



Australian Government  
Department of Industry, Science,  
Energy and Resources  
Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment

## Grant Opportunity Guidelines

# Off-farm Efficiency Grants Program

<b>Opening date:</b>	24 November 2021
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	5:00PM Australian Eastern Standard Time on 27 May 2022 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
<b>Administering entity:</b>	Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	24 November 2021
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Open non-competitive

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# 1. Off-farm Efficiency Grants Program

**The Off-farm Efficiency Grants Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives**

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's Outcome 5. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#).



**The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on [business.gov.au](#) and GrantConnect.



**You complete and submit a grant application**

You complete the application form, addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.



**We assess all grant applications**

We review the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. We assess eligible applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with relevant money.



**We make grant recommendations**

We provide advice to the decision maker on the merits of each application.



**Grant decisions are made**

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



**We notify you of the outcome**

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



**We enter into a grant agreement**

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and proportional to the risks involved.



**Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



**Evaluation of the Off-farm Efficiency Grants Program**

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment evaluate the specific grant activity and Off-farm Efficiency Grants Program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

## 2. About the grant program

The Off-farm Efficiency Grants Program will run over three years from 2021-22 to 2023-24. The program is part of the Australian Government's \$1.5 billion package to achieve a sustainable future for the Murray–Darling Basin, its people, industries and the environment.

The objectives of the program are to:

- better prepare water delivery networks, irrigators and communities for the future
- provide economic stimulus to support regional communities
- achieve neutral to positive socio-economic outcomes which are supported by the community
- reduce water losses to increase the volume of available water for the environment, irrigation networks, irrigators and communities
- enhance the environmental outcomes that can be achieved by the Murray–Darling Basin Plan 2012:
  - by increasing the volume of Murray–Darling Basin water resources available for environmental use by up to 450 GL
  - by helping to ensure long term Murray–Darling Basin health and water quality for the environment, irrigators, towns and cities.

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (the department/we) is responsible for administering this grant opportunity on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs)<sup>1</sup>.

### 2.1. Socio-economic test

The Murray–Darling Basin Ministerial Council has agreed to a socio-economic test which applies under this program. You should work with your state government to undertake the test, including public consultation. Your relevant Basin state should supply the outcomes of your test, including their decision on whether or not your project passes the test, for you to submit as an attachment to your grant application. The outcomes of your socio-economic test will form part of your application assessment, including the assessment of your response to assessment criterion 1.

The key elements of the socio-economic criteria are:

- the validity of water savings
- potential impacts on water prices
- community and industry engagement
- the future viability of proponent businesses and irrigation districts
- the expected socio-economic, environmental and cultural outcomes
- third-party impacts on irrigation districts, water market and regional communities
- integrated implementation opportunities
- improving drought and climate resilience

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-guidelines>

The opportunity for public comment is a key component of the socio-economic assessment of projects. Basin Governments agreed that they must take the views of the public into account when assessing water efficiency projects against the agreed socio-economic criteria.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment can be contacted at [waterefficiency@awe.gov.au](mailto:waterefficiency@awe.gov.au) to assist you to work with your basin state on this requirement.

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$150 million for this grant opportunity over three years from 2021-22 to 2023-24.

#### 3.1. Grants available

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

- The minimum grant amount is \$50,000
- There is no maximum grant amount, but grants cannot exceed the amount of available funds.

Grants are likely to be between \$50,000 and \$15 million depending on the scope and complexity of the project.

You are responsible for any eligible project expenditure not met by the grant, plus any ineligible expenditure.

Cash or in-kind contributions to your project are not required but are encouraged noting that in-kind contributions do not constitute eligible expenditure.

#### 3.2. Project period

You must complete your project by 31 March 2024.

### 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 one of the following entities:

- an entity, incorporated in Australia
- a company limited by guarantee
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- an incorporated association.

Joint applications are acceptable, provided you have a lead organisation who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 7.2.

#### 4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications where:

- you own or operate water delivery infrastructure within the Murray–Darling Basin for the purpose of delivering water for use in irrigation, urban, stock and domestic, or industrial uses

- your project is consistent with the purposes of the Water for the Environment Special Account (WESA) as specified in section 86AD of the Water Act 2007 (Cth)
- you can provide evidence of ownership of unencumbered water entitlements and agree to transfer ownership of these unencumbered water entitlements to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder by 30 June 2024
- you can provide evidence from your board (or chief executive officer or equivalent if there is no board) that the project is supported, and that you can complete the project and meet the costs of the project not covered by grant funding
- you provide all mandatory attachments as outlined in section 7.1.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

### 4.3. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation operating an irrigation enterprise as a single unit (i.e. an irrigator)
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' ([www.nationalredress.gov.au](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au))
- an organisation that has not complied with *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)* (Cth)<sup>2</sup>.

