



Australian Government

**Community
Grants Hub**
Improving your grant experience



Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports by Sea – transition assistance Enhancing Market Demand Grants Program

Feedback for Applicants

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports by Sea – transition assistance Enhancing Market Demand Grants Program grant opportunity.

Assessment of applications was in accordance with the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (the guidelines) and outlined in the selection process below.

Overview

The application submission period opened on 23 September 2025 and closed on 4 November 2025.

The grant round received 18 eligible applications, with 12 applications selected for funding by the Grant Round's Financial Delegate, offering up to a total of \$3.65 million (GST exclusive) over 3 years, commencing in the 2025–26 financial year.

The grant round was administered by the Department of Social Services' Community Grants Hub (the Hub), on behalf of the department, under a Whole of Australian Government initiative to streamline grant processes across Australian Government agencies.

The grant round provides the opportunity for successful applicants to access funding for activities that contribute to: helping Australian industries better understand market opportunities for sheep products both domestically and internationally, and for agri-food products in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region; and assist the sheep, food and fibre industries through transitioning to other opportunities away from the live sheep by sea trade.

Projects developed under this grant program will provide Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries with an increased understanding, knowledge or information about potential market opportunities and/or stronger business-to-business relationships for interstate and overseas markets for Australian sheep products and/or markets for Australian agri-food in the MENA region.

The selected projects provided strong responses to the selection criteria and demonstrated their ability to meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the guidelines.

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Selection Process

The Hub undertook the initial screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the guidelines. This information was provided to the department's grant opportunity delegate for final decisions on whether an application met the eligibility and compliance criteria.

The department assessed and considered eligible and compliant applications through an Open Competitive grant process.

The assessment panel (panel) established by the department, comprised of subject matter experts who assessed applications and provided advice to inform the funding recommendations to the Financial Delegate.

The panel's consideration of assessed applications was based on:

- meeting the compliance requirements outlined in the guidelines
- meeting the eligibility requirements outlined in the guidelines
- how well the responses met the assessment criteria
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrated that it contributes to meeting either or both of the 2 priorities, the objectives and the intended policy outcomes of the grant opportunity
- how the project outcomes will build on and/or complement other activities funded through the broader \$27 million Enhancing Market Demand program
- the provision and appropriateness of the requested attachments
- the provision of sufficient detail and supporting evidence relative to the size, complexity and grant amount requested
- whether the project demonstrated value with relevant money
- how the grant activities will target groups or individuals
- the risks, financial, fraud and other, that the applicant or project poses for Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- the risks that the applicant or project poses for the Commonwealth.

Each applicant was required to address the following selection criteria:

- **Criterion 1: Project alignment to grant program priorities, objectives and intended outcomes (40 points)**
- **Criterion 2: Suitability and effectiveness of the project to achieve its outcomes (20 points)**
- **Criterion 3: Capacity, capability and resources to deliver your project (20 points)**
- **Criterion 4: Value for money and sustainability of project outcome(s) (20 points)**

Preferred applicants were identified based on the strength of their responses to the selection criterion and their demonstrated ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

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Selection Results

There was a strong interest in the grant opportunity, and most applications were of a high standard. The preferred applicants demonstrated their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the guidelines based on the strength of their responses to the assessment criteria.

The Hub notified applicants of the outcome in writing, where their applications did not meet the requirements outlined in the guidelines.

This feedback is provided to assist grant applicants to understand what comprised a strong application and what were quality responses to the assessment criteria.

General feedback for applicants

Successful applicants outlined projects which addressed the grant program objectives, outcomes and selection criteria to a high degree; showed value for money; and presented evidence the project outputs could provide Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries with an increased understanding, knowledge or information about potential market opportunities and/or stronger business-to-business relationships (for interstate and overseas markets for Australian sheep products and/or markets for Australian agri-food in the MENA region). Successful applicants also provided a detailed proposal, project plan, budget and risk assessment which delivered strong to good responses to all of the assessment criteria, plus provided letters of support from consortium partners and/or key stakeholders.

