



QUALITY NATURE - QUALITY HERITAGE - QUALITY LIFESTYLE

BUSINESS PAPER EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2020

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and pursuant to Clause 2.3 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice that an **Extraordinary Council Meeting** will be held in the RSL Pavilion, Tenterfield Memorial Hall, Molesworth Street, Tenterfield, on **Friday, 22 May 2020** commencing at **9.30 am**.

Terry Dodds
Chief Executive

Community Consultation (Public Access) relating to items on this Agenda can be made between 9.30 am and 10.30 am on the day of the Meeting. Requests for public access should be made to the General Manager no later than COB on the Monday before the Meeting.

Section 8 of the Business Paper allows a period of up to 30 minutes of Open Council Meetings for members of the Public to address the Council Meeting on matters INCLUDED in the Business Paper for the Meeting.

Members of the public will be permitted a maximum of five (5) minutes to address the Council Meeting. An extension of time may be granted if deemed necessary.

Members of the public seeking to represent or speak on behalf of a third party must satisfy the Council Meeting that he or she has the authority to represent or speak on behalf of the third party.

Members of the public wishing to address Council Meetings are requested to contact Council either by telephone or in person prior to close of business on the Monday prior to the day of the Meeting. Persons not registered to speak will not be able to address Council at the Meeting.

Council will only permit two (2) speakers in support and two (2) speakers in opposition to a recommendation contained in the Business Paper. If there are more than two (2) speakers, Council's Governance division will contact all registered speakers to determine who will address Council. In relation to a Development Application, the applicant will be reserved a position to speak.

Members of the public will not be permitted to raise matters or provide information which involves:

- Personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors);
- Personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
- Information that would, if disclosed confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business;
- Commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - Prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - Confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council; or
 - Reveal a trade secret;
- Information that would, if disclosed prejudice the maintenance of law;
- Matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property;
- Advice concerning litigation or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege;
- Information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land;
- Alleged contraventions of any Code of Conduct requirements applicable under Section 440; or
- On balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Members of the public will not be permitted to use Community Consultation to abuse, vilify, insult, threaten, intimidate or harass Councillors, Council staff or other members of the public. Conduct of this nature will be deemed to be an act of disorder and the person engaging in such behaviour will be ruled out of order and may be expelled.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

What is a "Conflict of Interests" - A conflict of interests can be of two types:

Pecuniary - an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated.

Non-pecuniary – a private or personal interest that a Council official has that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Local Government Act (eg. A friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union or involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature).

Remoteness

A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to a matter or if the interest is of a kind specified in Section 448 of the Local Government Act.

Who has a Pecuniary Interest? - A person has a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is the interest of:

- The person, or
- Another person with whom the person is associated (see below).

Relatives, Partners

A person is taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter if:

- The person's spouse or de facto partner or a relative of the person has a pecuniary interest in the matter, or
- The person, or a nominee, partners or employer of the person, is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

N.B. "Relative", in relation to a person means any of the following:

- (a) the parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descends or adopted child of the person or of the person's spouse;
- (b) the spouse or de facto partners of the person or of a person referred to in paragraph (a)

No Interest in the Matter

However, a person is not taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter:

- If the person is unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of the spouse, de facto partner, relative or company or other body, or
- Just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, the Council.
- Just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of the Council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter provided that the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

Disclosure and participation in meetings

- A Councillor or a member of a Council Committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Council or Committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or Committee:
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or Committee, or
 - (b) at any time during which the Council or Committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

No Knowledge - A person does not breach this Clause if the person did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

Participation in Meetings Despite Pecuniary Interest (S 452 Act)

A Councillor is not prevented from taking part in the consideration or discussion of, or from voting on, any of the matters/questions detailed in Section 452 of the Local Government Act.

Non-pecuniary Interests - Must be disclosed in meetings.

There are a broad range of options available for managing conflicts & the option chosen will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. Non-pecuniary conflicts of interests must be dealt with in at least one of the following ways:

- It may be appropriate that no action be taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, Councillors should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (eg. Participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice-versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (eg. Relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict)
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as if the provisions in S451 of the Local Government Act apply (particularly if you have a significant non-pecuniary interest)

Disclosures to be Recorded (s 453 Act)

A disclosure (and the reason/s for the disclosure) made at a meeting of the Council or Council Committee or Sub-Committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

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ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Opening & Welcome
2. Civic Prayer & Acknowledgement of Country
3. Apologies
4. Disclosure & Declarations of Interest
5. Tabling of Documents
6. Community Consultation (Public Access)
7. Business of Extraordinary Meeting
8. Meeting Close

AGENDA

1. OPENING & WELCOME

2. (A) OPENING PRAYER

"We give thanks for the contribution by our pioneers, early settlers and those who fought in the various wars for the fabric of the Tenterfield Community we have today.

