



Australian Government

**Community
Grants Hub**
Improving your grant experience



Future Drought Fund: Adoption and Innovation Hubs to Build Drought Resilience – Competitive Grant

Questions and Answers

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

The application form must be submitted by **11.00 pm AEDT on 23 December 2020**.
Late applications will not be accepted.

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

Late applications will not be accepted.

3. Can I apply for funding if I am receiving funding or have received funding for the same activity?

You cannot spend grant money on activities that you receive funding for under any other government program unless this funding is an identified co-contribution.

Please refer to section 5 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

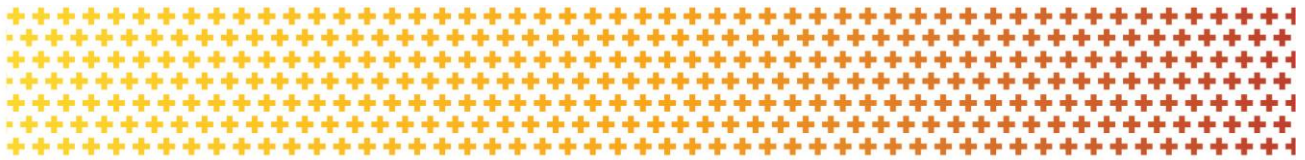
4. Is sourcing additional cash and in-kind contributions required?

A matching co-contribution is required. The grant amount will be up to 50% of eligible project costs (grant percentage). The remaining 50% of eligible project costs we consider your contribution. Your contribution can be a mix of cash and in-kind support.

Your co-contribution can come from any source other than the Commonwealth including state, territory and local government, research organisations, industry and other Hubs partners. State and/or territory government participation is encouraged.

The extent and nature of co-contributions will be a consideration in assessing applications.

Please refer to section 15 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.



5. Who is eligible to apply as a lead applicant for a grant?

To be eligible you must have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be one of the following:

- a Company ¹
- a co-operative
- an Indigenous corporation
- a local government entity
- an incorporated association (for example, an incorporated not for profit organisation)
- an incorporated joint venture between an Australian state/territory government agency and a university or other organisation
- a registered higher education provider for the purposes of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth), that is registered in a provider category that permits the use of the word “university”
- A Trust.²

For the purposes of this grant opportunity:

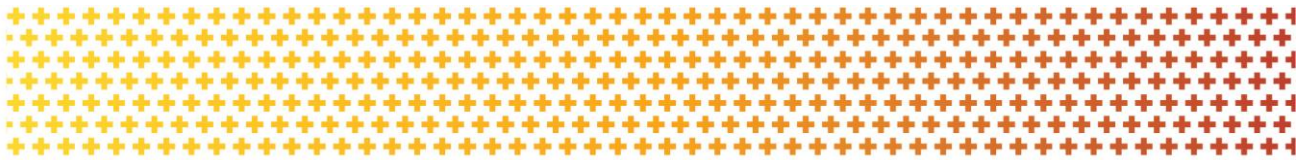
- An incorporated association is an association that has been incorporated or registered as an incorporated association under the relevant incorporated associations legislation in the state or territory in which they were formed.
- An incorporated joint venture is where the participants arrange for the incorporation of a separate legal entity to pursue an agreed business objective.

An important intention of the program is that Hubs include higher education providers. The definition that is included provides clarity that, to be eligible to be a lead applicant, the registered higher education providers must be registered in a category under the relevant Act that permits the provider to be called a university. Higher education providers that are not registered in such a category are not eligible to be a lead applicant for this grant opportunity.

While one of the above types of organisations must be the Hub lead, there are no restrictions on the types of entities that can be part of the Hub consortium.

¹ Company is a company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth)

² Trusts are not legal entities in their own right – to be eligible, only the Trustee for the Trust can apply by providing the signed Trust Deed and any subsequent variations with the application form. Trustees must be an eligible entity type as stated in section 4.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Both the Trust's and Trustee's details will be collected in the application form.



6. Who is not eligible to apply as a lead applicant for a grant?

The following organisation/individuals are not eligible to apply as a lead organisation for the Hub grant:

- Non-corporate Commonwealth Entity
- Commonwealth Company
- Unincorporated Association
- Australian state/territory government agency or body (not referred to as being eligible above)
- International Entity
- Sole Trader
- Partnership³
- Person⁴
- any organisation not included in section 4.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

For the purposes of this grant opportunity:

- Commonwealth entities and companies and Australian state/territory government agencies or bodies are generally not eligible to lead a Hub application. However, universities are eligible to lead a Hub application and can be a statutory entity, corporate Commonwealth entity or a corporate state/territory entity.
- A Partnership is an agreement by legal persons to share responsibility for debts, losses and obligations which any individual partner may take on in the course of conducting the business or activities of the Partnership. An individual partner may be any of the types of legal entities described herein. A Partnership may consist of both Government and private partners.

