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# **Innovation Grants**

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

These FAQs apply to the Innovation Grants under the Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream.

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# General

**What are Innovation Grants and how much funding is available for each project?**

Innovation Grants are part of the Sustainable Agriculture stream of Caring for our Country. Individuals and organisations can apply for grants ranging between $250 000 to $1.5 million (GST exclusive) to assist the development and adoption of innovation in agriculture, fishing, aquaculture and agroforestry (or farm forestry). The projects must contribute to the Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream strategic objectives as outlined in [Strategic Directions.](http://www.nrm.gov.au/about/caring/agriculture.html)

The applicant's GST status must be accurate against the applicant's details identified on the [Australian Business Register](http://www.abr.business.gov.au).

**How long is the term for a successful project?**

All funded projects must be completed by 30 June 2015.

**How do the Innovation Grants link with other Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) programs?**

The Sustainable Agriculture stream and Innovation Grants also supports the Australian Government’s broader sustainability agenda by linking with other government initiatives such as the National Food Plan, National Drought Program Reform, Biosecurity Reform and Carbon Farming Futures. Linking with these programs ensures the Australian Government is focusing investment where national action can make a difference.

# Who is eligible?

**Who can apply for an Innovation Grant?**

The types of groups that can apply for the Innovation Grants include, but are not limited to:

* industry associations and bodies

farming systems groups

* Landcare groups
* aquaculture and commercial fisheries organisations.
* regional natural resource management organisations
* research and development bodies including Rural Research and Development Corporations
* universities or consortiums
* local, state and territory governments
* farmers and fishers
* community groups
* women and youth groups who have been operating in the sustainable agriculture and fisheries landscape
* groups whose membership is predominantly made up of Indigenous Australians or people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
* agribusiness
* corporate companies and along the supply chain businesses and
* individuals

Detailed eligibility criteria are available in the *Innovation Grants Applicant guidelines* (the guidelines) available on the Caring for our Country website.

**Are groups that have previously received Australian Government funding eligible to apply?**

Groups that previously received funding through the Australian Government are eligible to apply for Innovation Grants funding, providing the group meets the Innovation Grants eligibility criteria and have no overdue reports or acquittals with the Australian Government.

**Are groups that have an overdue report from a previous Caring for our Country project eligible for funding?**

No. At the time of the application closing date, groups with any overdue reports and/or acquittals for previous Australian Government funding will be ineligible to apply for Innovation Grants funding.

# What can be funded?

**Can a group apply for funding for projects that are already underway?**

Applications can be submitted for further distinct stages of a project that has already been completed by application close. However, there should be no duplication of funding between existing projects and Innovation Grants applications.

**Are research projects eligible for funding?**

No. Caring for our Country is seeking to increase the uptake of innovative management practices that are underpinned by scientific research and evidence, have a demonstrated "proof of concept" and are considered suitable for adoption.

**Will cost sharing be required?**

Cost sharing may be required as part of an Innovation Grant project. This will depend on the nature of the project including the current level of adoption, the activities to be funded, and the expected contribution to the five year outcome(s), value for money and risk. However, if there is a prospect for commercialisation of the innovation and/or private benefit in the future it would be expected there is a level of cost sharing (approximately 50 per cent).

These contributions should be identified in Section 6 of the application form. Please see the [*How to Apply*](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/agriculture/innovation/apply.html) guide for further information.

**Is cash or in-kind funding a compulsory item?**

You must include all details of any cash or in-kind funding that will be contributed by other parties into the budget table, including writing ‘Nil’ where there are no other contributions.

Applicants are also encouraged to carefully consider the information provided in Section 5.1 of the Grant Guidelines - Assessment criteria when completing the budget table.

Assessment Criterion 4 - (Value for Money)

Assessors will consider:

* the public or broader community benefit derived from the application value-for-money for outcomes achieved, including:
  + that budget items are eligible, reasonable and relevant to the project activities, recognising the project and a sense of its scale
  + the total project budget is comparable with the outcomes of the overall project, taking into account the expected public benefit to be derived from the project
  + that applications proposing work on private land include other contributions to the cost of the project taking into account the levels of public and private benefits to be obtained from other contributions to the project, for example the level of financial and/or in-kind contribution to be provided by the applicant, partners, third parties or other sources.