May the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord."

(B) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

"I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land that we are meeting on today. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders past, present, and emerging of the Jukembal, Kamilaroi and Bundjalung nations and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people present."

3. APOLOGIES

4. DISCLOSURES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

5. TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

6. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (PUBLIC ACCESS)

7. BUSINESS OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

OUR GOVERNANCE

(ITEM GOV22/20) OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020/20215

(ITEM GOV23/20) DROUGHT COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME EXTENSION -
CULTURAL AND HERITAGE INITIATIVES ACROSS THE
SHIRE (BY APPLICATION)8

8. MEETING CLOSED

Department:	Office of the Chief Corporate Officer
Submitted by:	Manager Customer Service, Governance & Records
Reference:	ITEM GOV22/20
Subject:	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020/2021

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

CSP Goal:	Leadership - LEAD 12 - We are a well engaged community that is actively involved in decision making processes and informed about services and activities.
CSP Strategy:	Maintain strong relationships with all levels of Government and proactively seek involvement in decision making impacting our Shire and the New England Northwest Region.
CSP Delivery Program	Provide sound and inclusive decisions using the Community Engagement Strategy to guide our interactions.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to place on public exhibition the draft Tenterfield Shire Council Operational Plan 2020/2021, from 22 May 2020 to 19 June 2020.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- (1) Place the draft Tenterfield Shire Council Operational Plan 2020/2021 on public exhibition on Council's website for 28 days for community review and comment, and**
- (2) That a further report be brought back to Council for adoption of the Tenterfield Shire Operational Plan 2020/2021.**

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, Council must prepare a number of plans that detail how Council intends to deliver services and infrastructure in the short and long term. These plans are to be based on priorities that have been identified through community engagement in the planning process, and established in a Community Strategic Plan.

Council must have a Delivery Program, detailing the principal activities it will undertake to achieve the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. The Operational Plan identifies the individual actions and activities that will be undertaken in a specific year to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program.

REPORT:

Section 8C of the Local Government Act 1993 provides the following principles for Integrated Planning and Reporting that apply to Councils:

- a) Councils should identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities.*
- b) Councils should identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations.*

Our Governance No. 22 Cont...

- c) Councils should develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals.*
- d) Councils should ensure that the strategic goals and activities to work towards them may be achieved within council resources.*
- e) Councils should regularly review and evaluate progress towards achieving strategic goals.*
- f) Councils should maintain an integrated approach to planning, delivering, monitoring and reporting on strategic goals.*
- g) Councils should collaborate with others to maximize achievement of strategic goals.*
- h) Councils should manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively.*
- i) Councils should make appropriate evidence-based adaptations to meet changing needs and circumstances.*

Council's current Delivery Program 2017/2021 incorporates the Community Strategic Plan and an annual Operational Plan that communicates to the residents of Tenterfield Shire the priorities for that year. The draft Operational Plan 2020/2021 details the actions and programs to be undertaken to support the Delivery Program and the Community Strategic Plan.

Following the end of the public exhibition period of 28 days on 19 June 2020 the final version of the Operational Plan will be provided as a late report to Council's Ordinary Meeting on 24 June 2020.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS:

1. Community Engagement / Communication (per engagement strategy)

The draft Operational Plan 2020/2021 will be placed on public exhibition on Council's website for a period of 28 days, for community review and comment. The draft Operational Plan 2020/2021 will then be brought back to Council for final review and adoption.

2. Policy and Regulation

- Local Government Act 1993 – Sections 8A 1(c), 8C, 405.

3. Financial (Annual Budget & LTFP)

The draft Operational Plan 2020/2021 includes Council's detailed annual budget, along with the Council's Statement of Revenue Policy, which includes the proposed rates, fees and charges for the financial year 2020/2021.

4. Asset Management (AMS)

Asset management implications in the delivery of the Operational Plan activities will need to be provided for in the budget for 2020/2021 and subsequent years, where identified.

Our Governance No. 22 Cont...

5. Workforce (WMS)

Nil.

6. Legal and Risk Management

In accordance with Sections 405(3) and 405(5) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council is required to provide the draft Operational Plan 2020/2021 for public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days, for public review and comments.

Given the current COVID 19 restrictions, hard copies of the draft Operational Plan will not be able to be made available or distributed to the public. Advertising of the availability of the plan on Council's website for review and comment by the community will be done through Council's website, mobile application and *Your Local News*.

7. Performance Measures

Nil.

8. Project Management

Nil.

