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Biosecurity Business Grants program

General feedback for applicants

Overview

As part of our commitment to sharing information with the sector and as an acknowledgement of the time and effort applicants have put into developing applications, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) is pleased to share this feedback for the Biosecurity Business Grants program (the program).

The funding round for the program opened 16 March 2021 and closed on 13 April 2021. Late applications were accepted up until 16 April 2021, for those who experienced exceptional circumstances.

The grant opportunity received 18 eligible applications. Following the Delegate's decision, 5 applications were selected for funding, to a value of \$2,216,368.18 (GST exclusive).

There was a strong interest by stakeholders in the program and successful applications were of a very high standard. All eligible applications were assessed according to the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (GOGs) and outlined in the selection process below.

This feedback is provided to assist grant applicants to understand what generally comprised a strong application and the content of quality responses to the assessment criteria for this grant round.

Program background

The program will run over 3 years from 2020–21 to 2022–23 and will be delivered through the Indigenous Rangers Biosecurity Program. The purpose of the program is to provide funding to support Indigenous business opportunities relating to biosecurity activities in northern Australia including the Torres Strait.

The objective of the grant program is to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and other organisations working with Indigenous people in northern Australia to view biosecurity as a business opportunity through the development of innovative business ideas.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- contribute to biosecurity outcomes in northern Australia practices
- support increased economic opportunities for Indigenous communities.

Selection process

An open competitive selection process was undertaken to select a range of quality projects from a variety of organisations.

Applications were screened for eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the GOGs.

A Selection Advisory Panel (SAP) was convened to determine funding recommendations for consideration by the Delegate. The SAP was comprised of a Chair and 3 members with the required expertise and industry knowledge relevant to this grant round.

To recommend funding, the SAP considered:

- how well applications scored against the assessment criteria
- how well the project aligned with objectives and outcomes of the program
- the relative merit of an application compared to other applications focussed on the program outcome(s), including overall value for money
- distribution of service providers across all locations
- how the services and/or project will be delivered and alignment with the GOGs
- possible duplication with other known Commonwealth/state/territory government programs/service delivery.

Final approval of funded projects was made by the relevant program Delegate, the First Assistant Secretary – Biosecurity Plant.

General feedback for Applicants

Successful Applicants proposed a range of activities which were eligible, appropriate and the SAP considered would be effective towards achieving the overall program objectives. They demonstrated their suitability for public funding along with value for money and a detailed proposal, project plan, budget and risk assessment and met the requirements outlined in the GOGs. Applications included strong responses to all of the assessment criteria.

Writing and providing details

Unfortunately, a number of applications were determined to be unsuccessful as they did not effectively provide the required information or respond satisfactorily to all selection criteria. In the main these applicants provided insufficient detail in responding to a) how the grant activities would contribute to biosecurity outcomes in northern Australia (Criteria 1) or b) how the grant activities would support increased business, economic or employment opportunities for Indigenous people.

Applicants were instructed to clearly and concisely address the assessment criterion including all sub-criteria, and complete the identified attachments. The SAP noted future applications will need to ensure clear links to biosecurity outcomes, as opposed to environmental management and conservation outcomes.

Criteria specific feedback

Criterion 1: Describe how your grant activities will contribute to biosecurity outcomes in northern Australia.

Strong applications:	Quality responses clearly provided:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Described how the proposed grant activities would contribute to biosecurity outcomes in northern Australia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate information with evidence, including quantitative data or anecdotal evidence, to justify the importance and need of the proposed activity in the proposed location a clear description of benefits of the activity for biosecurity in the identified location.

Criterion 2: Describe how the grant activities will support increased business, economic or employment opportunities for Indigenous people.

Strong applications:	Quality responses clearly described:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Described how the proposed grant activities would support increased employment, business or economic opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a clear description of benefits of the activity for increased employment, business or economic opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Criterion 3: Demonstrate that the applicant has the capability, capacity and resources to successfully undertake the grant activities.

Strong applications:	Quality responses provided:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Described how the applicant had the capability, capacity and resources to successfully undertake the grant activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a draft project plan completed on the supplied template, including a) a clear project description, b) clear aims, goals and intended outcomes were clearly linked to biosecurity and Indigenous business opportunity, c) list of stakeholders to be involved (including their role in the project), d) a defined project scope, and e) a detailed schedule of activities (timeline with start and end dates). a budget completed on the supplied template, with a detailed breakdown of proposed project costs and their components (GST inclusive) a completed Risk Management template, accurately identifying risk owners and levels of risk, with supporting evidence (such as SOPs, WHS policies etc.) where appropriate



Strong applications:	Quality responses provided:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ where applicable, evidence of support from/consultation with consortium partners or Indigenous stakeholders or industry stakeholders.