

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Introduction

The Tasmanian Government is investing \$3 million in a new Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) supporting agricultural Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) in Tasmanian agriculture. The ADF is intended to promote sustainable growth and innovation and will be available to all Tasmanian agricultural industries that contribute to the AgriVision 2050 target to increase the farm gate value of Tasmanian agriculture to \$10 billion per annum by 2050.

The ADF grant funding rounds will also allocate the unspent funds from the Tasmanian Government's \$3 million Agricultural Innovation Fund (AIF), which was established in 2019 in response to the actions identified in the Tasmanian Government's [Agricultural Research, Development and Extension – Principles and Investment Strategy](#).

Applicants do not need to submit separate applications for the ADF and AIF – a single application for funding through this process will be assessed against the assessment criteria and, if successful, funding will be allocated from the most appropriate funding source.

The grant funding round is being administered by the Agriculture and Water Division of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE).

Funding priorities

Preference will be given to funding for:

1. Climate-responsive agriculture

Projects that help support producers to reduce their emissions; adapt to and prepare for the impacts of climate change; and leverage opportunities for growth, including drought preparedness and resilience.

2. Biosecurity and risk mitigation

Projects that assist farmers and agribusiness to continue to identify, plan for, and manage biosecurity hazards and threats.

3. Digital transformation

Projects that assist the agricultural sector to address digital skills gaps and share information and technology to support more efficient practices that improve productivity.

4. Rapid response

Projects that respond rapidly to material threats and minimise adverse impacts to the Tasmanian agribusiness sector.

Funding limits

Up to \$3 million will be available in the 2021-22 opening grant fund round.

As a guide, proponents may seek up to \$1 million from the ADF for a project, noting that value for money and co-investment from project partners are key considerations in the assessment process.

Proponents seeking funding in excess of \$500,000 will need to:

- Provide rigorous information to support their application, including a quantified economic impact analysis; and
- Demonstrate broad industry and/or community benefit.

The type of projects that may be considered for funding in excess of \$500,000 include:

- Projects with potential to deliver step-change in productivity;
- Projects for which this level of investment will leverage funding from other sources; and
- Projects that can demonstrate that they will deliver jobs or increased job security.

Eligible expenditure

Funds received through the ADF are to be directed primarily to new research, development and extension activities that directly lead to the delivery of project outputs and outcomes. For example, grant money from the ADF cannot be used for:

- Subsidising overhead (indirect) costs such as electricity, phone or rent;
- Activities that were already underway before the execution of the Deed for the ADF;
- Business-as-usual activities for the recipients such as computing hardware;
- Hospitality for the purpose of entertaining clients or the project team;
- Capital expenditure or construction works valued at more than 10 per cent of the grant amount.

Project timeframes

As a guide, projects should be undertaken within a three-year timeframe.

Eligible proponents

The proponent may be from the Tasmanian public or private sector, provided that the project addresses a genuine need identified by Tasmanian industry and involves demonstrable collaboration with industry partners.¹ The quality of the partnership approach and the potential for the project to build collaboration between the public sector, industry sectors and researchers are factors that will be considered in the assessment of the project.

¹ Tasmanian private sector proponents are proponents with operations and employees based in Tasmania.

Assessment of applications

Applications will be assessed by the Agricultural Development Fund Assessment Panel, chaired the Deputy Secretary (DPIPWE). The panel will include two members representing industry and the General Manager of the Agriculture and Water Division (DPIPWE). After considering the applications, the panel will recommend projects for funding to the Minister for Primary industries and Water.

Assessment Criteria

Project proposals must provide clear evidence of:

- A primary focus on sustainable productivity gains for Tasmanian farmers and agribusinesses
- Alignment with the funding priorities and government policy (see “*Funding priorities*”)
- High quality agricultural RD&E likely to deliver net economic, environmental and social benefits that would not be undertaken without government investment
- The costs and benefits of the project, including:
 - Identification of the economic, environmental and social impacts of the project compared to the situation if the project were not undertaken (the ‘base case’). Where possible, benefits should be quantified. While it is recognised that quantification of all benefits is not always possible or feasible, proposals should provide evidence-based estimates to the extent possible and reasonable using available data.
 - Identification of the agribusinesses (or industry sectors) which will benefit from the project
- A clear impact pathway articulating a plausible and feasible connection from RD&E investment to farm- and business-level impact, including provision for extension and evaluation.
- The assumptions underlying the impact pathway, and the costs and benefits
- A partnership approach for industry engagement along the value-chain, appropriate levels of co-investment and maximisation of adoption and impact
- Transparent monitoring and reporting that enables assessment of outcomes and impacts against the RD&E investment
- Broad industry benefits (beyond a small number of individual businesses)
- Why the Agricultural Development Fund is an appropriate source of funding

Note that applications for funds in excess of \$500,000 will be held to a higher level of rigour for all of these requirements, particularly in relationship to the economic impact analysis and the assumptions underlying the success of the project and its outcomes.

Grant Deed

To receive funds through the ADF, successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding Deed with the Tasmanian Government. This Deed will set out the responsibilities of the parties, including but not limited to reporting, funding allocations, ownership of intellectual property and dispute resolution.

Intellectual Property

The ownership of any intellectual property generated as part of this project will be agreed in the funding Deed, noting that the intention of the ADF is to facilitate innovations that will be widely accessible across industry.

Timing of Grant Rounds

The first annual round for ADF grant applications opens for six weeks on **Friday 30 July 2021** and closes at 11:59 PM on **Friday 10 September 2021**.

Submission process

All submissions must be completed using the Agricultural Development Fund Grant Application Form, available at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/ADF.

Please email completed forms to Farmpoint@dpiipwe.tas.gov.au before applications close, or post to:

Agricultural Development Fund Assessment Panel
AgriGrowth Policy Branch
DPIPWE, GPO BOX 44
Hobart TAS 7001

It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications within approximately eight weeks of the close of the grant round.

Guidance for completing the Application Form

Additional information to assist applicants with completion of the application, including some simple, worked examples is provided in the Supporting Information document available at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/ADF. If additional support or guidance in completing the Grant Application Form is required, please contact Farmpoint no later than 5:00 PM on **Tuesday 31 August 2021** (ten days before applications close).

Enquiries

For enquiries and assistance contact:

FarmPoint
Phone: 1300 292 292
Email: Farmpoint@dpiipwe.tas.gov.au