## 5. What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be able to generate water savings, some of which will be transferred and registered with the Australian Government by 30 June 2024
- result in the transfer of unencumbered water entitlements in perpetuity by 30 June 2024 for use by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder
- have neutral or positive socio-economic impacts
- be consistent with item 38 or 39 of the Register of Measures<sup>3</sup> that were agreed by the Murray–Darling Basin Ministerial Council and notified to the Murray–Darling Basin Authority in May 2016 to outline the set of works that can be categorised as an efficiency measure through 'on farm irrigation efficiency and other water use efficiencies' or 'urban or industrial and mining areas efficiency'
- address at least one or more of the following:
  - improve the water efficiency of the irrigation infrastructure that uses Murray–Darling Basin water resources
  - provide irrigation infrastructure that delivers, stores or drains water from the Murray–Darling Basin
  - better utilise existing dams and storage to deliver water from the Murray–Darling Basin
  - adjustment of a long-term average sustainable diversion limit

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wgea.gov.au/what-we-do/reporting>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/171120-register-of-measures.pdf>

- otherwise achieve the objects of Part 2AA of the *Water Act 2007* (Cth), which are to enhance the environmental outcomes that can be achieved by the Basin Plan.

For examples of eligible activities, see Appendix A.

We may also approve other activities.

## 5.2. Eligible locations

Your project must be delivered in a catchment within the Murray–Darling Basin as defined by the Murray–Darling Basin Authority<sup>4</sup>.

## 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 are:

- purchase (or hire or lease) of equipment and materials to support eligible project activities for example, building materials, ICT cabling, fit-out of the infrastructure, fixed furniture, landscaping
- salaries and on-costs for personnel directly employed in delivering the project activities (this should be calculated on a pro-rata basis relative to their time commitment)
- contract expenditure, the cost of any agreed project activities that you contract to others directly relating to the program objectives
- external labour and external consulting expenditure to cover the cost of contracting others to undertake core elements related to the project and may include design services, project management, quantity surveying and building services
- building modifications where you own the modified asset and the modification is required to achieve water savings
- contingency costs up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the eligible project costs. Note that we make payments based on actual costs incurred
- domestic travel to and from the project area limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct the agreed project activities
- administrative support and overheads additional to the normal day to day running costs of the organisation, including project management or project co-ordination
- costs you incur in order to obtain planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals during the project period
- financial auditing of project expenditure
- reporting on project outcomes.

We may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/catchments>



Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is a Senior Responsible Officer within the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment with responsibility for the program) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you for required project audit activities.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

You may elect to commence your project from the date we notify you that your application is successful. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

#### 5.4. What you cannot use the grant for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- activities that occur entirely outside of the Murray–Darling Basin, other than domestic travel to and from the project area limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct the agreed project activities
- activities in a catchment with a remaining gap to the Sustainable Diversion Limits (note that this may affect all of a proposed project or part of the project only – if this affects you, or you are unsure, contact [waterefficiency@awe.gov.au](mailto:waterefficiency@awe.gov.au)).
- activities that relevant state government elects to include as a schedule to the Federation Funding Agreement (FFA) – Environment as an alternative funding source
- projects offering water entitlements from a different catchment to the work location unless we specifically approve this in writing
- non-water efficiency measures
- purchasing non-irrigation related equipment, such as cars or boats
- any activities not related to the efficiency measures listed in the approved project documentation
- business restructuring
- capacity building
- activities for research and development
- establishing a new irrigation network
- purchasing water entitlements
- activities that have been completed or have already commenced.

## 6. The assessment criteria

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion.

The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size,

complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays size limits for answers.

We will only consider funding applications that score at least 50 per cent against each assessment criterion, as these represent best value for money.

