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Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

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Frequently Asked Questions

Drought Communities Programme – Extension

Before applying, you should read and understand the Drought Communities Programme - Extension Guidelines, the sample application form and the sample grant agreement published on business.gov.au and Grant Connect.

These Frequently Asked Questions are to assist you with your application and compliment the above resources.

1. What types of local community infrastructure/facilities/spaces will the program support?

Examples of local community infrastructure/facilities/spaces include:

- bike paths
- skate parks
- foot paths
- street scapes
- community centres
- recreational facilities
- parks
- sporting facilities
- stadiums, arenas
- libraries
- showgrounds
- caravan parks
- men's sheds
- roads

This list is not exhaustive.

2. What types of projects could be undertaken at these local community infrastructure/facilities/spaces?

Example activities to repair, maintain, upgrade, construct and fit-out local community infrastructure/facilities/spaces include:

- lighting upgrades or new lighting
- fencing - around facilities, swimming pools
- solar panels
- drainage and watering systems
- amenities - drinking fountains, BBQ areas, park furniture, shelters, footpath renewal
- sport and recreational facilities - tennis courts, gymnasiums, scoreboards, shade structures
- kitchen upgrades and/or repairs
- power connections at caravan sites

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- improved disability access
- purchase of equipment - computers, televisions, furniture, fixture and fittings
- purchase of equipment for local State Emergency Service, RFS etc
- footpath renewal and beautification.

This list is not exhaustive.

Projects are expected to lead to the employment of locals.

3. Why are some councils eligible for $500,000 instead of $1 million?

Eligible councils listed in announcements before January 2020 are able to apply for funding of up to $1 million. These councils were selected based on particular criteria. Following a review of the DCP Extension in 2019, these criteria were updated to include population size of the council's Local Government Area (LGA).

Eligible councils announced in January 2020 can apply for the following amounts:

- $500,000, for LGAs with a population of less than 1,000 people
- $1 million, for LGAs with a population of 1,000 people or more.

Application Form

4. What should be included in the detailed project description and key activities?

Information provided in this section should enable the decision-maker to understand:

- what the project/s involve, and
- how the projects meet the requirements set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

The detailed project description and key activities response in your application should include:

- an overview of the project/s
- details of the major components of the project
- who will be employed to carry out the works
- locations in the community where the project will be undertaken
- any partnerships/collaborations involved in the project
- the impact and outcomes the projects will have on the community.

The information should be clearly separated by project and/or major components of the larger project.

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The following examples are provided to assist you to prepare your response... Your response will need to reflect your specific project components.

Council A
The XXX project aims to deliver small and medium infrastructure activities which will generate local employment and procurement and positively influence social and community sustainability. The project comprises four core initiatives, namely Water Security, Community Facilities, Community Infrastructure and Tourism Infrastructure.

1. Water Security
- Improved water security by connection of the former town bores to Council's existing water infrastructure network. Work includes installation of a subterranean pipeline to transfer water from the bores on XXX Road to the stormwater harvesting facility at the XXX dam.
- Install a new electronically driven irrigation system at the XXX recreation ground including fusion welded perimeter ring, PVC laterals, web based controller and weather sensing technology for optimum watering scheduling.
- Employing local people, the project will expand the emergency water security network of water storage tanks connected to bores and solar powered pumps for use during emergencies and in fire prevention activities.
- Provide clean potable water via drinking fountains from modern hydro panel technology in key community spaces including XXX Street, XXX Recreation Ground and XXX Public Rest Areas.

2. Community Facilities
- Contribute to the retention and ongoing sustainability of community facilities, all identified by the community as being of significant social and economic importance, by assisting with key infrastructure upgrades, equipment needs and rising energy costs.
- The works on these facilities include a kitchen and bathroom upgrade at the XXX; shelters and seating for cemeteries at XXX, XXX, XXX and XXX; kitchen upgrades at the XXX; shade and installation of new water activities at the XXX Swimming Pool; air-conditioning installation at the XXX Recreation Ground; solar power and generator connectivity for the XXX Community Store; and paving and street scaping of the XXX School Precinct.
- In partnership with the XXX Football Club and XXX Cricket Club, the major recreation ground for the district, the XXX Recreation Ground, will receive new drought tolerant turf following the installation of the new irrigation system.
- Undertake critical upgrades at the XXX Recreation Centre including kitchen and wet area renewal.

