# Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry 2021-2024Grant Opportunity Guidelines

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| Opening date: | dates to be advised for each annual round |
| Closing date and time: | **17:00 AEST on dates to be advised for each annual round**  |
| Commonwealth policy entity: | **Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment** |
| Administering entity | **Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment** |
| Enquiries: | **If you have any questions, contact the Science and Innovation Awards team at** **scienceawards@awe.gov.au** **or phone 02 6272 2260 or 02 627 2303.****Questions should be sent no later than the closing date for that annual round.** |
| Date guidelines released: | **July 2020**  |
| Type of grant opportunity: | **Open competitive** |

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## Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry: Grant opportunity processes

**The** **Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry 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 PBS - 1.10 - Agricultural Resources. 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](https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf).

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**The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on the GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/).

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**You complete and submit a grant application**

You complete the application form and address all the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant.

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**We assess all grant applications**

We assess the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. We distribute all eligible applications to the relevant industry category award expert panel which assesses your eligible application against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value for money and compared to other applications.

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**We make grant recommendations**

The industry category award expert panels recommend their preferred applicant to us. We then provide advice to the decision maker on the merits of each application.

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**Grant decisions are made**

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.

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**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.

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**We invite successful industry category award applicants to apply for the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management’s Award**

Applicants prepare and submit their application. The expert panel assesses eligible applicants and recommends their preferred applicant to the decision maker.

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**We notify you of the outcome**

We advise you of the outcome of your application.

🡻

**We enter into a grant agreement**

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

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**Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We, and the Community Grants Hub in the Department of Social Services, manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payment.

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**Evaluation of the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry program**

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

**1.1 Introduction**

These guidelines contain information for the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry grants.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

* the purpose of the grant program
* the eligibility and assessment criteria
* how grant applications are considered and selected
* how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
* how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
* responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

## About the grant program

The Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is an open competitive annual grant program supporting young people aged between 18 and 35 years who are working, employed or studying in an agriculture, fisheries or forestry related industry (including food and sustainable natural resource management) to undertake a project on an innovative or emerging scientific issue, including biophysical and social sciences, that will contribute to the ongoing success and sustainability of Australia's agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries.

The grant program will run annually from 2021 to 2024. Opening and closing dates will be advised on the grant program [website](http://www.awe.gov.au/scienceawards).

In each annual round there are multiple grants available in individual categories (referred to as the industry category awards) and one overall Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management’s Award. Each award includes a grant to a maximum of $22,000 including GST.

For the purposes of these Guidelines, an applicant is a person between 18 and 35 years who is working, employed or studying in an agriculture, fisheries or forestry related industry (including food and sustainable natural resource management). Applicants may include, but not limited to, producers (farmers, fishers, foresters etc.), scientists and researchers, extension officers, students, industry advisers and those actively engaged in the agriculture sector.

The objectives of the program are:

* to assist primary producers to develop more competitive, technologically adaptive and self-reliant industries
* to advance the careers of successful applicants through national recognition and funding of their research ideas

The intended outcomes of the program are:

* to encourage participation and uptake of science, innovation and technology in rural industries
* to attract innovative research proposals that will lead to longer term innovation in the sector
* to improve the connection between research and on-farm application with practical benefit.

The program is a public and active reflection of the commitment by government and industry to improve the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of portfolio industries and to foster innovation.

Benefits to industry from these innovative research projects include improvements to productivity, sustainability and adaptability through the provision of science and innovation in research, development and extension.

Benefits to successful applicants include financial support, skills development opportunities, opportunity to build strong networks across their industry, national and international exposure for their work including conference participation, publishing opportunities, and career development.

We will evaluate the program annually and consider the following key performance indicators:

* number of sponsors secured for each annual round
* number of applications
* quality and competitiveness of applications as assessed by the expert panels
* timeliness and quality of milestone reporting
* project expenditure according to budget

We will also review existing grant management and administration processes, practices and requirements and may make minor refinements that do not affect the overall intent of the program.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf) (CGRGs)*[[1]](#footnote-1).*

This grant program contributes to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment’s PBS - 1.10 - Agricultural Resources.

