AgUP Program – 2022 (Round One)

Feedback for applicants

Overview

The AgUP grant program provides grants to co-fund industry-led (agriculture, fisheries and forestry) initiatives aimed at supporting jobs and retaining the Australian workforce by building skills, establishing and enhancing career progression pathways and mentoring opportunities.

The grants will support initiatives which encourage the development of innovative approaches to career progression and support the retention and sustainability of the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector workforce.

The objectives of the grant opportunity are:

- support sustainable industry-led approaches which improve workforce outcomes to retain workers in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors

- industry to facilitate workforce activities which successfully identify and establish career pathways and progression in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors for Australians.

The grant opportunity application period opened on 23 November 2021 and closed on 20 January 2022.

The grant opportunity received 9 applications. Following the decision maker's decision, 3 applications were selected for funding, to a value of up to $900,000 (GST exclusive).

There was good interest in the program and successful applications were of a high standard. Applications were assessed according to the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines 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 opportunity.

Selection process

Applications were screened for eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

Applications were assessed on merit, based on:

- the initial preliminary score against the assessment criteria

- how well it compares to other applications

- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant

- the relative value of the grant sought

- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives

- how the grant activities will target participants across the agricultural sector and across states and territories

- how the grant may be applied nationally

- the risks the applicant or project poses for the Commonwealth.

Each applicant was required to address the following selection criteria:

- Criterion 1 – Delivering outcomes

- Criterion 2 – Strategic value

- Criterion 3 – Project impact

- Criterion 4 – Capability, experience and effective management

- Criterion 5 – Key personnel, skills and expertise.

Selection results

Three organisations were selected to deliver the AgUP Program – 2022 (Round One) grant.

The selected organisations provided strong responses to the selection criteria and demonstrated their ability to meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Further detail about what constituted a strong response to each criterion is provided below.

Criterion 1

Describe how your proposed project will contribute to the outcomes of the grant opportunity.

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

- how the project will achieve the objectives and intended outcomes of the grant opportunity
- how the project is focused on one or more of the priority areas of the grant opportunity
- how the project will engage relevant stakeholders (for example, employers, state and territory government, education and training providers et cetera)
- how the project will monitor, evaluate and measure project outcomes that are outlined in your proposal.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the project will achieve the objectives and intended outcomes of the grant opportunity.	Strong responses demonstrated: - a strong understanding of the grant objectives and intended outcomes - how the proposed grant activities would retain workers in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors - how the proposed grant activities would establish career pathways and progression in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the project is focused on one or more of the priority areas of the grant opportunity.	Strong responses: - demonstrated how the proposed grant activities solved local workforce issues whilst allowing for scalability - identified industry workforce needs and demonstrated benefits for the agriculture, fisheries or forestry sectors - demonstrated how the grant activities will target participants across the agricultural sector and across states and territories and how the grant may be applied nationally.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the project will engage relevant stakeholders (for example, employers, state and territory government, education and training providers et cetera).	Strong responses demonstrated: - a strong understanding of relevant stakeholders and evidenced existing and ongoing relationships and support - how the proposed grant activities would connect target cohorts to employers and training providers.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the project will monitor, evaluate and measure project outcomes that are outlined in your proposal.	Strong responses: - described how monitoring and evaluation would be undertaken in a quantifiable way against project outcomes - provided measurable key performance indicators and clarified what success looked like.

Criterion 2

Describe how your project aims to transform or change workforce outcomes for the agricultural, fishery or forestry sector/s.

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

- how your project approach will achieve the project aims

- the scope of the project including states and territories, employers and cohort/s of participants you will target and why

- how you plan to engage with the participant cohorts your project seeks to target

- tangible benefits the project will provide to your industry and/or the broader agricultural sector