3. Community Infrastructure
- Town entrance signage will be designed and installed at the north and south entrances to the XXX township. The XXX road entrance to XXX from XXX will also receive new signage recognising XXX road as a major tourist route for the area. The northern end of the XXX township will also receive new entrance signage.
- In collaboration with the XXX community association, install a new vehicle-stop and rest bay in the XXX township.

4. Tourism Infrastructure
- In collaboration with the local community-driven tourism group, improve visitor services, maximise the use of community owned assets and install new tourist infrastructure which will stimulate employment and economic benefits in XXX.
- Works will employ local people and contractors to deliver a range of activities such as upgrade of the adventure area of the XXX Recreation Ground, accessibility improvements (access track, car park, steps and handrails) at the historic XXX Creek, picnic and camping area upgrades at XXX reservoir, XXX heritage interpretive trail and nature play activities in XXX Street and the XXX Park nature picnic ground. Directional and interpretive signage will also be installed across the district to value add existing tourism offerings and further establish XXX as a heritage tourism destination.

Council B

Theme 1 - The XXX recreation centre is currently being built and will provide significant community, sport and recreation facilities to the region, including two state level netball/basketball courts and associated user offices. The mezzanine level of the centre provides a large flexible space and will host significant regional business services, events and conferences, trade shows and agricultural education and training programs. The proposed fit-out of that level will have widespread benefits for users, including the sporting and agricultural interests of the community.

Theme 2 - Council, with the community, has been developing a riverfront masterplan with widespread consultation that concluded in August 2019. It is now ready to implement the plan. The masterplan includes a new boat ramp, new lawn areas and roads, and moving the berthing area further west along the river to allow for access to the prime areas for recreation. Additionally, there is shared bicycle and pedestrian paths, new toilets, an amphitheatre, increased access to the XXX CBD that links to the XXX CBD revitalisation plan.

It is proposed to allocate $XXX from the DCP with Council allocating $XXX from its own reserves to enhance this first section of the masterplan. The masterplan was developed because the riverfront was identified as the town's major tourism asset and the key to diversifying the local economy away from agriculture and provide more jobs and employment reliability when they are agricultural downturns through drought.

5. What should project outcomes include?

Project Outcomes should align to the *Project Requirements* listed in section 6 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Project Requirements correlate to each of the intended outcomes of the Program (refer section 2, Grant Opportunity Guidelines).

- **Increase employment in regions** for locals and/or farmers/contractors whose employment has been affected by the drought
    - Ensure approximate numbers of jobs are estimated
- **Improve levels of economic activity** in regions
    - Explain in detail how the local economy will be affected by the project?
- **Increase productivity** in regions
    - Explain how the project will encourage investment, business activities & local economic benefits?
- **Enable better retention of businesses, services and facilities**.
    - Explain how the benefits of the project will lead to better retention of businesses and services. Comment on tourism, trade or improved services

6. What should be included in the project details for publication?

Project Title:

The title should succinctly describe the activities in the project e.g.

Community infrastructure upgrades and improvements in XXX Council

Project Description:

The project description for publication should be a concise general description that encompasses all the activities and/or sub-projects included in the project.

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Council A

The project will deliver 10 community facility and infrastructure developments and upgrades throughout the council area, with local businesses and contractors to participate in the delivery of the projects. The projects comprise: XXX Sport and Recreational Grounds, resurfacing of arena; XXX Showgrounds, cattle yards safety modifications; XXX Sports Ground, installation of solar pumps and water storage for irrigation of sporting fields to meet required standards and improve safety; XXX Water Infrastructure survey easement, to secure access over water facilities in XXX; XXX Memorial Hall, foyer upgrade; XXX Showgrounds, sealing of the access road throughout the showgrounds to provide improved facility for users (i.e. reduce dust); XXX Community Hall, roof repairs and insulation; XXX Civic Centre, construction and installation of a solid shade structure to improve amenities for residents and visitors; XXX Multipurpose Centre, purchase and installation of a new generator; XXX Recreation Grounds and Hall, upgrade; and XXX and XXX local swimming pools, solar heating.