### About the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry grant opportunity

The objectives of the grant opportunity are:

* to assist primary producers to develop more competitive, technologically adaptive and self-reliant industries
* to advance the careers of successful applicants through national recognition and funding of their research ideas

The intended outcomes of the grant opportunity are:

* to encourage participation and uptake of science, innovation and technology in rural industries
* to attract innovative research proposals that will lead to longer term innovation in the sector
* to improve the connection between research and on-farm application with practical benefit.

There are two components to the program:

1. *Industry category awards,* and
2. *Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management’s Award.*

*Industry category awards*

There are multiple industry category awards in each annual round, with each category individually sponsored by a research and development corporation or industry association (the sponsor). Each industry category award recognises one competitive application with an award i.e. grant to a maximum of $22,000 (GST inclusive). While applicants may apply for an award in multiple categories with the same or different projects, they will receive only one award in that round. There is generally one award recipient in each industry category award though a sponsor may opt to support more than one application in their category. A successful industry category award applicant's research project is expected to commence and conclude within twelve (12) months of the executed grant agreement.

Each industry award category is supported exclusively by one sponsor. The categories may change from round to round depending on the support of the sponsor. Sponsors are confirmed annually and will be published on the grant program [website](http://www.awe.gov.au/scienceawards). Categories may include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Sponsor** |
| New and emerging rural industries | AgriFutures Australia |
| Eggs | Australian Eggs |
| Red meat processing  | Australian Meat Processor Corporation  |
| Pork  | Australian Pork Ltd  |
| Wool | Australian Wool Innovation |
| Cotton  | Cotton Research and Development Corporation  |
| Biosecurity | CSIRO Biosecurity digital innovation |
| Fisheries and aquaculture  | Fisheries Research and Development Corporation  |
| Forest and wood products | Forest & Wood Products Australia |
| Grains  | Grains Research and Development Corporation  |
| Meat and livestock  | Meat & Livestock Australia  |
| Viticulture and oenology | Wine Australia |

At the start of each annual round, the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management will be invited to formally launch the Science and Innovation Awards and open applications. The department will then publish the Guidelines and supplementary information on the GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/). The department may promote each round through advertising, social media and email newsletters. Applicants will be directed to the GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/) for the application form, Guidelines and program information.

Once the round closes, the department will check the submitted applications against the eligibility criteria and then distribute eligible applications to the relevant expert panels convened by the sponsors for each industry category.

Each sponsor convenes an expert panel to undertake the assessment process. All applications are assessed against the same assessment criteria, with each criterion equally weighted, and with reference to the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Each expert panel undertakes a merit assessment of applications for their industry category award before providing recommendations to the department. The department will incorporate those recommendations into an Assessment Report provided to the Approver - the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment’s Chief Scientist and Chief Plant Protection Officer (one role) as the decision maker.

The department will notify successful applicants by phone and in writing prior to their details being published on the GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/).

Successful applicants will be conditionally offered a grant (conditional on entering a grant agreement between the department and the grantee). If applicants accept the conditional offer, the department will enter into the grant agreement with the applicant’s employer acting as the grantee on behalf of the applicant, or directly with the applicant as the grantee if there if there is no employer. This will occur after the recipient of the Minister’s Award is known, as both projects will be covered by the one grant agreement.

Each applicant should be supported by their grantee throughout the project. A copy of the grant agreement can be found on GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/). On execution of the grant agreement, the successful applicant will be recognised as the relevant industry category award winner and project funding will be provided.

The department and the Community Grants Hub[[2]](#footnote-2)  will manage the grants.

There is no requirement for matched or co-funding from an applicant, industry category award sponsor or grantee.

If an applicant declines the grant on whatever basis before the grant agreement is executed, the offer is withdrawn by the department in writing. The sponsor of that industry award category will be consulted for their recommendation for the next highest ranked application. If the sponsor decides there is no next highest ranked application worthy of the grant, the sponsor may opt not to provide the grant in that round.

An industry category award sponsor can support more than one application in one annual round. In that case, the sponsor will provide the additional grant funding amount.

If no applications are received for a category or the applications received are assessed as unsuitable for funding (e.g. of poor quality), the sponsor reserves the right not to select a recipient or recommend any grant funding.

Unsuccessful applicants in the industry category award will be advised of their application outcome and offered the opportunity for feedback once the assessment process has been finalised. They are encouraged to apply in future rounds.

