



North Queensland Natural Disaster Mitigation Program

Guidelines 2021–22



Australian Government



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PART A – OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

1. The North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (NQNDMP) Guidelines 2021-22 (the Guidelines) outline the objectives and governance arrangements for grant funding available under the NQNDMP.
2. The NQNDMP will fund disaster mitigation initiatives that aim to help reduce the cost of insurance premiums in high risk, cyclone-prone coastal areas by reducing disaster risk and/or supporting a better understanding of future risk.
3. NQNDMP aims to address some of the issues highlighted in the [Australian Consumer and Competition Commission’s \(ACCC\) Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry’s Final Report](#) released in December 2020. The report encourages governments and insurers to identify mitigation works that can help reduce insurance premiums in Northern Australia.
4. Part A of the Guidelines provides an overview of the funding that is available, the program objectives, key dates, who can apply, the types of projects that are eligible, the types of costs that are eligible, and the key issues that will be considered in assessing and prioritising projects.
5. Part B of the Guidelines provides an overview of the governance and administrative arrangements that will apply to successful projects, including progress reporting and progress claims, assurance activities, project acquittal requirements, record keeping and public acknowledgement requirements.

Funding source

6. NQNDMP is fully funded by the Queensland Government from the 2021-22 Queensland Budget. The total amount of funding available is \$10 million.

Objective

7. The NQNDMP’s objective is to deliver projects that aim to reduce disaster risk and therefore may assist in reducing the cost or growth of insurance costs for residents, businesses and/or the community, for example by:
 - a. reducing or mitigating natural hazard risk
 - b. deriving intelligence to enable an accurate assessment of risk
 - c. informing delivery of future risk reduction or mitigation activities.

Relevant policies

8. To achieve more disaster resilient communities applicants should consider two priority outcomes:
 - use consistent methodologies and frameworks in relevant impact assessments
 - identify costs and benefits associated with hazard management to inform risk reduction activities.
9. Policies relevant in the design and delivery of NQNDMP are:
 - a. the [Cyclone Resilient Building Guidance for Queensland Homes](#)
 - b. the [Storm Tide Resilient Building Guidance for Queensland Homes](#)
 - c. the [Flood Resilient Building Guidance for Queensland Homes](#)
 - d. the [Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience](#)
 - e. the [Queensland Disaster Resilience and Mitigation Investment Framework](#)
 - f. the [Queensland Flood Risk Management Framework](#)
 - g. the [Economic Assessment Framework of Flood Risk Management Projects](#)

Key timeframes

10. Application stage
 - a. Expressions of Interest (EOIs) open on Thursday 11 November 2021.
 - b. EOIs close on Friday 18 February 2022.
 - c. EOIs will be reviewed and short-listed applicants invited to submit a detailed application.
 - d. All applicants will be notified of outcomes by 30 June 2022.
11. All projects must commence following notification of funding approval and be complete by 31 December 2023.
12. All project acquittal reports are due within three months of the completion of the project, including any peer/external reviews of scoping studies or research.

Who may apply

13. NQNDMP is available to 33 local governments and one town authority in high risk, cyclone-prone, coastal areas with population centres within 50kms of the coastline, from Bundaberg north to the Northern Territory border.

Aurukun Shire Council	Mackay Regional Council
Bundaberg Regional Council	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council
Burdekin Shire Council	Mareeba Shire Council
Burke Shire Council	Mornington Shire Council
Cairns Regional Council	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council
Carpentaria Shire Council	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council
Cook Shire Council	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council
Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Douglas Shire Council	Tablelands Regional Council
Gladstone Regional Council	Torres Shire Council
Hinchinbrook Shire Council	Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council	Townsville City Council
Isaac Regional Council	Weipa Town Authority
Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council	Whitsunday Regional Council
Livingstone Shire Council	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Maximum funding available per project

14. While the total cost of a project is uncapped, the maximum funding amount that can be sought under these Guidelines is limited to \$2 million in eligible costs.
15. All ineligible costs, and any costs above the approved capped project funding amount, will need to be met by the applicant.

Co-contributions

16. Applicants are expected to provide a co-contribution towards the total project cost. There is no specific or minimum co-contribution amount required, however it should be proportionate to the scale of the project and funding amount sought. The co-contribution can be financial or in-kind, for example applicants labour or plant costs.
17. Applicants need to demonstrate that any co-contribution is secured, and if a co-contribution is being provided by another source ensure agreement has been reached.
18. In recognition of limited revenue generating capacity, Indigenous councils are not required to make a co-contribution.