Council B

The project involves 7 sub-projects that will support regional employment and stimulate the local economy. They comprise: Extension of the local area network to provide coverage to the furthest extremities of the shire; Construction of a back-up fuel supply depot in the Council yards to enable regional supply at times of disaster; Upgrade to the community facilities at the XXX Sports Complex including kitchen upgrade, shed extension and fencing; Extension to the canteen at the XXX Saleyards, included an extension to the kitchen area and an area for shaded seating including landscaping; Landscaping public park areas in XXX including construction and installation of a deck area, landscaping and play equipment; Construction of a large promotional sign for XXX in partnership with the community; and Construction of a light art installation to attract tourists to extend their stay in XXX.

Council C

High priority sections of footpath around the XXX Regional Council area have been identified to be constructed using local labour and suppliers. A significant component of the cost of constructing footpaths is labour with construction proposed to maximise immediate job creation. The scope of work includes sites across the XXX Regional Council Area. There is proposed work in several parts of XXX as well as local villages (XXX and XXX). The project is intended to provide infrastructure which will provide a benefit to the whole community. Work in the villages in particular is expected to increase the level of economic activity there. The sites for work are identified in council's footpath priority program to give the most benefit to the community. They have large catchments and connect to existing paths. Several locations have been identified to connect to public transport and improve disability access.

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7. How long should the project duration be?

Refer to Section 3.2, Project Duration, of the Drought Communities Programme - Extension Guidelines, for the project end date applicable to your Council.

Please ensure that:

- the project duration is realistic for the activities you propose to complete;
- the project duration is within the eligible project period for your Council; and
- your project includes a buffer and allows for likely and possible delays and contingencies.

Grantees are welcome to submit the End of Project Report before the due date.

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8. What should be included in the project budget?

The expenditure budget is broken up into four main areas:

1. Suppliers, consultants and contracted labour
2. Materials
3. Equipment
4. Other costs

Please ensure that:

- all expenditure costs are GST exclusive; and

- any co-contribution amounts are included - these will be listed in the Grant Agreement

The costs of developing an Adverse Event Plan and preparing an Independent Audit Report may be claimed as Other Eligible Expenditure.

9. What is ineligible expenditure?

Please be aware that the following costs are not covered under Drought Communities Programme - Extension:

- Council on-costs, except salary on-costs for contractors
- Payment of salaries for existing Council staff or contractors, unless contracted specifically for the term of the project
- The Council's core or business-as-usual operations costs
- Costs for community vouchers or cash handouts
- The development of private or commercial ventures, including licenced areas of registered clubs.

Ineligible expenditure is listed in Section 5 of the Drought Communities Programme - Extension Guidelines.

10. What should milestones include?

Milestones should be clear, measurable, and describe the activity to be completed.

Milestones should represent the sequence of events required for the completion of your project. You should explain what activities will occur at each stage and what the anticipated duration will be.

Ensure you provide milestones that reflect your specific project. Do not provide general milestones that could relate to any project and will be reflected in relevant parts of the grant agreement (e.g. completed work, report to be prepared, review quotes, start project, commence work, and complete project etc).

Your milestones should allow us to understand how you will manage your project over its duration, assess how your project is progressing and what your project will achieve.

If you have a number of sub projects/activities included under one application, each of these should be captured in separate milestones.

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The following examples are provided to assist you to prepare your response. Your response will need to reflect your specific project components.

Council A
Milestone Name - XXX Internet Project - Stage 3
Description - Stage 3 of the XXX project will deliver a network of proprietary digital microwave radios and point-to-point and point-to-multi point antennas and towers which will provide broadband data communications services. The new infrastructure will service a section of the XXX region that is currently not connected, linking into the existing infrastructure installed during stages 1-2 of the project; effectively forming a single local area network. Construction will occur at various locations.
Estimated Start Date - 20/03/2020
Estimated End Date - 1/12/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Sports Complex Upgrade
Description - Extension of the shed at the XXX Sports Complex, upgrade to the kitchen amenities, fencing and landscaping.
Estimated Start Date - 20/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 1/12/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Park Beautification
Description - Landscaping public park areas in XXX including the construction of a deck area, landscaping and play equipment installation.
Estimated Start Date - 20/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 1/12/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Sign
Description - Construction of a large promotional sign for XXX to be located at the town's northern entrance.
Estimated Start Date - 20/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 31/12/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Dam Lights
Description - Construction of a light art installation on the banks of the XXX Dam on the southern entrance to town.
Estimated Start Date - 20/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 31/12/2020