Kylie Smith
Chief Corporate Officer

Prepared by staff member: Erika Bursford, Manager Customer Service,
Governance & Records

Approved/Reviewed by Manager: Kylie Smith, Chief Corporate Officer

Department: Office of the Chief Corporate Officer

Attachments:

**1 ATTACHMENT FOR THIS REPORT
WILL BE TABLED AT THE
EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**
- Draft Operational Plan 2020-21 & Draft
Tenterfield Fees & Charges

Department:	Office of the Chief Corporate Officer
Submitted by:	Corporate Administration Officer
Reference:	ITEM GOV23/20
Subject:	DROUGHT COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME EXTENSION - CULTURAL AND HERITAGE INITIATIVES ACROSS THE SHIRE (BY APPLICATION)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK	
CSP Goal:	Environment - ENVO 9 - Our natural environment will be protected, enhanced and promoted for future generations.
CSP Strategy:	Town and Village planning supports and enhances local place making principles and practice celebrating the diversity of our natural environment.
CSP Delivery Program	Identify, plan and enhance local environments in partnership with the community and stakeholders.

SUMMARY

Council staff have been liaising with the Manager for the Drought Communities Programme Extension, as per Council Resolution 40/20 – Bushfire Drought Recovery Grants dated 26 February 2020. We have been advised that the ‘Cultural and Heritage Initiatives across the Shire (by Application)’ project will not be approved due to the development of private or commercial buildings.

OFFICER’S RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- (1) **Amend resolution 40/20 – by removing ‘Cultural and Heritage Initiatives across the shire (by application)’ project from the Drought Communities Programme – Extension funding spreadsheet;**
- (2) **Council endorse and adopt the two (2) recommended projects for funding for the Drought Communities Programme Extension Grant.**

BACKGROUND

Council staff have been in communication with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science as per the Council Resolution 40/20 which was resolved by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting of 26 February 2020.

The Program & Delivery Manager of the *Drought Communities Programme – Extension* has advised that the project ‘Cultural and Heritage Initiatives across the Shire (by application)’ is not eligible under the funding guidelines due to the fact that it would be developing private or commercial properties. The funding requirements state that the project needs to increase employment of locals (directly or indirectly), contribute to the economic activity or communities/regions and lead to the retention of businesses, services and facilities such as increased tourism.

Two (2) projects have been identified as suitable replacements for the ‘Cultural & Heritage Initiatives across the Shire (by application)’ project. These projects fit the current grant funding criteria.

Our Governance No. 23 Cont...

The following activities are proposed:

Project 1: Drake Village Resource Centre Upgrade - \$60,000 GST excl.

Project 2: Cemetery Restoration work to historical Wilson's Downfall Cemetery – \$40,000 GST excl.

REPORT:

Grant Guidelines under the *Drought Communities Programme – Extension* (see Attachment 1 to this report) state that eligible projects must meet project requirements as stated on page 9 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. The proposed Cemetery Restoration work to historical Wilson's Downfall Cemetery and the upgrades to the Drake Village Resource Centre meets these requirements.

Project 1: Drake Village Resource Centre Upgrade

To upgrade and repair the Drake Village Resource Centre infrastructure. Including:

- Solar system upgrade with battery backup to enable functionality during power outages;
- Repairs to building and toilet/bathroom facilities;
- Installation of rainwater tanks and pump to provide increased water storage capacity;
- Emergency response shed for storage of donated water, food, clothing - accessible by forklift;
- Electrical work for repairs and improvements
- Painting and fittings; and
- Garden area's redesigned for reduced fire risk and increased WH&S and Public Safety concerns.

Project 2: Cemetery Restoration Work to historical Wilson's Downfall Cemetery and Development of Stage 1 Cemetery Tourism Trail

Protecting, preserving and restoring the historical Wilsons Downfall Cemetery which is a resting place for our early pioneers who forged the history of Wilson's Downfall, Liston and Amosfield localities, with headstones dating back to 1870 (see Attachment 2 to this report). This Cemetery has been listed by the National Trust as an historical, architectural site with 20 marked graves in 8 plots. There are also approximately 10 unambiguous grave depressions and another 30 unmarked graves. Clearing and removal of trees, tree sapling's and shrubbery from the site will minimise damage caused by roots, tree growth and falling branches and protect the last remaining graves and headstones. With the design and installation of the location and interpretive signage, this location will then form part of the Tenterfield Shire Cemetery tourism experience.

Drought Communities Programme Extension funding projects need to be completed by 1 December 2020 and acquitted prior to 31 December 2020.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS:

1. Community Engagement / Communication (per engagement strategy)

Drake Village Resource Centre has lobbied through Community Engagement Sessions, Progress Association Meetings and approaches to individual Councillor's for assistance with these upgrades.

Our Governance No. 23 Cont...