Maximum number of applications per local government authority

19. If an applicant submits more than one application, the order of priority of applications must be indicated.
20. Should the program be oversubscribed, QRA may limit assessment of applications to an applicant's highest priority application.

Eligible projects

21. Applicants can apply for funding for projects that aim to reduce disaster risk and therefore may assist in reducing the cost or growth of insurance costs for their communities. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. applicant programs to encourage residents to adopt resilient homes guidance for cyclone, storm surge and flood
 - b. studies or investigations to support a better understanding of a community's hazard risk, e.g. floor height surveys, flood studies and flood risk management studies
 - c. physical mitigation works that reduce disaster risk, e.g. upgrading, replacing or constructing new assets and flood mitigation infrastructure such as drainage systems, stormwater detention, levees and culverts
 - d. planning and design of infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects that reduce disaster risk to property or infrastructure.

Ineligible projects

22. Projects that do not meet the program objectives are ineligible. Other examples of ineligible projects include projects that:
 - a. have already commenced or are already complete
 - b. involve works on an asset or land that will not be owned or controlled by the applicant (unless demonstrably for public benefit)
 - c. involve the purchase of land or buildings (unless demonstrably for public benefit)
 - d. are commercial in nature for the applicant or any partner applicant
 - e. are not undertaken in the eligible areas of Queensland or that do not benefit Queensland communities.

Eligible costs

23. Eligible costs are costs directly associated with delivery of the project and are able to be funded through this program.
24. Examples of eligible costs include:
 - a. personnel costs directly related to the delivery of the project including salaries, vehicle and office equipment leasing
 - b. costs associated with the delivery of resilient homes awareness campaigns, such as design and publication of materials, community/public messaging
 - c. construction costs, such as all site works required as part of the construction, and construction-related labour, materials and equipment hire
 - d. detailed design, for example, production of Final or Tender Design drawings and/or specifications
 - e. costs of conducting a tender for the proposed project

- f. project management costs proportionate with the funding amount sought including remuneration of additional technical, professional and/or administrative staff for time directly related to managing the construction or delivery of the proposed project (does not include executive duties or overhead charges)
- g. purchase and installation of fixed plant and equipment.

Ineligible costs

- 25. Ineligible costs are not funded by the program and will need to be met by the applicant.
- 26. Examples of ineligible costs are:
 - a. core business of the applicant (or a partner if a collaborative project)
 - b. legal costs
 - c. catering and official opening expenses (excluding permanent signage)
 - d. purchase of core business capital equipment such as motor vehicles and office equipment
 - e. vehicle and office equipment leasing, unless directly related to the delivery of the project
 - f. remuneration of executive officers
 - g. remuneration of an existing employee, unless the employee is temporarily reassigned to conduct work directly related to the delivery of the project
 - h. costs that are incurred prior to project approval, unless prior formal agreement has been reached with QRA to incur such costs
 - i. duplication of existing initiatives, for example costs already approved through other funding streams
 - j. statutory fees and charges, and any costs associated with obtaining regulatory and/or development approvals
 - k. costs of internal furnishings and supplies
 - l. costs beyond the project period, for example ongoing costs for administration, operation, maintenance or management
 - m. costs not supported by the general ledger, including on-cost charges
 - n. profit margin of applicant
 - o. Goods and Services Tax
 - p. costs exceeding the approved capped project funding amount.

PART B – APPLICATION PROCESS

How to apply

27. The application form can be found at www.qra.qld.gov.au/nqndmp.

Stage 1: Expressions of Interest (EOI)

28. Applicants may submit more than one EOI. However, should the program be over-subscribed, an applicant's lower priority applications may not be considered.
29. EOIs are to be emailed to submissions@qra.qld.gov.au by Friday 18 February 2022.
30. The EOI requires applicants to provide information about the proposed project including:
- a. applicant name and details
 - b. project name
 - c. the program objective/s the project seeks to address
 - d. project description
 - e. project benefits
 - f. alignment to relevant policies
 - g. geographic location of the project (including GPS coordinates if appropriate)
 - h. requested funding amount (maximum \$2 million per project)
 - i. estimated total cost of the project (i.e. including co-contribution and ineligible costs)
 - j. proposed start date and duration of the project
 - k. if an applicant is submitting more than one application, the allocated priority of each project (i.e. if submitting two applications, which project is first priority and which project is second priority)
 - l. if the project is a collaborative project, the details of collaborating partners and evidence supporting the collaboration, e.g. letter/email from the relevant Council CEO supporting the collaboration.
31. Collaborative projects are encouraged, and require one EOI to be submitted by the lead applicant, which must be one of the listed eligible applicants. The lead applicant will be responsible for the project application, delivery, reporting and acquittal.
32. Funding under these Guidelines will be approved as a capped amount per project.
33. The maximum amount that can be sought under these Guidelines is \$2 million per project. Although the total cost of a project may be more than \$2 million, the maximum amount available under the program is \$2 million per project.
34. QRA will review EOIs and invite short-listed applicants to submit a detailed application.