Milestone Name - Water and Sewer Mains Upgrades
Description - Water and sewerage mains upgrade in various locations around XXX and XXX, including relining in some instances. Specialist plumbing services required.
Estimated Start Date - 20/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 31/12/2020

Council B
Milestone Name - XXX Creek Desilting
Description - The clearing of 2km of XXX Creek at XXX to remove the build-up of silt and the removal of weeds and rubbish.
Estimated Start Date - 02/12/2019
Estimated End Date - 30/04/2020

Milestone Name - Solar Installations
Description - The installation of solar panels on high electricity usage facilities to reduce future power costs.
Estimated Start Date - 01/02/2020
Estimated End Date - 30/06/2020

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Milestone Name - XXX Community Centre
Description - The construction of a new building in XXX to be used by community care services.
Estimated Start Date - 01/02/2020
Estimated End Date - 30/06/2020

Milestone Name - XXX River Site
Description - The construction of a tourism site to commemorate the location of the finding of the XXX bones.
Estimated Start Date - 01/02/2020
Estimated End Date - 30/09/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Museum
Description - The construction of a new building at the XXX Museum to house the XXX displays.
Estimated Start Date - 01/02/2020
Estimated End Date - 30/09/2020

Milestone Name - Community Signage
Description - The installation of LED signs in XXX, XXX, XXX, XXX and XXX to promote community events.
Estimated Start Date - 01/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 30/09/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Skate Park Shade
Description - The construction of a shade structure over the XXX Skate Park.
Estimated Start Date - 01/02/2020
Estimated End Date - 31/12/2020

Milestone Name - XXX Recreation Park Jetty
Description - The construction of a jetty at the XXX Recreation Park.
Estimated Start Date - 01/01/2020
Estimated End Date - 31/12/2020

11. What should be included in the Risk Management Plan?

The Risk Management Plan should identify all significant risks to the project as well as identify mitigating strategies.

The following examples are provided to assist you to prepare your response. Your response will need to address the risks that relevant to your specific project components.

Council A
- **Quality assurance of deliverables**; mitigated by engaging project manager, specialist advice through preferred suppliers, continuous project monitoring and regular reporting.
- **Availability of specialist advice**; minimised by initiating early involvement of engineering expertise, and liaison with Councils who have completed similar projects.
- **Inclement weather** could frustrate construction of the project; the intended large delivery window will minimise the potential of time loss due to fluctuations in weather and potential extreme weather events
- **Supply of materials and/or services** could challenge project deadlines; Long lead-in time of project establishment and early engagement of contractors will ensure supply and stock of relevant materials.
- **Health and wellbeing of staff** undertaking works; safety and governance expertise provided from XXX in the development of agreements will ensure consideration of insurance, public liability, safe operating procedures etc.
- **Breach of contract by Contractor**; appointment of Supervisor (Project Manager) to project, XXX Contracts Policy, XXX Contract Templates.

- **Inadequate WH&S provisions/management**; use best practice Contract Templates, Contracts Training.
- **Inappropriate/inadequate insurance**; supervision by Project Manager, Insurance currency.
- **Damage to property**; supervision by Project Manager, Declaration on Tender Form, Visual evidence required.

Council B
- **Inclement Weather / Natural Catastrophes**: Significant wet weather event, localised flooding or flooding along transport lines may impact this project. The actual sites will be located out of local flood zones. A construction contingency has been allowed for unforeseen circumstances. Project Managers to monitor weather and adjust schedule where possible.
- **Costs exceed Council's funding capacity**: A contingency of 10% included in the budget will accommodate minor adjustments in construction and equipment costs. The Project will be continually monitored by the Consultant Engineer, with monthly meetings to keep track and review progress.
- **Failure to deliver project within the specified timeframe**: Council's Project Managers will oversee each stage of the project in consultation with the Provider's Project Manager/Contractor to ensure outcomes are managed and achieved. Council input is undertaken as quickly as possible to minimise delays. The Project Manager will remain in regular contact with the Provider/contractor.
- **Construction damages and other risks**: Project costings include contingency. Any budget overruns to covered by further Council budget allocation.
- **Timing**: Material supply unavailability: Project Manager and Contractors remain in regular contact to ensure sub-contractor / suppliers availability

12. What is an Adverse Event Plan?

An Adverse Event Plan is a plan that meets the needs of the community and considers the following:

➢ natural resource management i.e. water supply, ground cover and trees, erosion and 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 do you let people know what's available, how do you communicate in hard times for recovery?