Applicants who are successful in one round are eligible to apply in future rounds with new projects.

*Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management’s Award*

There is one Minister’s Award in each annual round which provides additional funding to a maximum of $22,000 (GST inclusive) to one industry category award recipient for an extended research project related to the industry category application project. The successful applicant is expected to commence and conclude their extended research project within twelve (12) months of the executed grant agreement, and concurrent with their industry category award project.

Only recipients of the industry category awards are eligible to apply for the Minister’s Award. Applicants are eligible for the Minister’s Award if they were aged 35 years or younger by the industry category awards application closing date.

Following an offer and acceptance of their industry category award, recipients will be invited to apply for the Minister’s Award. The Minister’s Award provides additional funding to extend the industry category award project.

Industry category award recipients will complete a separate application and have additional time to complete it. The project budget in the Minister’s Award application must not duplicate expenses from the applicant’s industry category award project budget. An application is optional and does not affect the status of the industry category award.

Applications will be assessed by an expert panel led by the department’s Chief Scientist and will comprise members internal and external to the department, including the Chief Scientist. The Minister’s Award expert panel will use the same assessment criteria used for the industry category award, with each criterion equally weighted, and with reference to the Guidelines. The panel will assess all eligible applications and recommend one application to the Minister. The Minister or their delegate endorses the Minister’s Award.

The department and grantee will enter into a grant agreement which will include projects for both the industry category award and the Minister’s Award.

The department and the Community Grants Hub will manage the grants for the industry category award and Minister’s Award.

## Grant amount and grant period

The grant program will run annually from 2021 to 2024. Opening and closing dates will be advised on the grant program [website](https://www.awe.gov.au/scienceawards).

In each annual round, there are multiple industry category awards with each category individually sponsored by a research and development corporation or industry association (the sponsor). Each industry category award recognises one competitive application with an award (i.e. grant) to a maximum of $22,000 (GST inclusive). There is no minimum amount.

While applicants may apply for an award in one or multiple categories with the same or different projects, they will receive only one award in that round.

In each annual round, there is also one Minister’s Award which provides additional funding to a maximum of $22,000 (GST inclusive) to one industry category award recipient for an extended research project related to the industry category application project. There is no minimum amount. Only applicants successful in the industry category awards are invited to apply for the Minister’s Award (provided they have accepted that industry category award).

We expect successful applicants to complete and report on their research projects within twelve (12) months of the executed grant agreement. For the Minister’s Award recipient, this is concurrent with their industry category award project.

### Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of up to $1,100,000 (GST inclusive) over four financial years for the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The annual grant opportunity will open for applications in August and close in October of the same year.

* The minimum grant amount is at the discretion of the applicant.
* The maximum grant amount is $22,000 (GST inclusive).

### Grant period

The maximum grant period is 12 months.

You must complete your grant project within 12 months of the executed grant agreement. Following the grant project period, an evaluation period of two weeks will commence.

## Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

We cannot provide a grant if you receive funding from another government source for the same purpose.

### Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

Applications are open to young people between 18 and 35 years, who are working, employed or studying in an agriculture, fisheries or forestry related industry (including food and sustainable natural resource management) in Australia. Applicants may include young producers (farmers, fishers, foresters etc.), scientists and researchers, extension officers, students, industry advisers and those actively engaged in the agriculture sector.

An applicant is eligible if they meet all the requirements below:

* be aged between the ages of 18 and 35 (inclusive) by the closing date for each round.
* be an Australian citizen or permanent resident (proof is to be provided) by the closing date for each round.
* be working, employed or studying in an agriculture, fisheries or forestry related industry (including food and sustainable natural resource management) in Australia. Proof such as a letter of employment, scholarship or current pay slip may be requested by the department if this information is not immediately discernible.

New Zealand citizens currently permanently residing in Australia prior to 26 February 2001 and who have been living in Australia permanently since then, are eligible to apply. New Zealand citizens who arrived on or after 26 February 2001 are not eligible unless they hold an Australian permanent resident visa. New Zealand citizens are generally granted a Special Category Visa (subclass 444) on arrival in Australia. This visa allows you to remain indefinitely and live, work and study in Australia. However, it is a temporary visa and does not afford you permanent residency status. Under the bilateral social security arrangement between Australia and New Zealand of 26 February 2001, the Australian Government announced that New Zealand citizens who arrive in Australia on or after 26 February 2001 must apply for, and be granted, Australian permanent residency. For more information please visit the Department of Home Affairs’ [website](https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/new-zealand-citizens/pathway-to-permanent-resident-and-citizenship).

