) 1800 555 677 or email support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within five working days.

17. What Feedback will be available for this funding round?

General feedback summaries for open funding rounds will be published on the Community Grants Hub website to provide all organisations with easy to access information about the assessment process overall and the main strengths and areas for improving future applications.

Individual feedback will be available upon written request.

18. What is a sponsor?

A project sponsor is a legal entity who chooses to apply on behalf of an individual or an organisation that cannot do so themselves because they are not an eligible legal entity. Please check the guidelines section 4.2.3 for sponsor eligibility. If the application is successful, the sponsor is responsible for the project meeting the grant agreement obligations but is not directly involved in the on-ground delivery of the project.

Sponsor arrangements are not available for Tier 2.

19. What is a co-contribution?

A co-contribution is the provision of cash or in-kind resources to the project by an applicant or other entities. All co-contributions are in addition to grant funding. For more information on co-contributions, please refer to section 5.5 of the guidelines.

Cash and/or in-kind contributions must be included in the project budget.

20. What is the difference between a 'cash contribution' and an 'in-kind contribution'?

Collectively, cash and in-kind contributions are known as co-contributions.

Cash contributions: A cash contribution is the actual money that an individual, group or organisation provides to the project. Cash contributions should be able to be seen as entries into a bank account. This needs to be included as part of the project budget.

In-kind contributions: In-kind contributions are goods, services, equipment loans or labour that others provide to the project. An in-kind contribution may include, for example, contributed 'time' for a project manager, availability of office space, trial land, equipment that would otherwise need to be hired. Applicants should substantiate the value of the in-kind contributions based on reasonable market value of the resources brought to the project. This will need to be included as part of the project budget.

21. Is a co-contribution compulsory?

Activities on private land must include contributions. The option to include a co-contribution to the project is to balance significant private benefit of a project.

Please refer to sections 5.5 of the guidelines.

22. How long will it take for applications to be assessed?

Please refer to Part 7.2 of the guidelines regarding application process timing. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications.

23. What are the tax implications of receiving a grant?

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#) for more information.

24. When can I start my project?

A recipient must not commence work on the Project before a funding agreement is executed with the Department. Payment will not be backdated for activities that commenced before the execution of the funding agreement, and no payments will be made unless a funding agreement has been executed. Please refer to section 7.2 of the guidelines for application process timing.

New question and answer added 26 October

25. I have clicked the imbedded hyperlink in point 2.5 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and am unable to locate the government's priorities report and background reports on regional priorities that are specified to be available on at the Australian Government's natural resource management website.

The government's priorities are now discussed in the Regional Land Partnerships Consultation Paper. This draws upon the information in the government's priorities reports and background reports that are not yet publically available. The Regional Land Partnerships Consultation Paper can be accessed at the [National Landcare Program](#) page.

New question and answer added 2 November

26. Can all regional, regional/catchment natural resource management bodies, including those established by a state government, apply for the Smart Farms Small Grant Tier 2?

Yes. Please refer to section 4.2.6 of the Smart Farms Small Grants Guidelines.

New question and answer added 6 November

27. What is the difference between “Conducting surveys” which is an eligible activity and “Basic research” which is an ineligible activity?

Conducting surveys can be used as a monitoring/evaluation tool in projects, which is an eligible budget item as stated in section 5.3 of the Small Grant Guidelines. For example, surveys can be used to measure change in knowledge and/or capacity of a stakeholder as a result of participating in workshops, field days, courses and on-ground demonstrations. This work generally involves a baseline survey being carried out before an event and then another survey at a later date, therefore determining if there has been any increase in knowledge as a result of an intervention and if this has resulted in a change of practice. Similarly, surveys can also be carried out at the start of a project and at completion to measure changes in knowledge and/or capacity of a land manager or stakeholder as a result of the project.

Basic research is considered to be an in depth study to gain greater knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of a subject through detailed observable facts. For example, this would include a replicated trial where large quantities of data are gathered. As stated in the Guidelines at Section 5.4, basic research is not eligible.

Demonstration of new techniques is a valid and effective extension tool and therefore an eligible budget item for a project. For example, a new practice could be demonstrated with the aim of ground truthing or comparing it to current district practice. This could also be used to test the suitability of a new practice a different industry or region. This demonstration work can assist in farmers adopting new or improved practices.

28. Please clarify whether organisations that are operating or appointed under state legislation that are Livestock Health and Pest Authorities, and Committees of Management for crown land reserves and are also regional/catchment natural resource management bodies, are eligible to apply?

Determining whether you are eligible to apply for and receive a grant is very important. If you are not legally eligible for a specific funding opportunity your application will not proceed to the assessment phase.

There are many types of organisations generally eligible to apply for funding opportunities. Eligibility entity types are shown in The Grant Opportunity Guidelines in section 4.2.

In this particular instance, refer to 4.2.6 bullet point 3 to determine if your organisation is eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

29. I would like to enquire as the eligibility of universities for Tier 2 funding under the National Landcare Program Small Farms Small Grants Round 2017-18 funding. The guidelines specify that universities are not eligible for Tier 1 funding, but universities are not listed as either eligible or not eligible for Tier 2 funding. The university does not fall under any of the other categories listed. Given that it isn't listed as 'non eligible', does that mean that universities can apply for Tier 2 funding?

Determining whether you are eligible to apply for and receive a grant is very important. If you are not legally eligible for a specific funding opportunity your application will not proceed to the assessment phase.

There are many types of organisations generally eligible to apply for funding opportunities. Eligibility entity types are shown in The Grant Opportunity Guidelines in section 4.2.

In this particular instance, A University, may be the type of legal entity listed at 4.2.5 and is therefore capable of entering into a legally binding and enforceable agreement with the Commonwealth, and therefore be eligible to apply for a Tier 2 small grant.