Council has engaged in community consultation through the Heritage Advisory Committee and community members, where requests have been made over several years for restoration and improvements to be performed on the Wilson's Downfall Cemetery site. Historical and current cemetery sites are considered an important asset for future tourism interest.

2. Policy and Regulation

- Tenterfield Shire Councils Strategic Plan
- Drought Communities Programme - Extension
The Drought Communities Programme – Extension provides councils with up to \$1 million per announcement for drought relief projects. Funding is available for eligible councils in areas impacted by drought.

3. Financial (Annual Budget & LTFP)

Drake Village Resource Centre is community owned and controlled by the Drake Village Resource Centre Management Committee. These upgrades will not impact Councils Asset Liability.

The allocation of funds for the proposed two (2) projects will be assigned from the Drought Communities Programme - Extension.

4. Asset Management (AMS)

Any potential new asset development arising on council owned/managed land from these funds will have an impact on Council's Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Register.

5. Workforce (WMS)

There is a significant increase in administration of these grants and additional staffing may require to facilitate these funds.

6. Legal and Risk Management

Must comply with legal and risk management policy. All works within Wilsons Downfall Cemetery will be completed in recognised best practice and advice from Council's Heritage Advisor.

Drake Village Resource Centre will be required to comply with all planning approvals before work is undertaken.

7. Performance Measures

Performance measures pertain to the grant delivery and outcomes matching the grant criteria. Acquittal also to demonstrate compliance with expenditure.

8. Project Management

On approval the project will be prioritised on assessment by the Tenterfield Shire Council's Heritage Advisor and Manager Planning & Development. Works will be scheduled and completed utilising a combination of Council staff and contractors/trades people.

An Agreement will be completed with the Drake Village Resource Centre Management Committee prior to the allocation of funding and commencement of work.

Kylie Smith
Chief Corporate Officer

Our Governance No. 23 Cont...

Prepared by staff member:	Jodie Condrick; Harry Bolton	
Approved/Reviewed by Manager:	Kylie Smith, Chief Corporate Officer	
Department:	Office of the Chief Corporate Officer	
Attachments:	1 Drought Communities Programme Grant Opportunity Guidelines	20 Pages
	2 Heritage Headstones - Wilsons Downfall Cemetery	4 Pages



Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science,
Energy and Resources
Department of Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development
and Communications

Business

business.gov.au
13 28 46
Delivered by AusIndustry

Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Drought Communities Programme - Extension

Opening date:	September 2018
Closing date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">30 June 2019 for the 81 Eligible Councils announced in 20181 December 2019 for the 15 Eligible Councils announced in March 20191 June 2020 for the 14 Eligible Councils announced during the 2019 election campaign1 June 2020 for the 12 Eligible Councils announced in September 20191 December 2020 for the 6 new Eligible Councils and 122 Existing Councils approved for further funding announced in November 20191 June 2021 for the 52 Eligible Councils announced in January 2020
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
Administering entity	Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us at business.gov.au .
Date guidelines released:	September 2018 and updated October 2018, March 2019, July 2019, November 2019, December 2019 and March 2020.
Type of grant opportunity:	Closed non-competitive