The age range of 18–35 years for the program is considered to have an exemption under the Age Discrimination Act 2004.

### Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you:

* do not meet all the eligibility criteria noted in section 4.1.
* are employed by a sponsoring organisation in the industry category award you are applying for.
* have an immediate family member (e.g. a sibling or parent) who is employed by a sponsoring organisation in the industry category award you are applying for.
* are employed by a Non-Corporate Commonwealth entity.

Note: Employees of entities that are classified as Corporate Commonwealth entities are eligible for the Science and Innovation Awards program, while employees of entities classified as Non-Corporate Commonwealth entities are ineligible for the Awards.

Note: Corporate Commonwealth entities are legally separate from the Commonwealth, whereas non-Corporate Commonwealth entities are part of the Commonwealth (see Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Section 11).

For clarification on the PGPA Act 2013 and the relevant entities, visit the Department of Finance’s [website](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/structure-australian-government-public-sector/pgpa-act-flipchart-list).

## What the grant money can be used for

### Eligible grant activities

A project is defined as a specific body of work which demonstrates innovation in scientific or technological approach or process and:

To be eligible your project must:

* be related to a significant, long standing or emerging issue in an agriculture, fisheries or forestry related industry (including food and sustainable natural resource management)
* demonstrate dedication to the future of rural and regional industries with a commitment to promoting science and innovation as an integral part of that future.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include but is not limited to:

* specific research activities
* further study
* industry visits
* presentations at conferences or workshops or attending such events
* publishing in journals

Further information about the projects that succeeded in previous rounds and the scope of activities can be found on the grant program [website](https://www.awe.gov.au/scienceawards).

### Eligible expenditure

The funding amount is a maximum of $22,000 (GST inclusive). While there is no minimum amount, you are reminded that your project should demonstrate value for money.

You can only spend the grant on eligible grant activities that formed part of your application. Expenditure on activities not detailed in your application cannot be introduced once your project has commenced. We may consider a reallocation of expenditure when your project is underway if there are changes in circumstances, but you must consult with us in the first instance for approval.

Eligible expenditure items may include but is not limited to:

* specific research activities
* further study
* industry visits such as travel and accommodation (excluding per diems)
* equipment or materials purchase
* presentations at conferences or workshops or attending such events
* publishing in journals
* staff costs that are not your own e.g. short-term hire of lab staff to run analysis.

We may update the guidelines 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 grant activity.

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.

You must incur the expenditure on your grant activities between the start date and end or completion date for your grant agreement for it to be eligible.

There is no requirement for matched or co–funding from an applicant, industry category award sponsor or grantee.

### What the grant money cannot be used for

Examples of ineligible projects / activities that will not be funded include:

i. projects that are undertaken as part of any TAFE or undergraduate tertiary course of study, pre-existing PhD research projects which are funded by an industry/university scholarship where you wish to use grant funding for the same purpose (projects that complement or contribute to a postgraduate course of study may be eligible provided that they are not excluded under (ii) and (iii) below).

ii. projects that are funded by other Commonwealth, Territory or state government programs.

iii. projects that include activities that have commenced or completed before the funding agreement is executed.

iv. project funding is not available to support the applicant’s own salary costs, stipends, living allowances or other similar expenses.

v. project funding is not available to support any corporate or administration costs of the applicant or grantee including real estate purchase, rental or tenancy.

## The assessment criteria

You must address all the following assessment criteria in the application. Each criterion is scored out of ten points, all with equal weighting and totalling a maximum of 50 points.

In responding to the assessment criteria in the application form, you should be aware there are sections with text limits of 250 words.

**Criterion 1** - Innovative or emerging scientific issue in an agriculture, fisheries or forestry related industry (including food and sustainable natural resource management)

* Demonstrated need for the research.
* Scientific focus or creative angle.
* Originality of data.

**Criterion 2** - Demonstration of the dedication to the future of rural and regional industries with a commitment to promoting science and innovation as an integral part of that future

* Dedication of the applicant and research to advancing and promoting rural and regional industries.
* Extension and engagement strategy.
* Applicant's related industry experience.