# Applying for an Innovation Grant

**What else should my group consider when developing our application?**

Applicants will be required to obtain all necessary planning approvals for their project, including the permission of the landowner or land manager for any project on private or public land prior to contracting. Indigenous groups undertaking work on traditional lands and/or undertaking Indigenous ecological knowledge projects must also have support from local Traditional Owners.

**How does an individual or group apply for an Innovation Grant?**

To apply for an Innovation Grant, all sections of the application form must be completed and submitted by email to [innovationgrants@daff.gov.au](mailto:innovationgrants@daff.gov.au) by **2pm (AEST) 4 July 2013.**

If you do not have internet access you can request an application pack by phoning **1800 552 008.** The pack includesthe following:

* Innovation Grants application form (hard copy version)
* Innovation Grants Guidelines
* How to apply guide

Hardcopy applications must be received by the due date, **4 July 2013.** Note: electronic applications are preferred.

**Who is the applicant?**

The applicant is the legal entity. The applicant will enter into a funding deed with the Australian Government. If the project is successful the applicant becomes the grantee who receives and administers the grant. Please review the [Funding Deed for Caring for our Country Innovation Grants](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/agriculture/innovation/apply.html) for information on terms and conditions of receiving funding.

**How much detail should be put into the budget and if something is missed can it be put in later?**

You must consider all aspects of your project and ensure all relevant costs are included in the application. Items that were not budgeted for in the original application will not be funded. Additional funds are not available to meet costs that may have increased after the application was submitted.

**Can an applicant make changes to the application after it has been submitted?**

No. Changes are not permitted to the application once the application has been submitted. However, if an applicant discovers that a submitted application contains incorrect or misleading information, they must immediately bring it to the attention of the department by emailing [innovationgrants@daff.gov.au](mailto:innovationgrants@daff.gov.au).

**How many partners can I include in my application?**

In the partnerships section of the application form only include partners that add value and more effectively deliver the outcomes sought. If you have more partners you may be able to indicate this through explaining the project in other parts of the application.

# Assessment and approval

**How will applications be assessed?**

The assessment process for Innovation Grants is based on the following criteria (all weighted equally):

* the application's contribution towards the five year outcomes as identified in the guidelines
* the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project
* consideration of risk management and
* value for money.

All assessment criteria will be used to consider the overall value for money of the application.

Applications will be assessed by an Expert Assessment Panel comprised of industry, research, community and government representatives. Further information on the assessment criteria is outlined in part 5 of the [guidelines](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/agriculture/clg/guidelines.html).

**How long will it take for applications to be assessed?**

The Australian Government will assess applications in a timely manner to enable successful projects to start as soon as possible in the new financial year.

**If our project is successful, what are the next stages?**

All applicants will receive a letter advising the outcome of their application. Successful applicants will also be sent a funding deed for the applicant to sign and return to the department for execution. The first payment will be made following the execution of the funding deed.

**What are the tax implications of receiving a grant?**

Innovation Grants are subject to normal taxation treatment and no special arrangements will apply. Applicants should seek independent taxation and financial advice from a suitably qualified professional before submitting their applications.

**If my project is successful what will the funding deed include?**

Successful applicants will be required to sign a funding deed with the Commonwealth.

The [Funding Deed for Caring for our Country Innovation Grants](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/agriculture/innovation/apply.html) template contains the terms and conditions of the grant. Applicants should read the terms and conditions before submitting their application and should seek independent legal advice before entering into a funding deed. No legally binding relationship exists until a funding deed is signed by all parties.

If you have any questions regarding the funding deed terms and conditions please contact 1800 552 008 for more information.

**Who owns the intellectual property**?

Ownership of intellectual property brought to, or produced by the project will be subject to the standard terms and conditions as specified in the [Funding Deed for Caring for our Country Innovation Grants](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/agriculture/innovation/apply.html) for information. Applicants should familiarise themselves with these conditions when preparing their application.