If the Council does not have an existing Adverse Event Plan then it is possible to use part of the grant funding to develop one.

13. What is an Independent Audit Report?

An Independent Audit Reports is required for all projects with grant funding more than $500,000.

Ensure audit report costs are factored into your project budget. A maximum of one percent of the total eligible project expenditure, can be claimed as costs, under Other Eligible Expenditure.

Ensure you use the audit report template which will be emailed to you during the project.

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14. What types of community events are supported under the program?

A community event brings the community together in some way. For this program the emphasis is around how locals will benefit from the event especially through employment opportunities and supporting mental health.

15. Can an eligible council work together with another eligible council to complete a project?

Yes. Provided both councils are eligible for the program. Each council would submit a separate application and reference the other council/s in their application. A project could be undertaken in partnership where each council would specify in their application their role in the project and their requested funding. If successful, each council would be contracted separately and required to report on their project.

The Guidelines do not allow for joint applications (i.e. one application from multiple councils).

16. Are councils required to follow standard tendering and procurement processes?

Yes. Councils are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations under this program.

If the project requires a tender process to be completed, councils must adhere to that process. The timing available for the program may restrict the types of projects that can be submitted.

17. Can councils replenish water tanks on private properties for human consumption?

No. Projects under this program are to provide relief and benefits to the wider community, not just individuals. Councils seeking funding for water carting or other water related projects would need to devise a strategy to allow the whole community to benefit - for example, a plan to allow a group of community members to replenish their water tanks.

18. Can councils establish new and/or expand bore holes on public properties?

Yes. This activity would be considered eligible. The bores holes would provide a benefit to the local community and locals/contractors can be employment and equipment sourced from local businesses to complete the work. An example would be the construction of a new bore water hole for the local park's amenities block.

19. Can councils use the grant funding to refurbish and/or revamp shop fronts located in the main town centre with the work being carried out by local workers?

Yes. This would be eligible. This project would lead to the employment of local people in the area and could encourage more visitors to the town to contribute to the economic activity of the region.

20. Can grant funds be used towards an Undergraduate Scholarship Program? For example, targeting talented students from rural / farm backgrounds who

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otherwise will not be able to pursue their academic studies as a consequence of the drought.

Maybe. This activity does not meet project requirements unless it: leads to the employment of locals, contributes to the economic activity of the community, and/or leads to the retention of businesses, services and facilities. Councils would need to put forward a detailed description as to how the project benefits the broader community.

21. What is covered in the definition "community facilities", would employee or community housing be classed a community facilities? For example, a remote council that provides housing to in order to attract new employees or provide community housing for rent to community members.

No. This activity does not meet project requirements unless it: leads to the employment of locals, contributes to the economic activity of the community, and/or leads to the retention of businesses, services and facilities.

The program will not fund the purchase of existing buildings. The program will not fund projects that benefit the council and not the community.

22. The impact of the drought has caused additional sedimentation loads resulting in water treatment issues, with existing filtration equipment being unable to cope. Would a project to improve the filtration process be considered eligible?

Maybe. Councils would need to put forward a detailed description on how the project benefits the broader community. This activity does not meet project requirements unless it; leads to employment of locals, contribute to the economic activity of the community, and/or lead to the retention of businesses, services and facilities.

23. Can councils, through a planned community initiative, provide `voucher/gift cards' to spend within the local region? These programs allow cards (e.g. eftpos or other types of cards) to be loaded with funds and then utilised solely within the local community/shire?

No. The intent of the Drought Communities Programme - Extension is to support local community infrastructure and other drought relief projects.

Support of this type (vouchers/gift cards) for communities impacted by drought is being delivered through the Drought Community Support Initiative Programme. More information can be found here.

24. Can councils provide funding to the local community to subsidise payment of council and water rates?

No. Providing rate relief is not eligible under the program. The intent of the program is to provide funding for projects expected to: lead to the employment of locals, contribute to the economic activity of communities/regions, or lead to the retention of business, services and facilities.