**Criterion 3** - Potential of the project to provide long-term benefits to the industry

* Potential financial benefits of the research.
* Sustainability of the project.
* Industry uptake through information dissemination and communication.

**Criterion 4** - Potential benefits to the applicant

* Opportunities for career development.
* Networking opportunities.

**Criterion 5** - Value for money

* Budget.
* Appropriateness of activities.

We will only award funding to applications that score highly against all assessment criteria. A total score of four or less in any criterion will be considered unsuitable for funding and not ranked.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rating** | **Description** | **Level of risk** | **Score** |
| Excellent | Exceeds requirements in all ways. | Very little or no risk | 9–10 |
| Good | Meets requirements in all ways, exceeds them in some.  | Little risk involved | 7–8 |
| Satisfactory | Meets requirements and is workable.  | Acceptable risk | 5–6 |
| Marginal | Nearly meets requirements, workable but may be deficient or limited in some areas | Higher than acceptable element of risk. | 3–4 |
| Poor | Applicant has either stated or demonstrated non-compliance, poorly addressed, criteria or there is insufficient information to assess. | Unacceptable risk | 0–2 |

## How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the sample application form, the sample grant agreement, and other briefing material on the grant program [website](http://www.awe.gov.au/scienceawards) and on the GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/). Any alterations and addenda[[3]](#footnote-3) will be published on GrantConnect. By registering on the GrantConnect [website](http://www.grants.gov.au/), you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

To apply you must:

* correctly complete and lodge the current round application form in electronic format, Word, pdf or other format used for the current round, and following the instructions in the application form, by the closing date and time.
* use the application form for the current round
* provide all the information requested
* address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
* include all necessary attachments such as project budget, timeline, two referee reports and, where applicable, proof of permanent residency
* submit your application/s as instructed on the program website by the closing date and time for that annual round.

If you wish to apply in more than one category, you will need to submit a separate application for each.

Applications that do not meet the application process or the deadline may not be accepted.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [*Criminal Code 1995*](http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/cth/consol_act/cca1995115/sch1.html) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately on scienceawards@awe.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

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.

We may accept late applications under extenuating circumstances provided an alternative timeframe has been agreed to prior to the closing date. Any requests for an extension to lodge an application must be made in writing to the program coordinator for a decision via email scienceawards@awe.gov.au prior to the closing date.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

We will acknowledge that we have received your application within two working days.

If you need further guidance around the application process or if you are unable to submit an application online contact us at scienceawards@awe.gov.au or by calling 02 6272 2260 or 02 6272 2303.

### Attachments to the application

Where an applicant is an Australian permanent resident, we require a copy of the documentation. Applicants who indicate they are an Australian permanent resident will be notified via email on how to provide documentation. Documentation must be provided by the applicant within two days of it being requested by us.

All applicants will need to provide a project budget and two referee reports, which will be included as part of the application.

You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

### Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must apply between the published opening and closing dates. We expect applications to open in the third quarter annually (approximately August) and close in the fourth quarter annually (approximately October).

We will only accept a late application under extenuating circumstances and where an alternative timeframe has been agreed to prior to the closing date. Any requests for an extension to lodge an application must be made in writing to the program coordinator for a decision via email scienceawards@awe.gov.au prior to the closing date.

We will undertake eligibility checks on all applications then distribute eligible applications to the sponsor expert panels in the fourth quarter annually. In this same quarter expert panels will then advise their preferred application to the department’s decision maker for approval. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified, and successful applicants will be invited to apply for the Minister’s Award. Application assessment for the Minister’s Award will also take place in this fourth quarter (approximately December).

In the first quarter of the following year (approximately January) a preferred application for the Minister’s Award will be recommended to the Minister by the department’s expert panel. In this first quarter (approximately March), successful applicants will attend the ABARES annual Outlook conference and be publicly recognised for their achievement. The grant agreement between the grantee and the department will be executed in the second quarter (approximately April).