### 6.1. Assessment criterion 1

#### **Project alignment with program objectives (50 points)**

Describe your project and provide information that demonstrates how your project will:

- a. better prepare water delivery networks, irrigators and communities for the future
- b. provide economic stimulus to the region
- c. have neutral to positive socio-economic outcomes due to water efficiency improvements

### 6.2. Assessment criterion 2

#### **Capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (25 points)**

You should demonstrate that your project has:

- a. sufficient support where applicable, from its direct stakeholders (such as customers within the water delivery network, potential individual rationalisation customers, and third parties with assets affected by the proposal)
- b. a sound project plan, demonstrating how you will successfully deliver and manage the project and maintain the benefits of the project beyond the terms of the grant funding
- c. a detailed budget based on the eligible activities required to achieve the proposed water savings
- d. overall project risks are identified with appropriate risk mitigation strategies.

### 6.3. Assessment criterion 3

#### **Benefits of your project and value for money (25 points)**

You should demonstrate this by describing how your project:

- a. has independently verified the water savings
- b. where appropriate, shares the water savings between the environment and water users resulting from the project
- c. will deliver eligible unencumbered water entitlements that can be transferred by 30 June 2024
- d. will result in a market multiple that balances the request for funding and the value of the water entitlements returned to the Commonwealth

The market multiple is a metric used to assess projects and is defined by dividing the total requested Commonwealth funding by the total value of the entitlements to be provided to the Commonwealth. Entitlement prices will be established in line with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's water valuation strategy. Projects should ideally have a relatively low market multiple, however, the program can support projects with a relatively higher market multiple under certain conditions (see section 8 for more information).

For technical assistance with calculating the market multiple for your project, contact [waterefficiency@awe.gov.au](mailto:waterefficiency@awe.gov.au).

## 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](http://business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#).

To apply, you must:

- complete the online [application form](#) via [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

You must retain a copy of your application, as it will form part of your grant agreement. You can view and print a copy of your submitted application on the portal for your own records.

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 Act 1995* (Cth). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information, your application may not be progressed. 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.

### 7.1. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

- project plan
- project budget
- outcomes of your socio-economic test
- risk assessment and risk management plan
- water savings calculation
- evidence of ownership of water entitlements proposed to be transferred to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder
- evidence of support for project from the board, CEO or equivalent (template provided on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#)). Where the CEO or equivalent submits the application, we will accept this as evidence of support
- project partner letters of support
- trust deed (where applicable).

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. Joint applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a project. In these circumstances, you must appoint a lead organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the project partners. Each letter of support should include:

- details of the project partner
- an overview of how the project partner will work with the lead organisation and any other project partners in the group to successfully complete the project
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the project partner will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities the project partner will undertake, and the resources it will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

### 7.3. Timing of grant opportunity

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your project around April 2022.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	4 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	4 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	4-8 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	April 2022
End date of grant commitment	30 June 2024

## 8. The grant selection process

We will assess applications as they are submitted between the opening and closing dates.

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will then assess it against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

We consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the market multiple of the grant sought.

We will establish a committee comprised of employees from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources to assess applications. The committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts.

The committee will assess your application against the assessment criteria and the outcomes of your socio-economic test and will recommend which projects to fund. The grant amount may differ, where the committee recommends there should be a decrease or increase in funding provided.

The assessment committee may consider recommending projects for funding with a higher market multiple, in the situation where:

- The proponent does not have a dedicated conveyance entitlement provided by the state government, so the network losses are covered by allocations from customers' entitlements on an ad hoc or systematic basis. For example, reducing water losses in the network will directly increase the percentage of a farmers' allocations available for crop production.
- The proponent has lower reliability (and lower value) entitlements only to offer (general security for example). This would mean a lower market value and therefore reduce the value proposition for the proponent as infrastructure costs need to be covered with a relatively higher number of entitlements.
- The project aims to fix, solve, or address issues around critical human water needs. This includes improvements to water access, reliability, security or water quality (i.e., through stock and domestic supply, connection of new customers to quality water supplies, supply or delivery issues).
- Previous water recovery (including purchases) resulted in an adverse socio-economic impact (using areas consistent with the first two rounds of eligible communities for the Murray–Darling Basin Economic Development Program). Also, the project would provide regional economic stimulus through a substantial stream of the investment engaging with local suppliers, contractors or services.
- There are exceptional supply and/or water distribution challenges being addressed by the project resulting in relatively higher infrastructure costs and lower water returns.

Note that the above may affect all or part of the proposed project. If your project is affected, or you are unsure, contact [waterefficiency@awe.gov.au](mailto:waterefficiency@awe.gov.au).

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition.

### 8.1. Who will approve grants?

The Minister for Resources and Water decides which grants to approve taking into account the recommendations of the committee and the availability of grant funds.

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

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Minister will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

## 9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

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

## 10. Successful grant applications

### 10.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#).

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until 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 Minister. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under this program, you cannot receive other grants for this project from other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government granting programs.