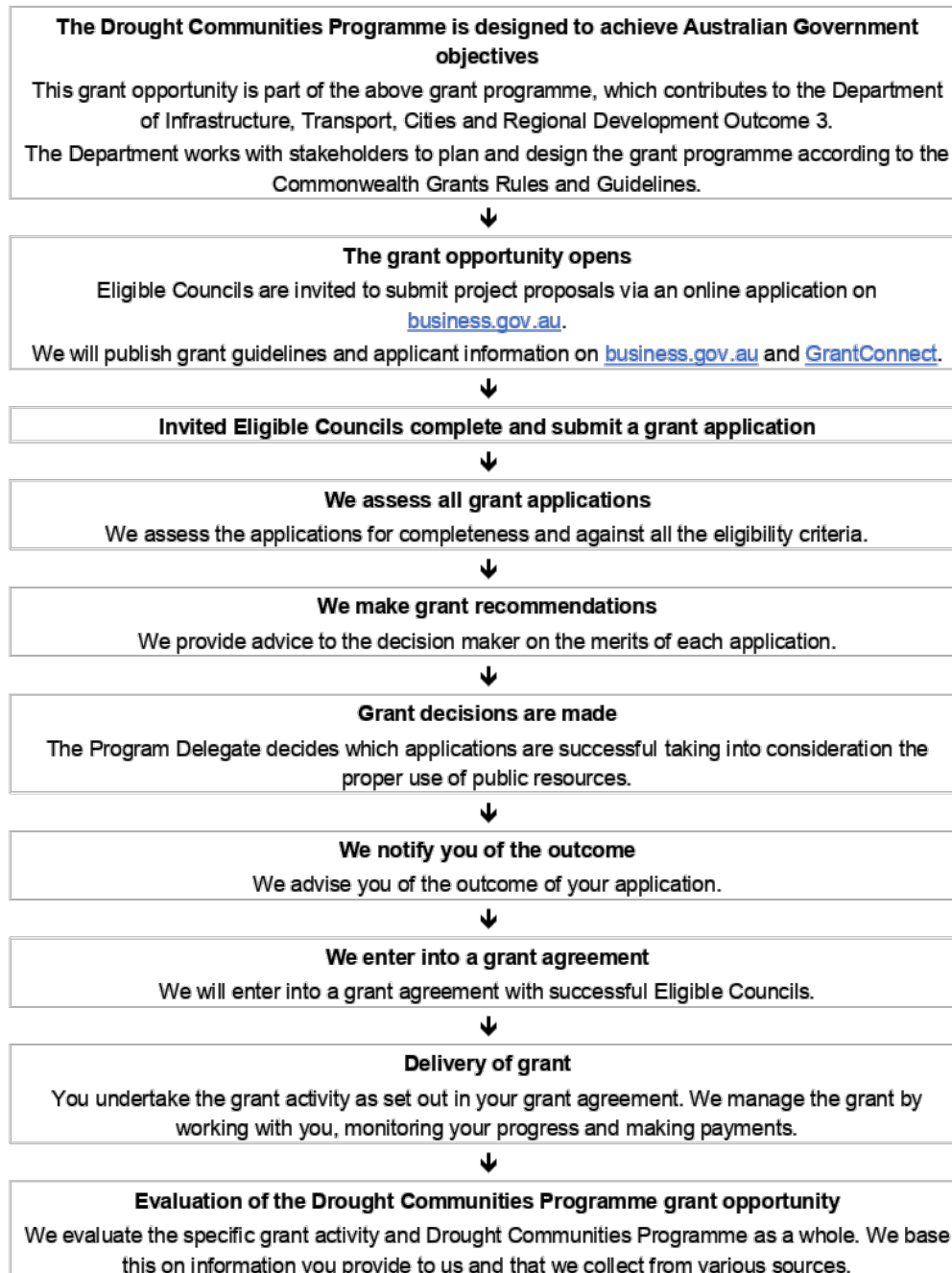
Version – March 2020

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1. Drought Communities Programme processes



2. About the grant program

The extension of the Drought Communities Programme (the program) will provide total funding of \$301 million over three years from 2018-19 to Eligible Councils to deliver immediate economic stimulus and other benefits to targeted drought-affected regions of Australia. The program will support local community infrastructure and other drought relief projects for communities who have been impacted by drought.

The objectives of the program are to deliver support to targeted drought-affected regions of Australia by funding:

- local community infrastructure and
- other drought relief projects.

Funding will target infrastructure and other projects that:

- provide employment for people whose work opportunities have been impacted by drought
- stimulate local community spending
- use local resources, businesses and suppliers
- provide a long-lasting benefit to communities and the agricultural industries on which they depend.

The intended outcomes of the program are to, within a three year timeframe:

- increase employment in regions by providing work for locals and/or farmers and farm labourers/staff/contractors whose employment opportunities have been affected by drought
- improve levels of economic activity in regions
- increase productivity in regions
- enable better retention of businesses, services and facilities.

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (the department/we) is responsible for administering the grant opportunity on behalf of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development.

We will publish the [opening and closing dates](#) and any other relevant information on [business.gov.au](#)¹ and [GrantConnect](#)².

We administer the program according to the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)³.

This document sets out:

- the eligibility criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in Appendix A.

¹ <https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/drought-communities-programme>

² <http://www.grants.gov.au/>

³ <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$301 million over three years from 2018-19. Program funding is capped and once that ceiling is reached, no other approvals are possible without a further consideration of the program parameters by the Australian Government.

Eligible Councils can receive funding for projects up to a maximum of \$1 million per announcement of funding (see announcements in Appendix A).

The maximum available funding for Eligible Councils announced in January 2020 is in two tiers:

- Tier one – maximum funding available up to \$1 million
- Tier two – maximum funding available up to \$500,000.

The tiers are determined by the population size of the eligible council.

Refer to list of Eligible Councils on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

The grant amount will be up to 100 per cent of eligible project costs (grant percentage).

- The minimum grant amount per application is \$25,000
- Applications can include multiple unrelated activities up to the total funding amount available per Eligible Council.

Eligible Councils announced for funding up to and including September 2019 may submit more than one application. Eligible Councils announced for funding from November 2019 may only submit one application.

Co-funding from Eligible Councils is not mandatory, but you may access other funding for the project. Cash funding or in-kind support can be provided by any organisation including, but not limited to, the Eligible Council, state government, not-for-profit organisations and private sector companies.

