

# AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND and AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION FUND GUIDELINES

## **Background**

The Tasmanian Government's \$3 million Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) supports agricultural Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) in Tasmanian agriculture. The ADF is intended to promote sustainable growth and innovation and is 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 Tasmanian Government's \$3 million Agricultural Innovation Fund (AIF) was established in response to the actions identified in the Tasmanian Government's [Agricultural Research, Development and Extension – Principles and Investment Strategy](#) with funding allocated in the 2018-19 State Budget. The AIF supports projects that are delivered in partnership with the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) that will address emerging opportunities and issues likely to have a direct impact on Tasmanian agriculture.

ADF grant funding rounds will allocate funds from both the ADF and AIF. Applicants do not need to submit separate applications for the two funds; a single application for funding through ADF grant funding rounds will be assessed against the criteria and, if successful, funding will be allocated from the appropriate funding source. Grant funding rounds are administered by the Agriculture, Forestry and Water Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas).

## **Funding priorities**

Preference will be given to funding for:

### **1. Climate-responsive agriculture**

Projects that help members of agricultural value chains to reduce their waste and 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.

#### **5. Agricultural Water Use**

Projects that will improve irrigation efficiency and address agricultural water quality.

### **Available funding**

In total, \$1.97 million will be available in the second grant funding round, which is expected to be the final round of funding for the ADF and AIF. Of this, approximately \$881,000 is available from the AIF for projects being delivered by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture in partnership with industry. Approximately \$1.09 million is available from the ADF for industry-driven agricultural research projects.

Proponents may seek up to \$500,000 for a project, noting that value for money and co-investment from project partners are key considerations in the assessment process.

### **Project timeframes**

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

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible, applicants must:

1. Be an entity with an ongoing presence in Tasmania
2. Have an ABN
3. Be registered for GST
4. Have public liability insurance with a coverage value of \$20 million
5. Have not received funding from the Tasmanian Government for the same activities

Funds received through the ADF/AIF are to be directed primarily towards new research, development and extension activities with a primary focus on sustainable productivity gains for Tasmanian farmers and agribusinesses. Funds are not to be used for:

1. Capital expenditure or construction works valued at more than 10 per cent of the grant amount
2. Subsidising day-to-day operating costs of the applicant, such as electricity, maintenance, phone, car parking rental or premises rent, unless they directly result from the project activities. We do not consider labour expenditure for leadership or administration staff (such as CEOs, CFOs, accountants and lawyers) as eligible expenditure, even if they are doing project management tasks.
3. Activities undertaken before the Department's approval of the project
4. Hospitality or entertainment expenses unless approved by the Department

## Assessment criteria

Assessment of applications is based on the information provided by the applicant against the assessment criteria. Applicants are encouraged to ensure that all relevant information is included in their application at the time of submission. During assessment, further information may be sought from proponents.

Project proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. **Benefit to Tasmanian agriculture:** proposals must provide compelling evidence for broad benefits to Tasmania and the state's agricultural sector, beyond a small number of individuals or businesses (20%)
2. **High-quality agricultural RD&E:** proposals must have a robust project plan and a project team with the demonstrated capability to undertake the research (15%)
3. **Partnership approach:** proposals must demonstrate a strong partnership (support, engagement, and co-investment) between industry and the RD&E provider(s) (15%)
4. **Clear impact pathway:** proposals must clearly show the connection from RD&E investment to farm- and business-level impact, including provision for extension, and how the impact will be measured and reported (20%)
5. **Alignment with funding priorities:** proposals must align with the ADF funding priorities and complement government policy and programs (15%)
6. **Cost:** proposals must demonstrate value for money and include a sufficiently detailed budget to enable transparency and accountability for the use of public funds (15%)

These weighted criteria will be assessed on a scale from 0 to 10. Applications which score of 0 for any criteria will not be eligible. Scores will be used to rank the suitability of projects for funding.

## Assessment Panel

An Assessment Panel will be established comprising:

- General Manager, Agriculture, Forestry and Water Division (Chair)
- Director, Agriculture and Water
- An industry member of the TIA Advisory Board
- Another experienced agribusiness or business/research analyst

## Administration of grant fund rounds

- The Agriculture, Forestry and Water Division of NRE Tas will be responsible for:
  - Developing application materials
  - Advertising and promoting the grant round
  - Administration of the competitive grant process
- The Assessment Panel will be responsible for:
  - Assessing the applications received against the criteria

- Seeking and receiving advice regarding applications from industry as appropriate
- Advising the Minister for Primary Industries and Water of their decision regarding the allocation of funding to projects
- The Minister for Primary Industries and Water will be responsible for:
  - Approving guidelines
  - Approving the amount of funding available in a round
  - Announcement of the successful recipients
- Funds for the Agricultural Innovation Fund will be reserved and held by TIA in a separate account with the identifier RT.114644.
- A minimum emergency impact reserve of \$200 000 is to be maintained in the AIF.
- The Minister for Primary Industries and Water, after considering the advice from the Department, may approve the allocation of funding from the \$200 000 AIF reserve to a project other than one recommended through the grant round process if:
  - a) it is for time-critical RD&E to respond rapidly to material threats and to minimise adverse impacts to the Tasmanian agribusiness sector
  - b) The project meets the eligibility requirements set out above.

### **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 and AIF is to facilitate innovations that will be widely accessible across Tasmania's agricultural industries.

### **Timing of Grant Rounds**

The second round for ADF grant applications opens for 12 weeks on **Friday 11 November 2022** and closes at 11:59 PM on **Friday 3 February 2023**.

### **Submission process**

All submissions must be completed using the SmartyGrants Agricultural Development Fund Grant Application Form, available at <https://nre.smartygrants.com.au/ADF>.

It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications within approximately 12 weeks of the close of the grant round.

## ***Enquiries***

For enquiries and assistance contact:

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