



Environmental Biosecurity Project Fund applicant guidelines

These guidelines describe the process for applying for funding under the Environmental Biosecurity Project Fund.

Objectives

The Environmental Biosecurity Project Fund (EBPF) has 4 objectives:

- 1) Enhance surveillance, detection and diagnostic capabilities for environmental biosecurity threats.
- 2) Foster expertise, networks and collaboration to enable coordinated and effective responses to environmental biosecurity threats.
- 3) Improve capacity for biosecurity preparedness and response.
- 4) Raise awareness and understanding of environmental biosecurity.

Priorities

The EBPF contributes to the following priority outcomes, especially for species on the [Exotic Environmental Pest List](#) (EEPL).

Preparedness

- Improved understanding of the risks posed by exotic environmental pests, weeds and diseases, including their impacts on the environment, cultural assets and First Nations people.
- Development of response plans that deliver coordinated processes, outline clear responsibilities and timely response activities to manage environmental biosecurity risks, and include perspectives of First Nations people.
- Research, development and innovation to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of biosecurity operations, including control measures to prevent or respond to the entry of exotic environmental pests, weeds and diseases.

Surveillance and diagnostics

- Increased diagnostic capability and capacity for exotic environmental pests, weeds and diseases to support definitive diagnosis, including improved or innovative technologies for identification (e.g. rapid diagnostic tools).
- Assessing environmental biosecurity risks to support surveillance at entry points and high-risk locations.

- Broaden existing surveillance activities, using risk assessment to identify environmental biosecurity risks (e.g. pathways for exotic environmental pests, weeds and diseases).
- Improve detection tools and systems to enhance our ability to detect exotic environmental pests, weeds and diseases.

Response

- Responsible agencies, experts and the community are well-connected to enact timely responses to the detection of exotic environmental pests, weeds and diseases.
- Response personnel are adequately trained and have the resources, skills and capacity to implement response plans.
- Mechanisms to review, evaluate and modify response plans according to identification of new risks, changing priorities or the development of new control measures.

Environmental biosecurity education, engagement and communication

- Effective engagement that improves public awareness of environmental biosecurity and the role we all play in managing the threats to our natural environment, cultural assets and way of life.
- Communication of, and access to, educational resources and practical tools (e.g. for diagnostics and surveillance) to enhance participation in environmental biosecurity activities.
- Supporting First Nations-led activities, that raise awareness of and consider environmental biosecurity risks to culture and community.

National strategies and plans

Applicants should demonstrate how their project contributes to national biosecurity strategies and plans, including:

- [Commonwealth Biosecurity 2030](#)
- [DAFF Biosecurity 2030 Roadmap](#)
- [Exotic Environmental Pest List](#)
- [National Biosecurity Strategy](#)
- [National Environment and Community Biosecurity Research, Development and Extension Strategy 2021–26](#)
- [National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan 2018–28.](#)

Other strategies and plans may be relevant in managing specific threats.

Eligibility

Applications are open to organisations who have an ABN, including state, territory and local governments (excluding Commonwealth entities) and non-government organisations.

How to apply

Using the Environmental Biosecurity Project Fund application form, provide details about your proposed project, including:

- key activities, end goals and outcomes that meet EBPF objectives
- timing
- metrics and maintenance
- personnel
- budget
- risk assessment.

The level of detail in your application should reflect the size and nature of the project.

Incomplete or vague submissions may not be considered. However, the assessment panel may contact applicants for more information before declining to consider an application.

Consider any overlap with exotic plant, marine and animal biosecurity risks that are relevant to your project (e.g. those identified in the [National Priority Plant Pests List](#) and associated national action plans, [Australian Priority Marine Pest List](#) and [Animal Diseases Exotic to Australia](#)).

If similar projects are underway or have been completed, demonstrate how your project complements or builds on this work.

Submission deadline

Applications can be submitted year-round. However, we encourage organisations to submit their completed application form by 31 October each year for consideration in the November panel assessment.

The assessment panel may decide to consider an application outside of the November panel assessment at their discretion.

Risk assessment

Identify all potential sources of risk, including governance, financial, resourcing and stakeholders.

For each identified risk, use the risk matrix (Table 1) to determine the risk rating (low, medium, high or extreme), based on the:

- likelihood of that risk occurring
- the consequential impacts to the project if that risk occurs.

Table 1 Risk matrix

Likelihood of the risk occurring	Consequence				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Almost certain Is expected to occur (up to 90% chance)	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely Will probably occur in most circumstances (up to 70% chance)	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Possible Might occur at some point (up to 40% chance)	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
Unlikely Could occur at some time (up to 20% chance)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
Rare May occur only in exceptional circumstances (up to 5% chance)	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Assessment criteria

Your application will be assessed against the criteria in Table 2 to determine whether your project is recommended to proceed to the next stage of the process.

