

Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects Guidelines

About the Fund

The Queensland Government's Advance Queensland initiative focuses on economic recovery, growing the economy and creating jobs. Building upon the momentum achieved through the Advance Queensland Strategy and the Regional Economic Recovery Plans, the Queensland Government remains committed to supporting the growth of innovation capability and culture in our regions.

Advance Queensland Regional Futures will empower regions to take action that anticipates and positions them for their future needs; unlock potential by targeting issues of regional significance and global relevance; and amplify the impact of change through sustained effort and building relationships of trust.

Support is available to regions that are ready to 'bring innovation to life' through opportunities that can be realised immediately.

The Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects program supports regional innovation leaders to address local issues by developing solutions that have national or international relevance.

The program will fund collaborative projects that harness the competitive strength of a region to deliver tangible benefits; increase capacity and maturity of the regional ecosystem; and assist in ensuring the future prosperity and resilience of the region.

Funding

Grants of up to \$200,000 (excluding GST) are available for projects with a duration of up to 18 months.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply, *at the time of application*, the applicant organisation must:

- be based in a Queensland region[#]
- have an ABN and be registered for GST
- be collaborating with one or more organisations based in a Queensland region[#]
- provide a signed *Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects Regional Engagement Officer Certificate*.

To be considered eligible for the program, the proposed project must:

- be scheduled to commence within 60 business days of the grant approval and to complete within 18 months of the commencement date
- have a total cash contribution (from the applicant and collaborative partner organisation(s)) that is equal to or greater than the Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects grant sought.

[#] For the purpose of the Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects program, a Queensland region is any local government area except for Brisbane City Council. Applicant organisations can check which local government they are located within on the [Electoral Commission Queensland Interactive Map](#).

Using the Grant Funds

Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects grants may be used for the following eligible project costs:

- salaries (including salary-related on-costs) for project staff
- consumables required specifically for the project
- plant and equipment required specifically for the project up to a total cumulative value of \$10,000 during the term of the grant
- reasonable travel costs necessary to undertake project activity
- specialist advice and services provided by unrelated (external) providers.

Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects grants must be expended wholly in Queensland unless it can be demonstrated that expenditure outside of Queensland is essential to ensure successful delivery of the project.

Only eligible expenditure incurred on or after the project commencement date can be claimed by successful applicant organisations.

Payment of grants will be made based on agreed periodic project milestones. A final milestone payment will be made upon the provision of documentary evidence that all project requirements have been satisfied, including evidence that total project expenditure has been incurred and project contributions have been made by all relevant parties.

Items not eligible for funding include:

- organisational overheads
- costs associated with the ongoing programs of work and/or core business of the applicant or collaborative partner organisation(s)
- capital works and/or physical infrastructure including any buildings, telecommunications, and IT networks, land acquisition costs or leases
- motor vehicles and motor vehicle leases
- first class and business class travel
- plant and equipment exceeding \$10,000 during the term of the grant.

Applicant and Collaborative Partner Organisation Contributions

Funds committed by the applicant and collaborative partner organisations to satisfy the matching cash requirements can include:

- salaries (including salary-related on-costs) for any staff working on the project for a minimum of 20 per cent of their total work time
- any direct and actual project costs (non-salaries).

Evidence that the applicant and collaborative partner organisations can meet the required matching funding contribution must be provided at the time of application. This must be in the form of a declaration from a suitably qualified accountant that is a member of:

- the Institute of Chartered Accountants, or
- CPA Australia, or
- the Institute of Public Accountants with a Professional Practice Certificate.

Assessment Criteria

1. Significance of the opportunity and innovation activity

You must demonstrate that the project:

- is a response to a significant opportunity or challenge and/or enables the uptake of innovative solutions and emerging technologies
- will provide an innovative solution to a regional issue that has national/international significance and/or cross-industry relevance
- harnesses an area of competitive strength for the region(s) involved.

2. Strength of collaboration and viability of the project

You must demonstrate that the project:

- is locally driven
- involves meaningful collaboration between organisations with a shared purpose and complementary expertise
- involves an applicant and collaborative partner organisation(s) with the resources, knowledge, skills, and experience, to successfully deliver the project

- is well planned and achievable within the defined timeframe and budget.