Funding can also form one component of a larger package of Australian Government funding, noting that other funding needs to meet the eligibility criteria of the program from under which it is funded. For example, eligible fencing projects may be part funded under the [Pest Animal and Weed Management Program](#)⁴, and eligible road projects may be part funded under the [Roads to Recovery Program](#)⁵.

Funding under this grant opportunity cannot be considered to be part of, or all of, a Council's contribution to projects under the Bridges Renewal Programme, the National Stronger Regions Fund, the Building Better Regions Fund, the Regional Growth Fund or the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programme.

If your project is dependent on funding from other sources, you must identify these sources and include their level of agreed support.

⁴ <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/>

⁵ <https://infrastructure.gov.au/>

3.2. Project duration

Projects can commence from the date of the Eligible Council's relevant funding announcement. The list of funding announcement dates, the earliest date for project commencement and the date by which projects must be completed is at Appendix A.

Eligible Councils that can demonstrate they have experienced extenuating circumstances may request an extension of the project period no more than three months beyond their expected project completion date (refer Appendix A), or as otherwise agreed.

The program ends on 30 June 2021.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and
- be an Eligible Council, listed on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](https://grantconnect.gov.au); or
- be invited to apply by the Minister.

4.2. Eligible Councils

Eligible Councils that can receive funding under the program are those specified by the Minister responsible for Drought. Eligible councils are listed on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](https://grantconnect.gov.au).

For the purposes of the program, we consider an incorporated organisation that provides council-like services and functions in Far West New South Wales and Far North South Australia, for example, the Regional Development Australia Far West or the Outback Communities Authority, to be Eligible Councils.

The Minister responsible for Drought, in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Agriculture can consider approving further Eligible Councils under the program, at their discretion.

The program does not create an entitlement for all drought-affected Councils to receive funding under the program.

4.3. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications:

- submitted by the Chief Executive Officer of an Eligible Council or other council officer authorised to sign a grant agreement
- that include a declaration that you will comply with specific regulatory requirements as outlined in section 10.3.

5. Eligible grant activities

5.1. Eligible projects

To be eligible your project must:

- be located in an Eligible Council area
- meet project requirements, see section 6

- include eligible activities and eligible expenditure
- have at least \$25,000 per application in eligible expenditure
- be undertaken in the project period and completed by the date stipulated in section 3.1.

5.2. Eligible activities

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include:

- repairs, maintenance, upgrading or building new community facilities
- repairs, maintenance, upgrades, construction and fit-out of community spaces
- employing local contractors to undertake repairs and maintenance
- holding events
- undertaking other drought relief activities (including water carting for human consumption) that benefit the community
- development of an Adverse Event Plan.

5.3. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

Eligible expenditure items may include the cost of:

- suppliers, consultants and contracted labour undertaking eligible project activities
- materials required to deliver eligible project activities
- purchasing, leasing or hiring equipment required to deliver eligible project activities
- holding events and
- other drought relief activities (including water carting for human consumption)

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible, unless stated otherwise. Refer to Appendix A for project start and end dates. Extenuating circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis. We will not be responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

5.4. Ineligible expenditure

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- payment of salaries for existing staff or contractors, although projects may be carried out by existing workforces
- computer software or hardware that is not an integral part of the funded capital project
- a council's core or business-as-usual operations, which council rates and other government funding usually funds
- purchases of land, buildings, vehicles or mobile capital equipment (e.g. trucks and earthmoving equipment)
- expenditure incurred prior to the project start date (refer to Appendix A)
- undertaking studies or investigations, or

- the development of private or commercial ventures, including licensed areas of registered clubs.

This list is not exhaustive and applies only to the expenditure of the grant funds. Other costs may be ineligible where we decide that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or are contrary to the objective of the program.

You must ensure you have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.

6. Project requirements

Each project must meet at least one of the following project requirements.

The project is expected to lead to the employment of locals

- the extent to which farmers and/or farm labourers/staff/contractors are expected to be employed
- how the project is expected to lead to the employment of locals and over what period of time they are expected to be employed
- the employment expected to be created beyond the immediate construction phase of the project and into the longer-term
- the indirect employment expected to be created through the potential flow-on effects to local businesses, suppliers, and services.

The project is expected to contribute to the economic activity of communities/regions

- local businesses, suppliers and services are expected to be used to complete the projects
- the project will encourage investment, business activities and other economic benefits to communities/regions.

The project is expected to lead to the retention of businesses, services and facilities

- the benefits that should be delivered as a result of the project, such as increased tourism, increased trade for local businesses, improved services resulting from enhanced facilities
- the number of people that are expected to benefit from the approved project.