Organisations that are not eligible to apply as the lead applicant can still be participants in a Hub.

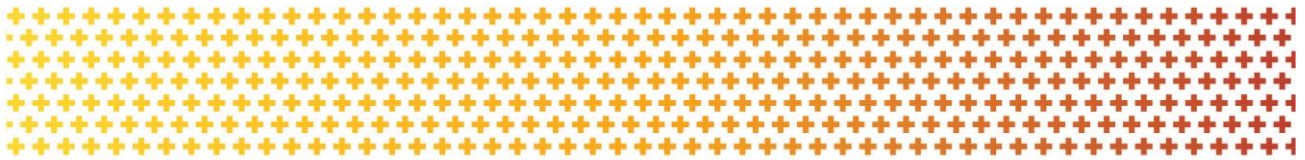
7. Can a university be a member of a Hub?

Yes. Universities' participation and engagement with Hubs is required.

Each consortium must have as a member at least one regional university. The university does not need to be the consortium lead. For the purposes of this requirement, a regional university will be considered to include a university with demonstrated connections to regional communities (for example, a regional campus or other physical presence). A metropolitan university that can demonstrate regional connections will qualify.

³ Partnership – the individual partners will enter into the agreement with the agency. A Partnership Agreement or a list of all individual partners of the Partnership may be requested.

⁴ A person is a natural person, an individual, a human being.



Your application should explain how you consider this requirement to be met.

For the purposes of this program, regional is defined as those areas outside the greater capital city metropolitan boundaries.

8. How are the regions for Adoption and Innovation Hubs defined?

The Hubs will support defined regional areas that broadly reflect the key agricultural and climatic zones across the country. The regions targeted are:

- Southern NSW
- Southern QLD/Northern NSW
- South-West WA
- Victoria
- Top End NT/WA
- Tropical North Queensland
- South Australia
- Tasmania.

In calling for Hub applications, there are no fixed definitions or boundaries for each region. The specific areas covered by Hubs will be refined through the process of calling for and selecting Hubs. This can include extending the boundary of one of the regions as described above into another region. The areas specified are intended to broadly capture the major agricultural and climatic zones across Australia.

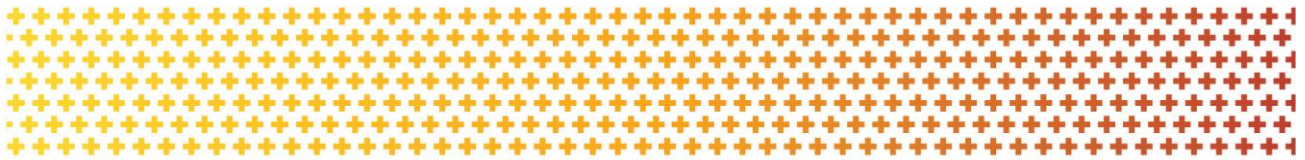
At least one member of a Hub must have a physical presence, of relevance to the delivery of Hub services, in the region in question.

In line with these objectives, coverage of regions, in terms of both geographical area and farming practices and industries, will be a core consideration in the assessment of Hub applications. Applications that are missing key geographic areas or farming practices will be less competitive.

We reserve the right to not make a grant for a Hub in one or more regions if we are not satisfied that any applications adequately address the criteria. In this situation, we may run a subsequent ad-hoc grant process in which we approach only selected applicants and ask them to modify or combine their previous applications.

9. If I'm applying to lead a consortium, does my consortium application require a letter of support from each of the consortium members?

Yes, please refer to section 7.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines for further information.



10. Can an organisation be a part of more than one application (for example, as a member or leader of different consortium applications)?

Yes. You can be a party to multiple applications, including a consortium lead and/or a member of a consortium (for example, as part of applications for different regions).

Please refer to section 4 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines for further information.

11. How do I know if my application has been received?

You will receive an acknowledgement email when you submit your application, to confirm your submission has been received.

Please wait for the acknowledgement email before closing your browser. This may take a few minutes, depending on your internet connection.

12. Can I make changes to my application after it has been submitted?

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time. If you find a mistake in your application after it has been submitted, you should immediately contact the Community Grants Hub by phone on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or by email at support@communitygrants.gov.au.