- anticipated short, medium, and long-term project outcomes, and

- how the project has national applicability and future scalability.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate/describe how the project approach will achieve the project aims.	Strong responses demonstrated: - strong engagement with industry research and identified benefits to the broader agriculture, fisheries or forestry sectors - alignment with current Commonwealth agricultural workforce initiatives - who would benefit from the project and described how and why.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate/describe the scope of the project including states and territories, employers and cohort/s of participants you will target and why.	Strong responses described: - an in-depth and well supported project scope - a rationale for the jurisdictions the project would be implemented in and identified the target cohorts.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate/describe how you plan to engage with the participant cohorts your project seeks to target.	Strong responses described: - methods of engagement with target cohorts.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate tangible benefits the project will provide to your industry and/or the broader agricultural sector.	Strong responses described: ▪ anticipated outcomes ▪ how the project aims to address workforce issues or shortages by addressing identified barriers ▪ quantifiable benefits for industry and/or the broader agricultural sector.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate anticipated short, medium, and long-term project outcomes.	Strong responses described: ▪ short, medium and long-term project outcomes relating to the proposed grant activities and grant opportunity objectives and outcomes.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the project has national applicability and future scalability.	Strong responses demonstrated: ▪ how the project would deliver national benefits and/or be applied nationally ▪ how the project had scalability across multiple jurisdictions ▪ how the project would deliver and evolve beyond the initial grant funding.

Criterion 3

Describe the impact value of the grant on the project.

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

- the likelihood the project would proceed without the grant

- how the grant will benefit the delivery and future scalability of the project

- how the funding amount requested, with respect to the scale and intended outcomes of the project, can be justified

- how the grant will benefit the cohort/s your project seeks to target.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate the likelihood the project would proceed without the grant.	Strong responses demonstrated: - the ability for the project to proceed without the grant funding - possible contingencies and additional stakeholder support to continue project delivery - how the project would continue beyond the initial grant funding.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the grant will benefit the delivery and future scalability of the project.	Strong responses demonstrated: - how the grant would assist establishment of the program, and how the project would be self-sustaining into the future.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the funding amount requested, with respect to the scale and intended outcomes of the project, can be justified.	Strong responses demonstrated: - a clear budget for the whole project, detailing all activities, administration, and promotional costs - where the grant funds would be allocated - cash and in-kind contributions from various organisations or partners - how the project would be self-sustaining financially - value for money.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate how the grant will benefit the cohort/s your project seeks to target.	Strong responses described: ■ the target cohorts identified for the project and why they were selected ■ how the target cohorts would be engaged ■ the tangible benefits to cohorts in relation to the overall project scope.

Criterion 4

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

- you and the consortia's overall capability, knowledge, experience to develop, implement and manage, including the roles and responsibilities for the project

- proposed governance arrangements to manage the project effectively, including management of consortia (if applicable)

- provide evidence of how you will provide your share of grant activity or project costs, such as a Financial Declaration or letters of support from consortia members (including in-kind contributions, see Appendix A of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines), that confirms you can fund your share of the grant activity or project costs.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate the consortia's overall capability, knowledge, experience to develop, implement and manage, including the roles and responsibilities for the project.	Strong responses described: - the consortia members and their stake in the project outcomes - the roles and responsibilities required to deliver successful outcomes - how the project would be governed, including risk management and oversite of deliverables - the qualifications and experience of key personnel relevant to both the proposed grant activities and the project.
Strong applications were required to describe proposed governance arrangements to manage the project effectively, including management of consortia (if applicable).	Strong responses demonstrated: - sound governance arrangements with consortia members and/or key stakeholders.
Strong applications were required to provide evidence of the consortia's share of grant activity or project costs, such as a Financial Declaration or letters of support from consortia members (including in-kind contributions see Appendix A of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines), that confirms you can fund your share of the grant activity or project costs.	Strong responses demonstrated: - support from consortia members through letters of support or similar documentation - how each organisation would fund its share of the project costs through cash and/or quantifiable in-kind contributions.

Criterion 5

Describe your organisation's experience (key personnel, skills and expertise) working with and delivering projects for employers and your community.

When addressing the criterion, strong applications will describe:

- details of the roles and responsibilities required to deliver the project

- details of the key personnel engaged in delivering the project/sub-projects or collaboration with relevant/specialist organisations

- particular skills or expertise that personnel/project partners will bring to the project.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to describe details of the roles and responsibilities required to deliver the project.	Strong responses described: - the key roles involved in the project, including relevant responsibilities.
Strong applications were required to describe details of the key personnel engaged in delivering the project/sub-projects or collaboration with relevant/specialist organisations.	Strong responses described: - the qualifications and experience of the key personnel to be engaged to deliver the project.
Strong applications were required to describe particular skills or expertise that personnel/project partners will bring to the project.	Strong responses: - specified or highlighted the specific skills and expertise key personnel would bring to the project which were relevant to the project objectives and outcomes.