3. Benefit to the region(s) and Queensland

You must demonstrate that the project:

- is sustainable with project activity and/or benefits that will extend beyond the lifetime of the funded project
- will deliver tangible and immediate benefits to the region(s)
- will contribute to:
 - an increase in the maturity level of the innovation ecosystem of the region(s)
 - economic growth in the region(s) including support of emerging/new industries and/or Queensland Government priority industry sectors
 - the support and creation of new / high-value / high-growth jobs in regional Queensland
- has the potential to position the region(s) and Queensland as innovation leaders nationally and/or internationally.

Support and Advice

It is a requirement of this program that organisations discuss their intention to submit an application with a Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport, Regional Engagement Officer.

The Regional Engagement Officer can:

- provide more information on the program intent
- explain the application and assessment process
- assist in facilitating collaborative partnerships
- explain the eligibility and assessment criteria
- provide advice on the eligibility of a proposed application
- provide potential applicant organisations with the *Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects Regional Engagement Officer Certificate* that is a pre-requisite for applications to the program.

The Regional Engagement Officer is not able to:

- review and provide feedback on an application
- provide advice on the merit of an application.

Potential applicant organisations should contact regionalinnovation@dtis.qld.gov.au to be referred to a Regional Engagement Officer.

Application Assessment

All applications will be assessed against the eligibility requirements. Only eligible submissions will be considered for funding support.

Eligible applications will be assessed in a competitive, merit-based approach by a panel of assessors.

Applicant organisations may be contacted at any stage of the assessment process to clarify any information provided in the application and/or to request further information to enable a due diligence and probity assessment.

There is no implicit guarantee of approval at any stage in the process, and applicants will be notified via email of the assessment outcomes.

The Queensland Government reserves the right to administer the Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects program and conduct the assessment and approval processes at it sees fit. This may include, at its discretion, considering current government priorities and the need to balance the investment to support a diversity of activities across regions and industries and to recognise regional opportunities outside of South-East Queensland.

Conditions of Funding

Successful applicants will be required to enter into:

- a legally binding Grant Agreement with the State of Queensland through the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport
- appropriate arrangements with each collaborative partner organisation to ensure the completion of the approved project activities and achievement of the proposed outcomes as set out in the Grant Agreement.

Applicants should ensure that they have read and accept the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement prior to applying for funding, as these are not negotiable at the time a funding offer is made.

Successful applicants will be required to:

- execute a Grant Agreement within 30 business days of being notified that the funding application has been successful
- commence projects within 60 business days of being notified that the funding application has been successful.

Failure to meet either of these timeframes will result in the funding offer being withdrawn.

Collaborative Partner Organisations

Following commencement of the project, the recipient organisation must immediately notify the department in the event a collaborative partner organisation ceases to be part of the project. In the event of such notice, the department may do one of the following:

- agree for the project to continue without the exiting collaborative partner organisation
- suspend the project activity until the department is satisfied the project can be delivered without the exiting collaborative partner organisation
- terminate the Grant Agreement thereby ending the project.

Promotion of Supported Projects

Funding recipients will be expected to actively promote their projects, and to provide information and attend media/promotion events if requested.

The Queensland Government funding should be acknowledged by recipients in all relevant published material, media releases and public statements.

Privacy

The Queensland Government and the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport manages personal information in accordance with the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#). Personal information will not otherwise be used or disclosed unless authorised or required by law.

The department collects personal information for the purposes of:

- assessing eligibility for the program
- promoting relevant information or services to you
- research, review, audits, evaluation and reporting.

The Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport, including its employees, may use and disclose the personal information provided in the application to third parties for the above purposes. Third parties include:

- Queensland Government departments and agencies
- Commonwealth Government departments and agencies
- non-government organisations.

The department or the Minister responsible for the innovation portfolio may publish grant recipient information on government websites, including Advance Queensland site or in media releases while publicising the outcomes of the program. Published information may include business name, funding amount, suburb/ postcode, and outcome details.

Further information

Web: advance.qld.gov.au

Email: regionalinnovation@dtis.qld.gov.au

Facebook: Advance Queensland

Twitter: @AdvanceQld

Phone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)