13. What if we find there is an error or information missing from your application?

If we find an error or information that is missing in your application, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

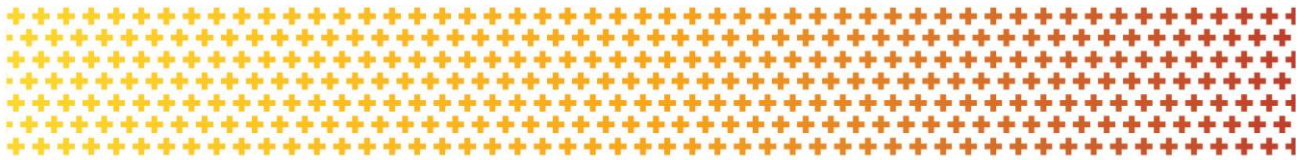
14. What if there is not enough room in the application form to describe my project proposal accurately?

The application form includes text limits of approximately 1,500 words per criterion. The application form will not accept characters beyond this limit and therefore it is essential that criterion answers are clear and concise. Please note that spaces are included in the character limit.

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

Five attachments are required to be submitted as part of your application, see section 7.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines for more detail. Templates for two of these required attachments are available on the [GrantConnect](#) website.

There are instructions in the application form to assist. Only attach the documents you have been asked to include. If the required documents are not attached, your application will not be eligible and will not be assessed.



16. My attachments will not upload to the application form because they exceed the 2mb size limit. What should I do?

If your attachment(s) are too large to upload to the application form, please email them with an explanation (and your application reference number) to support@communitygrants.gov.au. Any such attachments must be received by the grant closing time of **11.00 pm AEDT on 23 December 2020**.

17. I have an idea for how to deliver the Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub activities. Can the department provide me with advice about my planned activities and if they meet the grant project outcomes?

During the application process, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (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 grant's objectives. This is to ensure that the process remains equitable, fair and impartial, for all applicants.

18. What are the contract conditions for this grant?

The department is currently developing a tailored grant agreement to be used for this grant opportunity.

19. Who owns any intellectual property created in projects funded under this grant program?

Knowledge capture is essential to the success of the program. The department expects that all research outputs from the program – except those specifically agreed during project design – will be made publicly and freely available:

- on the internet and that researchers deposit research outputs in appropriate national repositories
- under a creative commons licence – specifically the latest version of the Creative Commons Attribution licence.

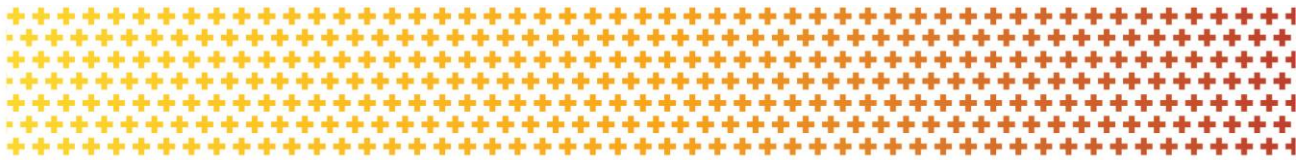
Please refer to section 2.3 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

20. How will my application be assessed and who is the decision maker?

Please refer to section 8 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines regarding the grant selection process. The Drought Minister is responsible for approving applications for funding.

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

Please refer to section 9 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines regarding application process timing. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application.



22. 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. In order 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.

23. What feedback will be available for this funding round?

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you and give you an opportunity for feedback on the outcome. If you are unsuccessful, you may email support@communitygrants.gov.au to request feedback within one month of being notified of the outcome. Please refer to section 9 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

24. When can I start my project?

The department is not responsible for any expenditure prior to a grant agreement being executed. You must not start any grant activities until a grant agreement is executed. Please refer to section 7 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines for application process timing.

25. When does the grant program end?

All grant activities are required to be completed by 30 June 2024.

26. Will there be future funding rounds for this grant program?

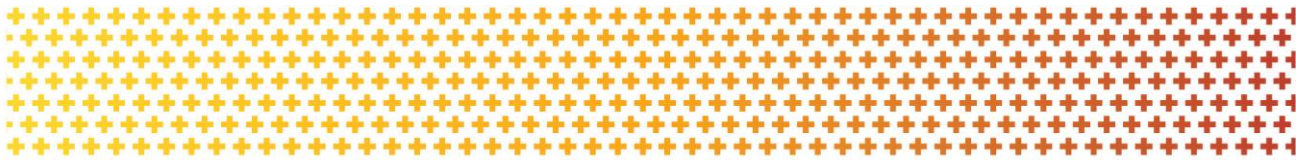
At this time, no decisions to allocate funding beyond 30 June 2024 have been made for this program under the Future Drought Fund. You may like to regularly check the [department's website](#) or the [GrantConnect](#) website for further information about this and other relevant programs.