Table 2 Assessment criteria and weighting

Criteria	Description	Weighting (%)
Alignment with EBPF objectives and priorities	Considers how well the project addresses national environmental biosecurity priorities, including EBPF objectives and priorities, relevant strategies and plans. Projects must address EBPF objectives.	30
Project value and co-investment	Evaluates the overall value for money, including cost-effectiveness and the ability to leverage additional funding or in-kind support. Projects that show strong collaboration (including with First Nations people where appropriate) and complement existing tools or strategies will be highly regarded.	25
Feasibility and applicant capability	Assesses the practicality of the project and the applicant's ability to successfully deliver it. This includes demonstrated project management skills, adherence to time frames and budgets, and a track record of achieving intended outcomes.	25
Project legacy	Considers the potential for the project to create lasting outcomes, such as building and maintaining expertise, generating data or resources and strengthening community or institutional capacity. The EBPF is not intended to provide ongoing support beyond the duration of a funded project.	20

Assessment decisions

If the assessment panel recommends your project to the Australian Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer, we will notify you and provide information on the next stage of the assessment process. Panel recommendation does not guarantee funding but indicates that the project has been assessed as suitable for further consideration.

The department has several legislative and policy obligations relevant to the spending of Commonwealth funding. All processes will be conducted in a manner consistent with:

- the [Commonwealth Procurement Rules](#)
- the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Principles 2024](#)
- applicable Commonwealth legislation and policies.

This includes an open, competitive process where there is insufficient justification for a closed non-competitive process.

By the applicant's participation in the application process, the applicant acknowledges that no binding contract, including a process contract, understanding or other legal or equitable rights or obligations will exist, or is created, between the Department and the applicant.

Applicants whose projects are not recommended by the panel will be notified and provided feedback.

Funded projects

The EBPF webpage will be updated following commencement of any new agreements.

Information on funded projects will be shared on the [Environmental Biosecurity Project Fund](#) webpage, the [Three Chiefs newsletter](#) and other department communication material with consent. The department may publish the project:

- Title
- Timeframe
- Lead organisation name
- Partner organisation names
- Commonwealth investment
- Objective and summary (including outcomes)

Use of information

A record of the information obtained through the EBPF application and any subsequent requests for information in relation to the EBPF process will be retained, and only used and disclosed for the purposes of the EBPF application assessment process and EBPF communication material if the project is funded and related purposes (e.g. evaluation of the program).

In administering this process, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry will disclose information (including confidential information) in connection with an application to the EBPF assessment panel and advisors, other Australian Government agencies and persons or organisations where necessary for the purposes of this process, provided the disclosure is consistent with relevant laws, including the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), and in relation to confidential information, provided those persons have agreed to not disclose any confidential information included in those documents.

Probity

Probity principles require the conduct of open, fair, accountable and consistent processes. The probity principles applied through this process aim to assure all parties of the integrity of the decision-making process.

The probity principles include:

- honesty and impartiality
- identification and management of conflicts of interest
- appropriate security and confidentiality arrangements
- consistency, fairness and due diligence
- transparency
- maintaining an appropriate audit trail
- compliance with legal and policy frameworks.

For queries about the probity of this nomination process, email ACEBO@aff.gov.au

Conditions of application

The Department will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by an organisation because of participating in the application process contained in these guidelines.

The information in the application may be made available to the public (except for personal information and any information specifically identified by you as confidential and you have explained why the department should treat that information as confidential, including an explanation as to how disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else). Your details (lead organisation, partner organisations, primary and secondary contact person details) will be used in accordance with the privacy notice in the application. Subject to paragraph (1), any information identified as confidential information will not be released and will remain confidential.

- 1) In addition to individuals involved with any stage of the process outlined in these guidelines, the department may also disclose confidential information included in an application:
 - a) to the Auditor-General, Commonwealth Ombudsman or Australian Information Commissioner
 - b) to the responsible minister
 - c) for public accountability reasons, including to a House or committee of the Australian Parliament, or
 - d) if the information is already in the public domain other than due to a breach of confidence.

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth).

Probity

Probity principles require the conduct of open, fair, accountable and consistent processes. The probity principles applied through this process aim to assure all parties of the integrity of the decision-making process.

The probity principles include:

- honesty and impartiality
- identification and management of conflicts of interest
- appropriate security and confidentiality arrangements
- consistency, fairness and due diligence
- transparency
- maintaining an appropriate audit trail
- compliance with legal and policy frameworks.

For queries about the probity of this nomination process, email ACEBO@aff.gov.au.

More information

Learn more about:

- [Environmental Biosecurity](#)
- [Environmental Biosecurity Project Fund](#)

Email: ACEBO@aff.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the continuous connection of First Nations Traditional Owners and Custodians to the lands, seas and waters of Australia. We recognise their care for and cultivation of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise their knowledge and contribution to the productivity, innovation and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2025

Unless otherwise noted, copyright (and any other intellectual property rights) in this publication is owned by the Commonwealth of Australia (referred to as the Commonwealth).

All material in this publication is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence](#) except content supplied by third parties, logos and the Commonwealth Coat of Arms.

The Australian Government acting through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has exercised due care and skill in preparing and compiling the information and data in this publication. Notwithstanding, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, its employees and advisers disclaim all liability, including liability for negligence and for any loss, damage, injury, expense or cost incurred by any person as a result of accessing, using or relying on any of the information or data in this publication to the maximum extent permitted by law.