Australian Government

Community Grants Hub
Improving your grant experience

National Farm Safety Education Fund: Improving Farm Safety Practices

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 (the department) is pleased to share this feedback for the National Farm Safety Education Fund: Improving Farm Safety Practices grant opportunity (the grant opportunity).

The funding round for the grant opportunity opened 17 June 2021 and closed 9:00 pm AEST on 11 August 2021.

The grant opportunity received 85 applications. Following the Delegate's decision, 9 applications were selected for funding, to a value of $1.6 million (GST exclusive).

There was a strong interest in the grant opportunity and successful applications were of a very high standard. Applications were assessed according to the procedures detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (the guidelines) and 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.

Program background

The National Farm Safety Education Fund (the program) was a 2019 election commitment of $3.5 million (excluding GST) to support activities to improve farm safety outcomes, through increased awareness of farm safety and education to help prevent farm accidents.

Funding of $1.9 million was allocated to Farmsafe Australia to undertake a range of activities which will deliver on the government's commitment to safer farms and reduce on-farm injuries and fatalities, and to develop the National Farm Safety Education Fund Strategy (the strategy). The strategy was released on 17 March 2021.

The remaining $1.6 million is being allocated through the National Farm Safety Education Fund: Improving Farm Safety Practices open competitive grant opportunity. The grants will support projects which result in improved farm safety outcomes nationally.

The grant opportunity aligns with the department's purpose of partnering and regulating to enhance Australia's agriculture, unique environment and heritage, and water resources.

The objective of the grant opportunity is better and more effective communication to farmers and those who live and work on Australian farms and in related industries, to improve their understanding and take up of the behaviours and practices associated with farm safety.

The grant opportunity will support projects focused on education and capacity building in 2 priority areas. These priorities were informed by the strategy.

1. The next generation of farmers.
2. Industry endorsed training and continued learning.

The intended outcome of the grant opportunity is for farmers and those who live and work on Australian farms and in related industries to have:

- increased positive attitude shift towards farm safety practices
- increased uptake of farm safety practices.

Selection Process

The department used an open competitive selection process 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 guidelines.

Applications were assessed on merit based on:

- how well the application scored against the assessment criteria
- how well it compared to other applications
- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- whether the project could be vocational education and training (VET) accredited
- the relative value of the grant sought
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrated a contribution to meeting the outcomes/objectives of the grant opportunity
- how the grant activities target groups or individuals
- the risks (financial, fraud and other) which the applicant or project pose for the department
- the risks which the applicant or project pose for the Commonwealth.

Applicants were required to address the following selection criteria.

- Criteria 1 - Describe how your project proposal will contribute to the grant opportunity and intended outcomes.
- Criteria 2 - Describe your organisations' experience working with and delivering projects for your community.
- Criteria 3 - Describe how your project proposal represents value for money.

Selection Results

9 organisations were selected to receive funding under the grant opportunity.

In accordance with the guidelines, the assessment process gave equal weighting to all assessment criteria and considered the balance of the 2 priority areas and the spread of commodities.

The projects were also considered for value for money in relation to minimising duplication in types of activities or geographic areas among the strong applications.

In general terms, unsuccessful applications contained one or more of the following issues.

Unsuccessful applications:

- did not address all aspects of the assessment criteria
- lacked depth and detail in responses to the assessment criteria
- contained assessment criteria responses which were not well structured and were difficult to follow
- did not provide a fit-for-purpose approach which aligned adequately with the grant opportunity objectives
- did not demonstrate knowledge of farm safety issues or did not adequately outline how this capability could be built
- did not sufficiently demonstrate an understanding of the stakeholders and/or have sufficient strategies to connect or establish relationships with the stakeholders
- did not contain any or sufficient risk analysis or mitigation measures to address risks
- submitted budget proposals which were considered as not providing value for money.

It should be noted under a merit-based, open and competitive grants process, an applicant rated as satisfactory for any of the assessment criteria may not receive funding if another applicant, undertaking a similar project, was rated higher and demonstrated stronger capabilities against the assessment criteria, including risk management and overall greater value for money.

The selected applicants provided strong responses to the selection criteria. Further detail about what constituted a strong response to each criterion is provided below.

Criterion 1

Describe how your project proposal will contribute to the grant opportunity and intended outcomes.

Applicants were required to demonstrate:

- how the project will achieve the objective and intended outcome 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, next generation of farmers and/or current workforce) and the extent to which the project leverages existing initiatives
- how the project will monitor, evaluate and measure project outcomes
- anticipated short, medium and long-term project outcomes.