Unsuccessful applications were determined to have one or more of the following issues:

- a lack of clarity on methodology and project activities and/or how the methodology would achieve the desired program outcomes, or the hypothesis lacked credibility and/or had a low prospect of success
- did not sufficiently address the program objectives and/or outcomes and/or sufficiently align with the priorities and objectives of Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports by Sea – transition assistance: Enhancing Market Demand Grants Program
- proposed a project which is not in alignment with the guidelines
- sought project funding for activities which were excluded in the guidelines (for example capital expenditure, major construction/capital works)
- did not provide sufficient information on outcomes which demonstrated application or benefit across industry(ies) nationally
- outcomes would lead to higher private than public benefit
- did not provide supporting evidence which the organisation had the capacity, capability and/or experience to successfully undertake the proposed project
- were not considered value for money or innovative enough compared to other projects submitted under the grant round.

Careful editing should be undertaken for future applications to ensure readability and comprehension. A few submitted applications provided insufficient detail and were not thoughtfully put together.

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Criterion 1

Project alignment to grant program priorities, objectives and intended outcomes

- the project’s overall aim(s) and why it was important, including how it aligned with the priorities, objectives and intended policy outcomes of the grant opportunity
- how the project delivered against and achieved priority “Market opportunities for Australian sheep products interstate and internationally” and/or priority “Diversification opportunities for Australian agri-food exports to the MENA region”
- how the project outcome(s) increased actionable understanding, knowledge or information about potential market opportunities and/or stronger business-to-business relationships available to Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries
- partnership(s) and collaboration in the project, for example across: industry; scientific organisations; cooperative research centres; state, territory or local governments; corporate Commonwealth entities; universities; and/or public and private research organisations
- benefits that the project’s activities delivered to industry and Australian agriculture.

Strong applications:

Strong applications	Qualities of a strong response
<p>Clearly described the project’s overall aims, identified why they were important and how the project aligned against the priorities, objectives and intended policy outcomes of the grant opportunity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outlined a clear methodology, required resources and well-defined and achievable objectives, activities and outcomes. ▪ Provided justification for project’s importance to Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries. ▪ Clearly articulated the scope and how project aims aligned with grant policy outcomes.
<p>Clearly described how the project achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ market opportunities for Australian sheep products interstate and internationally <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diversification opportunities for Australian agri-food exports to the MENA region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly linked project outcomes to improved market access and/or market diversification opportunities. ▪ Clearly demonstrated research and understanding of project target markets.
<p>Clearly described how the project outcomes increased:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly identified knowledge gaps and/or opportunities to build stronger business-to-business relationships. ▪ Clearly described how project outcomes would improve understanding about market opportunities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ actionable understanding, knowledge or information about potential market opportunities <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stronger business-to-business relationships available to Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries. 	<p>and/or build stronger business to business relationships.</p>
<p>Clearly listed their identified partnerships and collaboration in their projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided information on who has been consulted as part of the development of the project. ▪ Provided evidence of support from relevant stakeholders including technology partners, scientific organisations or research centres, government agencies and/or across industry. ▪ Clearly demonstrated an understanding of the importance of partnerships to project success.
<p>Clearly identified benefits that the project's activities delivered to industry and Australian agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided a solid proposal which was sometimes innovative, yet achievable within project timelines and funding. ▪ Clearly identified project scope, including target markets, commodities and aims. ▪ Clearly described how project outcomes deliver benefits to Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries.

Criterion 2

Suitability and effectiveness of the project to achieve its outcomes

- the activities to be undertaken, including how, where and when they will occur
- how the proposed methodology(ies) or approach(es) to undertaking the project activities assisted with achieving the project's outcome(s)
- the specific partner(s) involved in the project and the activities they undertook to support achieving the project outcome(s)
- how progress towards achieving the project's outcome(s) was measured
- potential risks to the success of the project and how these were managed or mitigated.