6.1. Adverse Event Plans

Eligible Councils, publicly announced from 1 July 2019, must submit an Adverse Event Plan with their final project report.

Eligible Councils without an Adverse Event Plan already in place can use part of their funding under the program to develop an Adverse Event Plan.

Eligible Councils must develop an Adverse Event Plan which meets the needs of their community, and give consideration to the following:

- natural resource management (i.e. managing water supply, ground cover, trees, erosion, biodiversity)
- economic diversification and community resilience (i.e. infrastructure planning, tourism investment, diversifying local industries, capacity building for local leadership)
- communication and coordination (i.e. how to let people know what's available – now, and in the future; how do you communicate in hard times and for recovery).

7. How to apply

Before applying, you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#).

You will need to set up a user account to access our online portal. The portal allows you to apply for and manage grants in secure online environment.

To apply, you must:

- be listed as an Eligible Council or invited by the Minister to submit an application
- complete the online application form through the portal
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

We may ask you to justify your project costs. You should have evidence for the costs that you include in your project budget that you can provide on request.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code 1995* (Cth). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

If you need further guidance around the application process or if you are unable to submit an application online [contact us](#) at [business.gov.au](#) or by calling 13 28 46.

7.1. Attachments to the application

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

7.2. Timing of grant opportunity

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. Refer to Appendix A.

8. The selection process

We will assess your application for completeness and against all the eligibility criteria. To be recommended for funding, your project must meet all eligibility criteria as these projects provide the best value for money.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors. You may be asked to submit an updated proposal.

You may withdraw your application at any time.

8.1. Final decision

The Program Delegate (an AusIndustry senior responsible officer with responsibility for the program), decides which grants to approve taking into account the application assessment and the availability of grant funds.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of applications for funding
- the amount of grant funding awarded
- the terms and conditions of funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

9. Notification of application outcomes

If you are successful, you will receive a written offer, including any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing and give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us.

10. If your application is successful

10.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We will use the Commonwealth simple grant agreement for this program. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

We will manage the grant agreement through the portal. Accepting the grant agreement through the portal is the equivalent of signing a grant agreement. After you have accepted it, we will execute the agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth Government have entered into the grant agreement. We will notify you when this happens and a copy of the executed grant agreement will be available through the portal. The grant agreement will not become binding until it is executed.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur before a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of funding.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

10.2. Simple grant agreement

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth ('execute' means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement). During this time, we will work with you to finalise details. The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Program Delegate.

10.3. Project specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations.

Under State and Territory legislation, it is a requirement for people in roles that have direct, unsupervised contact with children to undertake a working with children/vulnerable people check.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have met relevant State or Territory legislation obligations related to working with children and/or vulnerable people, and that any person that has direct, unsupervised contact with children as part of a project under this program, has undertaken and passed a working with children/vulnerable people check, if required under relevant State or Territory legislation. You are also responsible for assessing the suitability of the people you engage as part of your project to ensure children are kept safe.

We do not provide advice on working with children/vulnerable people legislation, and you are responsible for seeking your own advice from the authority in your relevant State or Territory.

In addition, you will need to complete a risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse, and put appropriate strategies in place to manage those risks. You will also need to establish a training and compliance regime to ensure staff are aware of, and comply with, the risk assessment requirements as well as relevant legislation.

To be eligible, you must declare in your application that you comply with these requirements. You will need to declare you can meet these requirements in your grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

10.4. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any in-kind contributions you will make
- any additional financial contribution provided by you or a third party.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will make an initial payment on execution of the grant agreement. We will make subsequent payments in advance, based on your forecast eligible expenditure as you achieve agreed milestones and adjusted for unspent amounts from previous payments. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

We set aside 10 per cent of the total grant funding for the final payment. We will pay this when you submit a satisfactory final report demonstrating you have completed outstanding obligations for the project. We may need to adjust your progress payments to align with available program funds

across financial years and/or to ensure we retain a minimum 10 per cent of grant funding for the final payment.

The Program Delegate may approve alternative arrangements on a discretionary basis.

10.5. How we monitor your project

You must submit reports through the portal in line with the grant agreement. We will provide sample templates for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. You will also be able to download them from business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](https://grantconnect.com.au). We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

10.6. Final report

When you complete the project, you must submit a final report.

Final reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- be submitted by the report due date
- be in the format provided in the grant agreement.

Eligible Councils, publicly announced from 1 July 2019, must submit an Adverse Event Plan with their final project report.

10.7. Ad-hoc report

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

10.8. Independent audit report

We may ask you to provide an independent audit report. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure. The report template is attached to the sample grant agreement.