27. Where should I go for further information?

If you have any questions, please call 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub will respond to questions within five working days and post an updated version of this Questions and Answers document.

Final questions must be submitted by **5.00 pm AEDT on 16 December 2020**.

Please email your enquiries to support@communitygrants.gov.au.



Questions and Answers added on 17 November 2020

28. Links to the National Agricultural Innovation Agenda.

- a. Innovation Hubs/Precincts are key aspects of the National Agricultural Innovation Agenda. Is the Commonwealth signalling that future research and innovation funding will be channelled through these institutions?**
- b. Are Innovation Hubs planned to be strategic innovation infrastructure that will be hardwired into the agricultural innovation effort of Australia for the longer term, and scaled up?**

The Hubs are being established under the Future Drought Fund. As such, they will be focused on drought resilience.

As noted in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, the government may, in the future, look to the Hubs to take on a broader role in supporting agricultural innovation. No such decision has been taken at this time.

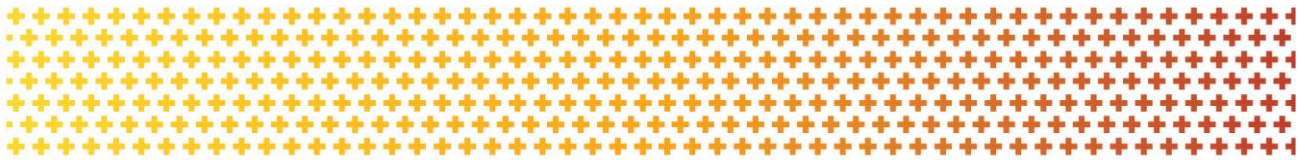
29. Possible Hubs structures

- a. How would the Commonwealth view an entity entirely supported by short-term funding (for example, 3 year tenures), for the lead agency in an Innovation Hub?**
- b. Would a regional university (presently without a standing school of agriculture), be a superior candidate for a lead in an Innovation Hub, to that of a non-research based organisation supported only by short-term funding?**
- c. Would developing a school of agriculture or affiliated institute dedicated to agriculture strengthen the case of a regional university lead in an Innovation Hub?**
- d. Would the business structure of a joint venture formed for example between government, university, natural resource management and industry stakeholder agencies be a suitable configuration for delivering the Future Drought Fund's Resilience and Adoption subprogram?**

For probity reasons, it is not appropriate for the department or Community Grants Hub to directly respond to these questions.

The Grant Opportunity Guidelines set out the criteria against which applications will be assessed. Assessment criteria 1 and 3 are of particular relevance to the questions asked.

In relation to point (d), the eligibility criteria in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines provide that a joint venture is eligible to apply if it is incorporated. If the Joint Venture is unincorporated, a lead applicant would need to meet the eligibility requirements defined in section 4.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.



30. Co-contributions

- a. **It is clear that Commonwealth funds cannot be used for the matching contribution. Just wanting to confirm that this captures Commonwealth facilities – for example CSIRO Labs or BOM Data?**
- b. **We assume that we can still work with Commonwealth funded entities – just cannot count their contribution as matching contributions. Is that correct?**
- c. **A matching co-contribution is required. Is there a threshold or expectation of how much of our contribution should be cash?**

Section 3 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines states that Commonwealth resources can't be counted for the purposes of the required matching contribution. This includes in-kind and other contributions from Commonwealth corporate entities, such as the CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology.

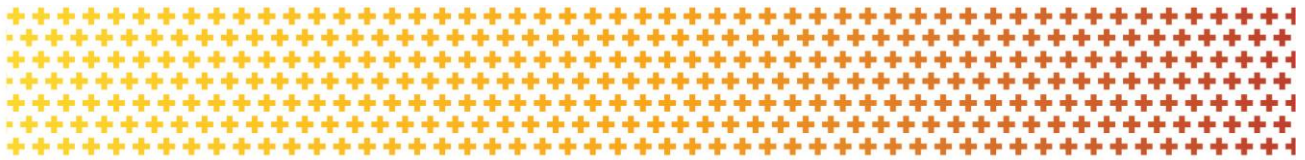
This rule relates only to the calculation of co-contributions. It in no way prevents, precludes, discourages or devalues co-contributions from Commonwealth sources.

There is no threshold on the level of cash contributions. As set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, the total investment the grant will leverage will be considered in the context of assessment criterion 4, as will the value for money of the proposal (section 8.1).