Strong applications:

Strong applications	Qualities of a strong response
Clearly identified the activities to be undertaken, including where, when and how they would occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly articulated project phases and activities, including when key partners and stakeholders would be engaged. ▪ Provided a detailed project outline, including timelines for respective project outcomes.
Clearly described how proposed methodology(ies) or approach(es) assisted with achieving project outcome(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outlined a suitable, well-designed methodology with measurable milestone(s) and achievable timelines. ▪ Provided sufficient detail in their methodology to assess project feasibility and identify how it supports project outcome(s).
Demonstrated how their identified partnerships would support achieving project outcome(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided a clear description of how stakeholders would support achieving the desired project outcome(s), including letters of support from partners and other relevant stakeholders. ▪ Identified appropriate partners to be involved to ensure the project approach was feasible. ▪ Outlined how relationships would be built beyond their direct network to ensure the project's success.
Demonstrated how they would measure progress towards the project's outcome(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly described what expected project success looked like, providing a breakdown of the project's desired outcome(s). ▪ Identified measurable and achievable milestone(s) which were clearly in support of project outcomes.
Identified potential risks to the project outcome(s) and how they would manage or mitigate these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified potential risks to the project's success and articulated their likelihood and impact. ▪ Provided appropriate processes and strategies to manage and mitigate project risks.

Criterion 3

Capacity, capability and resources to deliver your project

- your organisation’s ability to deliver the outcome(s), your track record (if any) in delivering similar projects, and access to (and availability of) personnel with the right skills and experience relevant to the project
- how you proactively managed and monitored your project, including taking responsibility for oversight. This was provided in the appropriate template (refer to section 7.1)
- how your organisation worked with partners, and engaged agricultural industries and other relevant stakeholders to inform design and delivery of grant activities
- how you proactively monitored and managed risks for grant activities. This was provided in the appropriate template (refer to section 7.1).

Strong applications:

Strong applications	Qualities of a strong response
Described how the organisation would deliver the outcomes and demonstrate their track record in delivering similar projects, and their access to personnel with the right skills and experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided strong evidence that the organisation had the capacity to deliver project outcomes within the provided budget and timeline. ▪ Outlined experience through providing details of previous work or research of similar outcomes and budget. ▪ Identified relevant stakeholders who could fill any organisational gaps in knowledge or experience.
Demonstrated how the organisation would manage and monitor the project effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided evidence that the organisation could manage and monitor a government funded project and outlined appropriate governance structures. ▪ Described how the project would be governed, including relevant partners.
Described how the organisation would work with partners to engage agricultural industry and other relevant stakeholders and end users throughout their project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrated a thorough understanding of the relevant stakeholders and how to engage to make the project successful. ▪ Outlined how project outcomes would meet the needs of project stakeholders. ▪ Identified how project outcomes could be scaled effectively to support stakeholders.
Demonstrated how the organisation would proactively manage risks for grant activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified existing risks to project delivery, and a process for identifying future risks.

- Outlined a robust process for assessing and managing current and future risks, including impacts on project outcomes.

Criterion 4

Value for money and sustainability of project outcome(s)

- how the funding requested was proportionate to the aim(s) of your project
- any co-contributions by your organisation or participating partner(s) in the project, including financial and/or in-kind contributions. This was provided in the appropriate template (refer to section 7.1)
- any future financial or private benefit(s) that accrued from delivering on the project
- if/how project outcome(s) built on and/or complemented other activities under the \$27 million (GST exclusive) Enhancing Market Demand (EMD) funding package
- the breadth of applications or benefits the project delivered.

Strong applications:

Strong applications	Qualities of a strong response
Clearly demonstrated how the funding requested was proportionate to project aim(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A detailed budget, clearly aligned with project activities. ▪ Costings considered proportionate to the cost and implementation of project activities.
Listed any co-contributions by their organisation or participatory partner(s) in the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listed at least equal co-contributions (both financial and in-kind) from their organisation, if applicable. ▪ Identified clearly the support provided by partner(s), including cash and/or in-kind contributions which would add value to the delivery of the project.
Described future financial or private benefit(s) which would be realised from delivering the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly described gains which may accrue from the project. ▪ Identified parts of the project which would provide benefit beyond the participating organisations and how those benefits might be shared. ▪ Described how project outcomes might be implemented to further benefit Australian sheep, agriculture, food and fibre industries.

Identified if/how project outcome(s) built on and/or complemented other activities under the \$27 million (GST exclusive) EMD funding package.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified and outlined how their project activities complemented and built on other activities under the broader EMD program.
Described the breath of applications or benefits the project delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detailed descriptions of the benefits and applications their suggested project would deliver.

Individual feedback

To request individual feedback please follow the instructions as set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines section 9.1.