10.9. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project, to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. For large or complex projects, we may visit you after you finish your project. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

10.10. Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement through the portal, including:

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but within the maximum project period referred to in section 3.2.
- changing project activities

Note the program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds (above the maximum available funding amount identified in section 3.1).

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement end date. We can provide you with a variation request template.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

10.11. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

10.12. Evaluation

We will evaluate the program to determine the extent to which the funded activity is contributing to the program objectives and outcomes. We may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes. We may contact you up to one year after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

10.13. Tax obligations

In accordance with the terms of Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2, payments made under the program, which are payments made by a government related entity to another government related entity, do not attract GST. Consequently, funding sought by Eligible Councils in their proposal(s) must exclude the GST component on goods and services and the payments made to Eligible Councils will not include GST.

10.14. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program we require you, at a minimum, to acknowledge the grant by using the following:

'This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.'

If you erect signage in relation to the project, the signage must contain an acknowledgement of the grant. These details will be outlined in the grant agreement.

10.15. Events

We will require you to notify us of events relating to your project and provide opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend. These requirements will be outlined in your grant agreement.

11. Conflicts of interest

11.1. Your conflict of interest responsibilities

A conflict of interest will occur if your private interests conflict with your obligations under the grant. Conflicts of interest could affect the awarding or performance of your grant. A conflict of interest can be:

- real (or actual)
- apparent (or perceived)
- potential.

We will ask you to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to your grant, you must inform us in writing immediately.

11.2. Our conflict of interest responsibilities

We recognise that conflicts of interest may arise with our staff, technical experts, and others delivering the program between:

- their program duties, roles and responsibilities and
- their private interests.

We manage our conflicts of interest according to the APS Code of Conduct (section 13 (7) of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth)). We publish our [conflict of interest policy⁶](#) on the department's website.

Program officials must declare any conflicts of interest. If we consider a conflict of interest is a cause for concern, that official will not take part in the assessment of relevant applications under the program.

12. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 12.1, or
- personal information as per 12.3,

We may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

12.1. How we handle your confidential information

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

12.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

⁶

<https://www.industry.gov.au/AboutUs/InformationPublicationScheme/Ourpolicies/Documents/Conflict-of-Interest-and-Inside-Trade-Expectations-Policy.pdf>

12.3. How we use your personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)⁷ on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

12.4. Public announcement

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect and business.gov.au. We are required to do this by the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines* and the [Australian Government Public Data Policy Statement](#)⁸, unless otherwise prohibited by law. This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

We publish this information to ensure open access to non-sensitive data within Australian Government agencies to enable greater innovation and productivity across all sectors of the Australian economy.

12.5. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

⁷ <http://www.industry.gov.au/Pages/PrivacyPolicy.aspx>

⁸ <http://www.dpmc.gov.au/resource-centre/data/australian-government-public-data-policy-statement>

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

13. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at business.gov.au. We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Head of Division
AusIndustry - Support for Business
Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)⁹ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Adverse Event Plan	A plan developed in consultation with local stakeholders which aims to build local leadership and community capacity to adapt and cope with chronic stresses and acute shocks. The plan should look to improve preparation, management and recovery from those events. Planning for drought should consider water supply and quality, projects to buoy the local economy and maintain community cohesion and drought support coordination.
Application form	The details that applicants provide in the online portal to apply for funding under the grant opportunity.
AusIndustry	The division of the same name within the department.

⁹ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

Term	Definition
Eligible Council	A council that is eligible to apply for funding under the program as published on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.
Department	The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.2.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.3.
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister responsible for Drought.
Personal information	Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is: Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
Program Delegate	An AusIndustry senior responsible officer within the department with responsibility for the program.
Program funding or Program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.

Appendix A. Key dates for Eligible Councils

The table below sets out the date of Eligible Councils' funding announcement, the date from which projects can commence, closing date for applications and the date by which projects should be completed.

Date of funding announcement	Eligible Councils	Earliest start date of project*	Closing date for applications	Date by which projects should be completed
Prior to 1 August 2018 and during October 2018	81 councils	19 August 2018	30 June 2019	30 June 2019
March 2019	15 councils	19 August 2018	1 December 2019	31 December 2019
During 2019 election campaign	14 councils	11 April 2019	1 June 2020	30 June 2020
During September 2019	12 councils	27 September 2019	1 June 2020	30 June 2020
During November 2019	128 councils	7 November 2019	1 December 2020	31 December 2020
January 2020**	52 councils	28 January 2020	1 June 2021	30 June 2021

* For any projects contracted at 19 December 2019, the earliest start date for these projects was 19 August 2018.

**The maximum available funding for eligible councils announced in January 2020 is determined based on two tiers:

- Tier one – up to \$1 million
- Tier two – up to \$500,000.

Eligible councils (including tiers) are listed on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).