Stage 2: Detailed Application

35. Short-listed applicants will be notified and a detailed application form made available to them.
36. Examples of the type of supporting evidence sought at detailed application stage include, but are not limited to:
- preliminary and/or detailed designs
 - options analysis, cost benefit analysis
 - details about the outcomes the project will deliver
 - results of investigations/consultation
 - project plans
 - ongoing benefits for the community
 - demonstration of contribution
 - confirmation of support from the local community, council and/or relevant agencies.

Late applications

37. If the applicant is experiencing exceptional circumstances that are reasonably unforeseeable and beyond the applicant's control, late applications may be considered, on a case by case basis.
38. Notification of a late application request must be made prior to the closing date, and emailed to grants@qra.qld.gov.au.

Assessment

39. QRA's assessment process is based on the [Queensland Disaster Resilience and Mitigation Investment Framework](#).
40. The following assessment criteria will be used in determining successful projects:
 - a. Issue identification and alignment to broader government policy, i.e. does the proposed project address a need, risk or vulnerability that has been identified and does it align with other policies and frameworks?
 - b. Community benefits realisation and collaboration, i.e. does the project reduce or mitigate disaster risk, derive intelligence to enable an accurate assessment of risk, or inform delivery of future risk reduction or mitigation activities; and does the project contribute to and promote partnership based collaboration?
 - c. Project management, feasibility and evidence base i.e. is the project likely to deliver on the stated objective, and is the applicant able to deliver the project on time, within budget, mitigate any identified risks/vulnerabilities; and maintain any ongoing requirements associated with the project?
 - d. Cost-benefit analysis and innovation i.e. does quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of the costs and benefits support the forecast effectiveness of the project and does the project deliver an innovative solution to longstanding risks?
41. In prioritising projects, QRA will consider whether:
 - a. local and regional needs are balanced, whether duplication of effort and funding is avoided, whether vulnerable groups/diverse populations are supported, and whether alternative funding streams may be available for projects.
 - b. the project assists in reducing the cost of insurance to residents, businesses and/or the community by reducing or mitigating natural hazard risk, deriving intelligence to enable an accurate assessment of risk, or informing delivery of future risk reduction or mitigation activities
42. QRA may consult with relevant agencies, representatives of the insurance industry and/or relevant Minister for review and/or endorsement of projects.
43. The QRA CEO provides final project approval.
44. Information about unsuccessful projects will be retained by QRA and may be reconsidered should further funding become available.

PART C – GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

45. The following governance and administrative arrangements will apply to successful projects.

Funding Agreement

46. It is a requirement that all recipients of this funding enter into a Project Funding Agreement with QRA.
47. A Project Funding Agreement will be formed either by:
- a. For regular recipients of QRA Funding: QRA will issue a Project Funding Schedule, which when executed by both parties, will be considered a binding Project Funding Agreement under the terms and conditions of the Head Agreement for QRA Funding already in place between QRA and the recipient
 - b. For one-off funding: by execution of a standalone Project Funding Agreement.
 - c. The Project Funding Schedule/Agreement will detail the terms and conditions specific to the approved funding, including reference to the relevant funding guidelines that govern the program, funding type and amount, key dates and milestone schedules, payment claim and reporting requirements.
48. Project Funding must be used solely for the purposes of the relevant Project and only be used on Eligible Project Costs.
49. The applicant warrants that it has sufficient funds to complete the Project if the amount of the Project Funding is insufficient to deliver the project.
50. Funds that have been used, spent or committed otherwise than in accordance with the Project Funding Agreement, relevant Program Guidelines or provisions of the Head Agreement must be repaid to QRA.
51. Any intellectual property associated with approved funding under this program will be provided to the applicant upon its creation by any third party.
52. At acquittal project intellectual property, such as research or scoping studies, will be provided for use by QRA.