If you are successful, we expect you will commence your grant activity from April and only once an executed agreement is in place.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | Timeframe |
| Assessment of applications | October to December  |
| Approval of selection process outcomes | December  |
| Notification to unsuccessful applicants | December  |
| Negotiations and award of grant agreements | April (of following year) |
| Earliest start date of grant activity  | April (of following year) |
| End date of grant activity or agreement  | April (of following year) |

### Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, contact scienceawards@awe.gov.au or call 02 6272 2260 or 02 6272 2303.

The program contact will respond to questions within two working days.

## The grant selection process

### Assessment of grant applications

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria (see section 4) and only eligible applications will move to the next stage.

In the next stage all eligible applications are sent to the relevant sponsor expert panel for assessment according to the industry category award you nominated.

The expert panel considers your application on its merits, based on:

* how well it meets the assessment criteria (see section 6)
* how it compares to other applications
* whether it provides value with relevant money.

All eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria and all criteria are weighted equally. Each criterion is scored out of ten points totalling a maximum of 50 points.

Applications will be scored and ranked against all other eligible applications received.

### Who will assess applications?

Each sponsor convenes an expert panel to assess applications in their category. Each expert panel is composed of representatives who demonstrate skills and experience in their industry, technical knowledge, awareness of current and emerging industry issues and the subject matter. Membership of the expert panel is unique to each sponsor organisation and may vary year to year. Each expert panel assesses applications against the same assessment criteria.

The expert panel may be assisted by technical, financial, legal and other specialists as required. These individuals are not members of the panel, but are, if requested by the expert panel, to analyse applications and prepare factual reports against one or more of the assessment criteria for the panel’s consideration.

Any expert/advisor, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

Each panel member will assess each eligible application on its own merit against the assessment criteria for a preliminary score. The panel will then convene and assess each eligible application against all other eligible applications using the assessment criteria. A final score will be agreed by the panel and applications ranked in merit order based on final scores.

The expert panels recommend which applications to approve for a grant to the Program Delegate as the decision maker.

Should two or more industry category award expert panels select the same application, we will liaise with each panel to determine which industry category award should be allocated to that applicant by considering the strength of the next highest ranked application in each of the affected categories and the best outcome for the applicant and the expert panels.

Applications for the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management’s Award are invited from successful applicants from the industry category awards (once they have accepted the offer).

The Minister’s Award provides additional project funding for an extended research project based on the applicant’s industry category award project. A separate application form will be provided to applicants, with additional time to complete it. An applicant can opt not to apply for the Minister's Award and their decision does not affect their industry category award.

The project submitted for the Minister’s Award is to be undertaken concurrently with the industry category award project.

The department’s Chief Scientist will convene a two to three-member expert panel to assess eligible applications. The panel will be composed of the Chief Scientist and experienced individuals from industry and the department who demonstrate strong industry, technical and analytical skills. The membership of this panel will be distinct from the membership of the Industry Award expert panels and may vary annually.

Each panel member will score all applications using the same assessment criteria and then rank against other eligible applications. The panel will convene to assess and make a recommendation to the Minister.

### Who will approve grants?

The Chief Scientist and Chief Plant Protection Officer (one role), Australian Chief Plant Protection Office in the Biosecurity and Compliance Group is the Program Delegate i.e. decision maker. They decide which grants to approve taking into account the recommendations of the expert panel and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

The Program Delegate’s decision is final in all matters, including:

* the approval of the grant
* the grant funding amount to be awarded.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

## Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing.

If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to request feedback.

Successful applicants will receive a phone call and a conditional letter of offer outlining the grant amount to be allocated. The letter of offer does not constitute a grant agreement and successful applicants must not begin a project until a grant agreement between the department and the grantee (usually the applicant’s employer, or directly with the applicant as the grantee if there is no employer) has been negotiated and executed.

We reserve the right to negotiate with applicants and grantees on any aspect of the grant prior to execution of the grant agreement, including supporting fewer projects/activities, offering less funding than the amount for which applicants applied, or seeking further outcomes.

An applicant will not be considered the industry category award recipient or the Minister’s Award recipient until a grant agreement has been executed with the grantee. The grant agreement for the recipient who receives the industry category award and the Minister’s Award will include both projects.

Drafting grant agreements will begin after the outcome of the Minister’s Award is known, likely from April.

### Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback by contacting the program coordinator via email scienceawards@awe.gov.au within two weeks of being advised of the outcome. Wewill give written feedback within one month of your request.