Strength	Example
Strong applications clearly demonstrated a strong understanding of the subject area and the grant objectives	Strong responses provided: ▪ a sound understanding of the subject area and challenges currently faced by farmers, their families and their employees ▪ a clear and thorough overview of the proposed project ▪ detailed information of relevant activities, processes and systems ▪ evidence to support long-term impacts in the subject area
Strong applications clearly demonstrated an engagement strategy and the applicant's willingness and ability to build strong partnerships with relevant stakeholders	Strong responses provided: ▪ knowledge of relevant stakeholders ▪ a clearly described stakeholder engagement approach ▪ evidence of established (or ability to establish) partnerships, connections and networks which could be leveraged ▪ details describing the project's ability to make a positive impact, including but not limited to its ability to reach a large population of stakeholders (relative to the investment) ▪ practical strategies and demonstrated outcomes in the subject area
Strong applications clearly demonstrated a plan to monitor, evaluate and measure progress towards project outcomes	Strong responses clearly described: ▪ strategies and evidence of monitoring and evaluation measures, linked to project outcomes ▪ evidence of a focus on continuous improvement

Criterion 2

Describe your organisations' experience working with and delivering projects for your community.

Applicants were required to demonstrate:

- details of the key personnel engaged in delivering the project/sub-projects or collaboration with relevant/specialist organisations
- particular skills or expertise which personnel/project partners will bring to the project
- proposed governance arrangements to manage the project effectively, including management of consortia (if applicable).

Strength	Example
Strong applications clearly demonstrated organisational capability and capacity to deliver in accordance with the grant opportunity	Strong responses provided: ▪ details of key personnel, and linked these personnel to the needs of the project ▪ key personnel with highly relevant skills or expertise ▪ examples of previous or existing projects delivered by the applicant, which demonstrated their capability to deliver their project ▪ strong proposed governance arrangements, for example regular meetings and updates to project partners (if applicable)
<u>Applications for consortia</u> Clearly outlined ▪ efficiencies gained from delivering activities as part of a consortium ▪ risks of project delivery as part of a consortium ▪ proposed governance arrangements for effective project and consortium management	Strong responses provided ▪ details of consortium partners with whom they'd worked previously, or evidence they could build on existing or new relationships ▪ details on the contributions of each partner towards the consortium ▪ a description of risks involved during project delivery involving a consortium ▪ proposed governance arrangements for effective project/consortium management, for example a project manager or regular meetings and information sharing

Criterion 3

Describe how your project proposal represents value for money.

Applicants were required to demonstrate:

- how the project outputs will be delivered on time and within budget (project management arrangements)
- project risks including the level of risk and how risks will be managed

- the project budget including items which are eligible, reasonable and relevant to the project activities (taking into account the scale of the project)
- how your project is an innovative or previously proven successful approach to engaging with the particular cohort/vulnerable group/community/locality your project seeks to target
- the issues facing the particular cohort/vulnerable group/community/locality your project seeks to target.

Strength	Example
Strong applications clearly demonstrated capacity to administer grants, including contract, project and risk management and reporting	Strong responses demonstrated: ▪ evidence of strong organisational capability, performance and professionalism ▪ evidence of established processes, systems and practices to deliver outcomes on time and within budget ▪ evidence of processes and policies to support effective, well-informed decision-making at all levels
Strong applications clearly outlined how the applicant will achieve value for money through their project	Strong responses provided: ▪ strategies or evidence to back strong claims to achieving value with money ▪ clear linkages to the grant opportunity outcomes ▪ details on the different components of the budget including quantifying the extent of the expected impact
Strong applications clearly demonstrated how the applicant would maximise efficiencies and achieve high quality outcomes in a cost-effective way, including a consideration of any risks identified	Strong responses provided: ▪ clear articulation of what high quality service and outcomes look like ▪ evidence of the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of their service offering ▪ strategies for cost effective service delivery ▪ detailed risk analysis and mitigation strategies considering the breadth of operations and reducing risks to acceptable levels
Strong applications described innovative approaches to their grant activity	Strong responses: ▪ described innovative or previously proven approaches they would undertake in delivering their project.
Strong applications clearly identified issues facing the stakeholders the project sought to target	Strong responses: ▪ clearly described farm safety issues facing stakeholders ▪ clearly described how their project would address the farm safety issues identified