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

We will use a standard grant agreement.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. 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 Minister.

### 10.2. Project/Activity specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

You will be required to comply with:

- state/territory legislation in relation to working with children

#### 10.2.1. Building and construction requirements

Wherever the government funds building and construction activities, the following special regulatory requirements apply.

- *Code for the Tendering and Performance of Building Work 2016* ([Building Code 2016](#))<sup>5</sup>
- Australian Government Building and Construction WHS Accreditation Scheme ([WHS Scheme](#))<sup>6</sup>.

These regulations are subject to the level of funding you receive as outlined below.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.abcc.gov.au/building-code/building-code-2016>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.fsc.gov.au/sites/fsc/needaccredited/accreditationscheme/pages/theaccreditationscheme>

#### 10.2.1.1. Building Code

The Building Code is administered by relevant State and Territory administrations under relevant State or Territory legislation on behalf of the [Australian Building and Construction Commission](#)<sup>7</sup>.

The Building Code applies to all construction projects funded by the Australian Government through grants and other programs where:

- the value of Australian Government contribution to a project is at least \$5 million and represents at least 50 per cent of the total construction project value, or
- regardless of the proportion of Australian Government funding, the Australian Government contribution to a project is \$10 million or more.

#### 10.2.1.2. WHS Scheme

The WHS Scheme is administered by the [Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner](#)<sup>8</sup>.

The Scheme applies to projects that are directly or indirectly funded by the Australian Government where:

- the value of the Australian Government contribution to the project is at least \$6 million and represents at least 50 per cent of the total construction project value, or
- the Australian Government contribution to a project is \$10 million (GST inclusive) or more, irrespective of the proportion of Australian Government funding, and
- a head contract under the project includes building work of \$4 million or more (GST inclusive).

### 10.3. 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
- the volume of water entitlements to be transferred to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder
- any 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 payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

### 10.4. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.abcc.gov.au/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.fsc.gov.au/sites/FSC>

<sup>9</sup> See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au)

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

## 10.5. Australian Industry Participation (AIP) plan

If your approved grant is equal to or over \$20 million, you may need to develop an Australian Industry Participation plan ('AIP plan') in accordance with the AIP policy. We will consider whether you need to complete an AIP plan based on the nature of your project and opportunities for Australian suppliers to provide goods and services. If we determine that you require an AIP plan, we must approve your AIP plan prior to entering into a grant agreement.

We will publish an executive summary of your approved AIP plan at [www.industry.gov.au/aip](http://www.industry.gov.au/aip) once we execute the grant agreement.

You must submit Implementation Reports showing how you are implementing the AIP plan.

More information on AIP plan requirements can be found at [www.industry.gov.au/aip](http://www.industry.gov.au/aip).

## 11. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on [GrantConnect](#). We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au). This information may include:

- the 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.

## 12. How we monitor your grant activity

### 12.1. 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.



## 12.2. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. 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
- contributions of participants directly related to the project.

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.

### 12.2.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed project activities
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant project activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

### 12.2.2. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date.

### 12.2.3. Ad-hoc reports

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.

## 12.3. Independent audits

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 available on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#).

## 12.4. 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. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

## 12.5. Grant agreement variations

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

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project
- changing project activities.

The program does not allow for an increase of grant funds.

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

If a delay in the project causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

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
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

## 12.6. Evaluation

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment may evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. 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.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment may contact you up to 10 years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

## 12.7. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must 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.

## 13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the [CGRGs](#).

### 13.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

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

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)<sup>10</sup>](#) of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)<sup>11</sup> on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

### 13.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 13.2.1, or
- personal information as per 13.2.3.

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.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00057>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf\\_files\\_redirect](https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf_files_redirect)

### 13.2.1. 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.

### 13.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to the committee and 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.

### 13.2.3. 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, the committee, and 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](#)<sup>12</sup> 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.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

#### 13.2.4. 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).

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.

#### 13.3. 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:

Chief Finance Officer  
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources  
GPO Box 2013  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)<sup>13</sup> with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

## 14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Application form	The document issued by the Business Grants Hub that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
Business Grants Hub	The branch of the same name within the department.
Committee	The body established by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to consider and assess eligible applications and make recommendations to the Minister for funding under the program.
Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH)	The Commonwealth Government body responsible for the management of water entitlements acquired by the Commonwealth. These water entitlements are used to protect or restore environmental assets of the Murray–Darling Basin.
Efficiency measure	A measure that operates to decrease the quantity of water required for one or more consumptive uses in a set of surface water Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) resource units, compared with the quantity required under the benchmark conditions of development.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for services or 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 0.
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.
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the <a href="#">CGRGs</a> .
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.