31. **Is the Commonwealth expecting these Innovation Hubs to have a capability for research excellence given the longer-term intent of the entities?**

The focus of funding under this grant process is to establish Hubs that can bring together *pre-existing research*, translate research and knowledge into impact, and support its effective uptake through extension, adoption, testing and scaling up new solutions, and commercialisation.

Funding for the Hubs through this grant opportunity is not focused on doing additional fundamental research. However, Hubs are expected to play a role in influencing and informing research investment and effort to ensure it is relevant, useful and used. Hubs and individual Hub members will be able to apply for the program's Innovation Grants to support investment in new research.



32. Extensions:

a. Will application extensions for the program be allowed?

We cannot accept late applications unless an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application. Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by one or more of the following:

- reasonably unforeseeable
- beyond the applicant’s control
- unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.

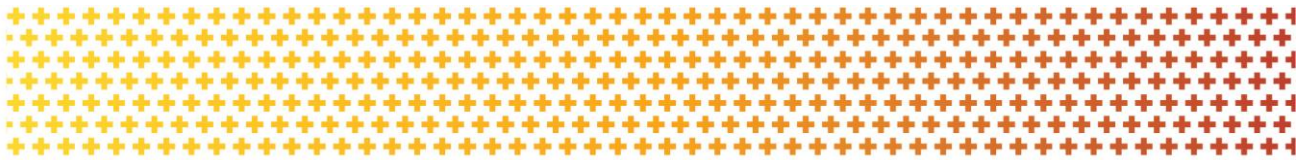
Exceptional circumstances will be considered on their merits and in accordance with probity principles.

33. Section 2.3.1 advises “Knowledge capture is essential.....The department expects that all research outputs from the program – except those specifically agreed during the project design – will be made publicly and freely available”. While we are committed to this expectation and the concept of an open data model, is there scope to capture value from some types of IP generated from research through patents, trademarks, etc., where these will enable a start-up business? Is this where the exception to the rule during project design might come in? We are trying to understand what commercialisation model might fit with the program, including not-for-profits and social enterprises.

The department expects that all research outputs from the program – except those specifically agreed during project design – will be made publicly and freely available. It is during project design that we expect Hubs to engage with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment on possible exceptions from making research outputs from the program publicly and freely available. It will be up to the Hubs to approach the department for the exception, and consideration will be given to how the proposal addresses the FDF Funding Plan and how the proposal will deliver public good.

A commitment to meet this expectation will be included in the grant agreement between the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Hubs. Detailed guidance on the department’s expectations about data accessibility will be provided to the successful applicants as part of grant agreement negotiation.

A sample grant agreement will be provided on the Community Grants Hub website as soon as possible. This will provide further detail on proposed arrangements for intellectual property.



34. Section 7 advises: Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, terms and conditions, the sample application form and the sample grant agreement. We note that there is no sample application form or sample grant agreement. Q18 advises you are working on a tailored agreement and we are wondering if this will include the sample agreement and when this might be available to view?

Yes, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is preparing a tailored agreement. A sample agreement and application form will be provided on the Community Grants Hub website before the closing date for applications.

Question and Answer added on 18 December 2020

35. Complementary Projects: Where an existing project with non-commonwealth funds has activity complimentary to the Hubs, how can this be included as a cash or in-kind contribution to the Hub budget? To further clarify, we are asking this question in the context that projects have been funded OR where projects are intended to be funded.

Projects that are funded from non-commonwealth sources and complementary to the Hubs will be counted as in-kind matching support through the assessment process outlined in section 3 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. As set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, the total investment the grant will leverage will also be considered in the context of assessment criterion 4, as will the value for money of the proposal (section 8.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines).

Projects that are not funded will not be included in the assessment process as any form of cash or in-kind support. However, projects that are complementary to Hubs and receive funding after the Hubs are established will be considered as part of the Hub's operations consistent with section 3 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, assessment criterion 4, and value for money (section 8.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines).

Question and Answer added on 22 December 2020

36. In the Drought Hub submission portal, the 'Other Funding' and 'In Kind' sections limit the number of rows in each table to 10. This number is too low for bids that have more than 10 partners in the consortium. We would like to request that this number be increased to 15 at a minimum. During the recent DAWE webinars, this limitation was raised by participants, and the presenters responded that the limit would be increased accordingly. However, this has not yet occurred, and we are close to submission. Can you please advise when the row limit will be increased?

As some applicants have indicated that they have more than 10 co-funding partners, we please ask that you consider adding this information to the bottom of the required Project Plan under the heading, 'Additional information on co-funding partners'.