You can submit a new application for the same or similar grant project in any future grant opportunities under the program. You should include new or more information to address any weaknesses that may have prevented your previous application from being successful.

### Further grant opportunities

If no applications are received for a category or the applications received are assessed as unsuitable for funding (for example, of poor quality), we and the expert panel reserve the right not to select an application or recommend any grant funding.

## Successful grant applications

### The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We use the simple grant agreement in this program.

Each agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample grant agreement is available on the Department of Finance’s [website](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/tools-templates).

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed. If you choose to start your grant activities before you have an executed grant agreement, you do so at your own risk. You must not start any activities until a grant agreement is executed.

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

**Simple Grant Agreement**

We will use a simple grant agreement.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth (‘execute’ means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement). 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.

### How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

* maximum grant amount to be paid
* the project activities to be undertaken and the timeframe for completion
* reporting milestones.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

Single Upfront Payment

We will pay 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the grant activity.

### Grants Payments and GST

Payments will be GST Inclusive. If you are registered for the [Goods and Services Tax (GST)](https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/GST/Registering-for-GST/), where applicable, we will add GST to your grant payment and issue you with a [Recipient Created Tax Invoice](https://www.ato.gov.au/business/gst/in-detail/managing-gst-in-your-business/tax-invoices/recipient-created-tax-invoices/).

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](https://www.ato.gov.au/).[[4]](#footnote-4) We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

Funding from this program may result in the applicant or grantee being ineligible for support from other government programs. Applicants and grantees should seek advice on the legal implications of their acceptance of a grant.

## Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by Section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](http://cgrgs/).

## How we monitor your grant activity

### Keeping us informed

You need to let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activity 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 grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

* name
* addresses
* nominated contact details
* employment status and location.

A circumstance may arise where a project cannot commence, continue, finish or is delayed (for example, personal circumstances, seasonal delays for crop planting, reduced rainfall, equipment delays or lack of stock, etc.).The recipient or their grantee must contact the program coordinator via email to scienceawards@awe.gov.au as soon as possible to advise of the situation, provide reasons for delay or cancellation and propose a revised project timeline and activities. This request will be reviewed by the department in conjunction with the award sponsor. The grantee will be advised of the decision. In most cases and with valid reasons and a revised progress plan, approval will be granted. Should delays be significant (i.e. greater than 12 months) and depending on the circumstance the department will consult with the award sponsor and the grantee and reserves the right to recover the remaining project funds and cancel the project.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately.

### Reporting

You must submit reportsin line with the grant agreement. We will provide templates for these reports - one milestone report at six months after the grant agreement execution date and one final milestone report 12 months after the grant agreement execution date. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

* progress against agreed grant activity milestones, outcomes and outstanding activities
* expenditure of the grant
* communication activities and contact with award sponsor.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor progress by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits or request records 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.

### Financial acquittal report

At the conclusion of your project we will ask you to provide a financial acquittal report to verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. It should show the project revenue, expenditure and any underspend of the grant money. Where there is an underspend, the unspent grant funding will be recouped by us.

### Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress where a project cannot commence, continue, finish or is delayed (for example, personal circumstances, seasonal delays for crop planting, reduced rainfall, equipment delays or lack of stock, etc.). In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement.

The grantee must contact the program coordinator via email to scienceawards@awe.gov.au as soon as possible to advise of the situation, provide reasons for delay and propose a revised project timeline and activities. This request will be reviewed by us in conjunction with the award sponsor. The grantee will be advised of the decision. With valid reasons and a revised progress plan, approval is likely to be granted. Should delays be significant (i.e. greater than 12 months) and depending on the circumstance we will consult with the award sponsor and the grantee and reserve the right to recover the remaining project funds and cancel the project.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

### Compliance visits

We may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

### Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

### Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant programto measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and 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.

### Acknowledgement

The program logo should be used on all materials related to grants under the program. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows:

‘Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – an Australian Government initiative’.

## Probity

The Australian Government 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.

These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

### Enquiries and feedback

In the first instance any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to scienceawards@awe.gov.au.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment’s [Suggestions, compliments and complaints procedures](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/contact/suggestions-compliments-complaints) apply to complaints about this grant opportunity.All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

If you do not agree with the way the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

 Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

### Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a [conflict of interest](http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/aps-values-and-code-of-conduct-in-practice/conflict-of-interest), or perceived conflict of interest, if the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment’s 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 or member of an external panel
* 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.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or 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 the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment in writing immediately.