Unspent funding

53. Unspent funds will be returned to the program and may be reallocated to other projects.

Variations

54. All variations to a Project Funding Agreement, scope or change in control of a project are to be agreed formally in writing.
55. Where there are material changes following a project approval, grant recipients must provide QRA with updated project information.

Procurement

56. The procurement of goods or services must be in accordance with the applicant's procurement policy. When procuring goods or services, local governments must align with the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and their own procurement policy.
57. If expenditure is in breach of the applicant's procurement standards, then reimbursement of these costs are unable to be sought under this program.

Record keeping

58. All funding recipients must keep an accurate audit trail.
59. Records must be available for seven years from the end of the financial year the expenditure is acquitted by the Queensland Government.
60. For assurance purposes, the Queensland Government may at any time, via QRA, request documentation from applicants to evidence the State's compliance with these Guidelines. This may include, but is not limited to, access to project level information to confirm acquittal is in accordance with these Guidelines.

Progress reporting and progress claims

61. All applicants with active programs are required to provide monthly progress reports on the status of works and expenditure throughout project delivery.
62. Monthly progress reports are created and lodged through QRA's Monitoring and Reporting System (MARS) Portal, detailing:
 - a. actual expenditure reported against the approved capped amount
 - b. percentage of scope of works completed
 - c. predicted start and completion dates and actual start and completion dates
 - d. delivery against project milestones
 - e. reasons for, and details of, any variances in scope, cost or time
 - f. details of any complementary works.
63. Once actual expenditure has exceeded the initial 30 per cent advance, and the project funding schedule is executed, applicants can progressively claim expenditure incurred up to 90 per cent of the approved capped value or the Estimated Final Cost (whichever is the lowest).
64. Claims for expenditure must be lodged with a progress report, a general ledger or transaction report (or similar financial document produced from the applicant's financial system) demonstrating the actual expenditure incurred against the Recommended Value of the approved scope of works. Progress reports must be certified by the applicant's delegated officer.

Extensions of time

65. If the applicant is experiencing exceptional circumstances that are reasonably unforeseeable and beyond the applicant's control, an extension of time (EOT) to the approved project completion date may be considered. Applicants are required to formally request an EOT, detailing the unforeseen circumstance impacting on project completion, the actions taken to minimise the impact, and the adjusted project plan and milestones.

Project acquittal report

66. The final project acquittal report, and associated documentation, must be received by QRA within three months of the completion of the project. For example, if a project is completed on 20 June 2023, the final project acquittal report is due by 20 September 2023. If a project is completed on 31 December 2023, the final project acquittal report is due by 31 March 2024.
67. Project acquittal reports must include:
 - a. a final progress report detailing the completed approved works activities against the approved project works activities
 - b. final actual costs reported against the approved capped amounts
 - c. detailed general ledger evidencing the final actual claimed expenditure and submitted total project costs (including details of contribution)
 - d. a Final Project Report and evidence demonstrating the completed works/activities, for example photo evidence representative of the extent of the completed works (JPG including EXIF metadata, GPS coordinates and time/date taken) and relevant reports.
 - e. Supporting documents to be made available for sampling by QRA if requested

68. Acquittals must be certified by the applicant in line with its delegations on lodgement.
69. QRA will undertake a final assessment of each project to ensure approved scope is delivered within timeframe, expenditure is eligible and assurance requirements are satisfied.

Assurance activities

70. Applicants may be required to provide documentation to support any assurance activities. These assurance activities may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. audit, site visits or inspections
 - b. obtaining relevant documentary evidence to support estimated/actual costs and/or value for money assessments
 - c. verification reviews on measures or projects
 - d. compliance with legislative and policy requirements.

Certification

71. All project documentation, including applications, progress reports and final reports, must be certified by the applicant in line with its delegations.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

72. When claiming reimbursement of expenditure the amount to be lodged must be the GST exclusive actual cost incurred.

Public acknowledgment of funding source

73. Funding recipients must acknowledge the Queensland Government's funding contribution in public materials. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. media releases regarding the approved project
 - b. acknowledgement or statements in project publications and materials
 - c. events that use or include reference to the approved project
 - d. plaques and signage at construction sites or completed works.
74. To comply with this requirement, all public advice and media releases should refer to the relevant funding source, as detailed in the Project Funding Schedule/Agreement.
75. Contact QRA for assistance and to coordinate approval for any materials by emailing media@qra.qld.gov.au.

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