Term	Definition
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 for Resources and Water
Non-income-tax-exempt	Not exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i> (Cth) or under Division 1AB of Part III of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1936</i> (Cth).
Off-farm activities	Upgrading irrigation network infrastructure, including reconfiguration and rationalisation to improve the delivery of water to farms. Includes modernising the delivery of water for stock and domestic purposes
On-farm activities	Upgrading farm infrastructure to improve the delivery of irrigation water to crops in isolation from irrigation network infrastructure
Personal information	<p>Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is:</p> <p>Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. whether the information or opinion is true or not</li> <li>b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.</li> </ol>
Program Delegate	A Senior Responsible Officer in the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 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.
Urban water activities	Upgrading water delivery networks to improve the delivery of water for urban consumption
Water entitlements	Rights to an ongoing share of water in a system within the Murray–Darling basin.

## Appendix A. Examples of eligible activities

Eligible activities	Examples
Installing new, or upgrading existing, irrigation infrastructure and technology in existing water delivery networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving/lining and/or reconstructing channels</li> <li>• replacing channels with piping systems</li> <li>• repairing or replacing pipes and pumping infrastructure</li> <li>• in line storages</li> <li>• installation/upgrading of flow control regulators, remote sensing, and telemetry control systems</li> <li>• system automation and control (including computing equipment, telemetry systems, etc)</li> <li>• improving management and measurement points, with intermediate automated control stations coupled with appropriate on-stream or off-stream storage facilities</li> <li>• installing meters that meet national standards.</li> </ul>
Permanently decommission inefficient or underutilised sections of a water delivery network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• earthworks to fill decommissioned channels</li> <li>• removal of pipes or channel off-takes</li> <li>• acquisition of water entitlements from irrigators retiring from irrigation as part of a channel rationalisation process, stock and domestic schemes for retiring irrigators, and removal of on-farm irrigation layouts.</li> </ul>
Improving stock and domestic water supply on one or more properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• replacing/upgrading existing stock and domestic supply infrastructure with piped systems.</li> </ul>



Eligible activities	Examples
<p>Constructing, replacing, upgrading, installing, improving, or refurbishing industrial water uses, including reducing leakage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• replacing existing sources of water with greywater</li> <li>• improving stormwater harvesting and re-use</li> <li>• replacing water supply with fit-for-purpose water delivered from alternative supplies</li> <li>• constructing, replacing, installing, upgrading, improving and/or refurbishing water efficient devices and/or technology</li> <li>• upgrading, improving and/or refurbishing production/manufacturing equipment to increase water efficiency</li> <li>• changing production practices to more water efficient production methods</li> <li>• changing production practices to produce more water efficient goods</li> <li>• decommissioning of infrastructure</li> <li>• other activities improving the water efficiency of a water delivery system.</li> </ul>
<p>Constructing, replacing, upgrading, installing, improving, or refurbishing urban water supply arrangements, including reducing leakage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bulk water infrastructure</li> <li>• filtration and/or water treatment infrastructure</li> <li>• operation and management of urban water delivery infrastructure</li> <li>• improve stormwater and wastewater capture and quality improvement infrastructure</li> <li>• stormwater and wastewater reuse infrastructure and/or devices including stormwater harvesting, management and reuse</li> <li>• sewage treatment facilities</li> <li>• water sensitive urban design infrastructure and/or landscaping</li> <li>• water efficient devices and/or technology</li> <li>• return of water entitlements where existing available water is no longer required for urban or other use</li> <li>• upgrading and/or improving management of bulk water supply, transport and/or distribution infrastructure</li> <li>• improving systems for monitoring and predicting leaks</li> <li>• replacing surface water with fit-for-purpose water delivered from alternative supplies</li> <li>• metering and/or pressure management</li> <li>• reducing demand through demand management</li> <li>• undertaking water audits and/or offering rebates</li> <li>• installing alternative household and/or community water supplies</li> <li>• water efficiency installation scheme for houses in a local government area.</li> </ul>

Eligible activities	Examples
activities that enable the implementation of water efficiency measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="544 259 1334 338">• feasibility studies, administration, design, project management, office supplies, planning, reports, surveys, professional advice.</li></ul>