We reserve the right to reject an application if not satisfied there are arrangements to appropriately address or manage a conflict of interest.

We will maintain a register of notified conflicts of interest throughout the application process. The register will include conflict of interest declarations provided by applicants, as well as those of the expert panel and Commonwealth officers. We will provide expert panel members with a conflict of interest form for their use.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13(7))](http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/cth/consol_act/psa1999152/s13.html) of the [*Public Service Act 1999*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00538). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on our website as part of these grant program guidelines on the grant program [website](http://www.awe.gov.au/scienceawards).

### Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [*Privacy Act 1988*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2014C00076) and the [*Australian Privacy Principles*](https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy-law/privacy-act/australian-privacy-principles). This includes letting you know:

* what personal information we collect
* why we collect your personal information
* who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

If the relevant personal information requested is not provided, we will be unable to assess or progress an application for this program. Specifically, an applicant may be contacted by the department to discuss and progress an application for the program round. If an applicant is successful, their project details, biography and photographs will be used for promotional purposes related to the Awards, including media releases and other promotional material, inclusion on the department’s and sponsors’ websites and through social media.

An applicant should also be aware that if successful, Commonwealth policy requires the department to publish information on GrantConnect about the grant, including, but not limited to:

* Name of the recipient of the grant
* Purpose of the grant funding
* Amount of funding received
* Term of the grant and
* Location of the grantee.

The department’s Privacy Policy, including information about, access to, and correction of, personal information, can be found on the department’s [website](https://www.awe.gov.au/about/commitment/privacy).

To contact the department about personal information or to make a complaint:

* Phone: Switchboard 02 6272 3933
* Email: privacy@awe.gov.au
* Post: Privacy Officer, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601.

### Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

* the expert panels and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
* our employees and contractors so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
* employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
* other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
* the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
* the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
* a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [*Freedom of Information Act 1982*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02562) (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.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing. For details visit the department’s [website](https://www.awe.gov.au/about/reporting/freedom-of-information).

## Glossary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Term | Definition |
| accountable authority | see subsection 12(2) of the [*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*](http://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/pgpa-legislation-rules-and-associated-instruments/) |
| administering entity | when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes |
| applicant | the individual who prepares and submits an application. |
| assessment criteria | are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings. |
| commencement date | the expected start date for the grant activity  |
| completion date | the expected date that the grant activity must be completed, and the grant spent by  |
| co-sponsoring entity | when two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it |
| date of effect | can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.  |
| decision maker | the person who makes a decision to award a grant |
| eligibility criteria | refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria. |
| Commonwealth entity | a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act |
| [*Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)*](https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf) | establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.  |
| grant  | for the purposes of the CGRGs, a ‘grant’ is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:* 1. under which relevant money[[5]](#footnote-5) or other [Consolidated Revenue Fund](https://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/pgpa-glossary/consolidated-revenue-fund/) (CRF) money[[6]](#footnote-6) is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and
	2. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government’s policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
 |
| grant activity/activities | refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake |
| grant agreement | sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant |
| [GrantConnect](http://www.grants.gov.au/) | is the Australian Government’s whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs |
| grant opportunity | refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process. |
| grant program | a ‘program’ carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Portfolio Budget Statement Program. |
| grantee | the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant |
| PBS Program | described within the entity’s [Portfolio Budget Statement](https://www.budget.gov.au/2018-19/content/pbs/index.html), PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs. A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities. |
| recipient | refers to a successful applicant. |
| selection criteria | comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria. |
| selection process | the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria. |
| value with money | value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:* the quality of the project proposal and activities;
* fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives;
* that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved; and
* the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.
 |

ENDS

1. <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Community Grants Hub, in the Department of Social Services, provides a shared-services arrangement to deliver grant administration services on behalf of Australian Government client agencies to support their policy outcomes. Client agencies retain their responsibility for grant policy and the development of grant programs, while the Hub is responsible for administering grant programs at the direction of policy owners and consistent with the requirements of the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017. For more information visit <https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/about>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.ato.gov.au/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)