Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

Disaster Ready Fund Round Three, 2025-26

Application How-to Guide

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Contents

1. Introduction

This Application How-to Guide (the Guide) has been developed to provide Lead Agencies with detailed instructions regarding the application process and forms for Round Three, 2025-2026 of the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund (DRF).

Various parts of this Guide – particularly Sections 2 and 4 – may also be helpful to Applicants in understanding and completing the information that Lead Agencies are required to submit to NEMA.

This Guide should be read in conjunction with the DRF Round Three Guidelines (DRF Guidelines) and other information published on GrantConnect and the National Emergency Management Agency's (NEMA's) website.

Throughout this Guide state and territory government agencies or departments who are responsible for coordinating project proposals and submitting DRF applications on behalf of their jurisdictions are referred to as 'Lead Agencies'. Entities that develop DRF project proposals are referred to as 'Applicants', noting that Lead Agencies may also be Applicants.

2. Process Overview

Application Process

Section 7.2 of the DRF Guidelines sets out the different pathways for applying for DRF funding, depending on the project scope and where the project will be delivered.

In all cases Lead Agencies are responsible for submitting ministerially endorsed applications to NEMA using NEMA's online application portal.

It is important to note that the process for submitting project proposals to Lead Agencies may vary by state and territory. Prospective Applicants should accordingly check these processes, including any jurisdiction specific information requirements, with their relevant Lead Agency before commencing an application.

Online Application Portal

For Round Three of the DRF, NEMA has an application portal powered by OmniStar.

Access to the online application portal will be governed by system administrators at NEMA and be open to Lead Agencies only, in accordance with the application process outlined in section 7 of the DRF Guidelines.

Further information on how to access and navigate the online application portal will be provided to Lead Agencies prior to the NEMA process opening.

Application Form

Applications must be submitted by Lead Agencies using NEMA's online application form and portal, prior to NEMA's application closing date and time.

All mandatory questions and attachments must be completed and uploaded before the online form is submitted.

A separate application (Individual Project Application) is required for each project submitted to NEMA.

To assist with developing Project Proposals, an offline version of the form and associated budget template that sets out the information required by NEMA will be provided to Lead Agencies prior to opening date for project proposals to Lead Agencies.

Please note that:

- Lead Agencies may choose to share the offline form and budget template with prospective Applicants and delivery partners or may prefer to use their own custom form. If using a custom form, Lead Agencies are responsible for ensuring that all information required by NEMA is collected and meets NEMA's length/formatting requirements, as set out in NEMA's offline forms and this Guide.
- Information entered in the offline form and budget template, or any custom form, must be copied into NEMA's online application portal prior to submission to NEMA. Completed versions of the offline form or budget template must not be submitted to, and will not be considered by, NEMA.
- NEMA's online form supports text-only fields, number-only fields, tick boxes and drop-down lists. If wanting to submit other content types (e.g. formatted text, tables, charts, images, etc.), these can be included as optional attachments (refer to the Attachments section of this Guide for more information).

Roles in the Application Process

Lead Agencies

Lead Agencies in each state and territory are responsible for coordinating DRF Project Proposals in their respective jurisdictions. This includes:

- calling for and receiving DRF Project Proposals from Applicants;
- conducting an initial assessment of DRF Project Proposals and allocating indicative ratings/rankings;
- seeking ministerial endorsement of and submitting the most competitive DRF Project Proposals as Applications to NEMA for funding in accordance with the DRF Guidelines; and
- if a Project Proposal is successful, administering funding, including managing delivery of projects, making payments to Project Proponents and reporting to NEMA.

To ensure that only the most competitive Applications are considered by the Australian Government's Assessment Panel, the number of Applications that each jurisdiction may submit to NEMA has been capped for DRF Round Three. Please refer to section 7.7 of the DRF Guidelines for further information.

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Applicants

Applicants are responsible for developing and submitting Project Proposals to their relevant Lead Agency for consideration and possible submission to NEMA prior to the closing date and time for Project Proposals to Lead Agencies. This includes:

- completing the Project Proposal form issued by the relevant Lead Agency
- providing all the information requested by the Lead Agency
- addressing all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria set out in the DRF Guidelines, and
- obtaining and providing all necessary attachments, including, but not limited to, any required evidence and letters stipulated in the DRF Guidelines (see in particular sections 4.2 and 7.6 of the Guidelines).

Applicants should refer to the website of their relevant Lead Agency (Lead Agencies are listed on NEMA's website) for further details on form requirements and the submission process for Project Proposals, noting that requirements may vary by state and territory.

Getting help

NEMA-issued forms, templates and guides will be made available to Lead Agencies to support Lead Agencies with collating Project Proposals.

Lead Agencies requiring assistance throughout the application process can contact NEMA by email at disaster.ready@nema.gov.au. Applicants must contact their Lead Agency for all enquiries. A list of Lead Agencies and their key contacts for the DRF is available on the NEMA website.

3. Application Management

This part of the Guide provides further information to assist Lead Agencies with managing applications in NEMA's online application portal.

Saving an Application

When completing the online application form, OmniStar will automatically save changes made within the form. Lead Agencies will also be able to manually save edits while the application is in preparation.

Submitting an Application

Once the Individual Project Application form has been completed and certified as complete and accurate, the Lead Agency is able to formally submit the application to NEMA. After submission the application status will change to "Submitted" and is considered final.

Before submitting online forms, Lead Agencies must:

- ensure all required fields are complete, and
- check all responses for accuracy.

Provided the application close date and time has not passed, on written request to disaster.ready@nema.gov.au, NEMA can return applications to Lead Agencies in a status of “in preparation” for further action.

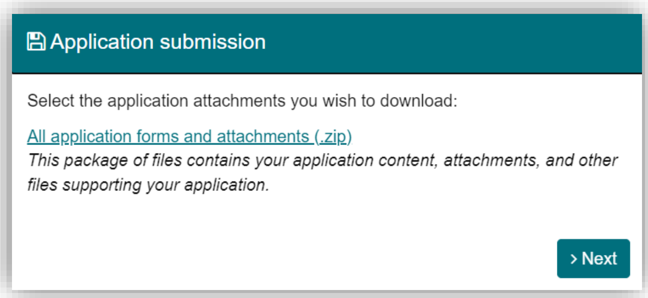
Please note: Applications that have been returned to in-preparation status must be certified as complete and be re-submitted to NEMA prior to the Round close data and time for inclusion in the DRF Round Three assessment process.

See Section 7.7 of the DRF Round 3 Guidelines for further information.

Downloading an Application

Application documents may be downloaded from the online application portal. This is available via the in-form “Preview” functionality located at the top right of the online application form.

Additionally, on submission the online application portal will generate copies of the submitted application for you to download.



An email will also be sent on submission with a copy of the application attached.

Deleting an Application

Prior to the Round close date and time, applications can be deleted by Lead Agencies via the online application portal.

Withdrawing an Application

Applications may be withdrawn by lead agencies after submission and prior to signing schedules. The Lead Agency must request this in writing by emailing disaster.ready@nema.gov.au.

NEMA will provide a written acknowledgement and confirmation once the application has been formally withdrawn from the process.

4. Individual Project Application Form

This part of the Guide provides further information to assist Lead Agencies with completing NEMA's Individual Project Application form. Applicants using the offline version of NEMA's form to prepare Project Proposals should also refer to this part of the Guide.

A completed application form must include:

- All mandatory sections of the Individual Project Application form (note: all questions within the Individual Project Application form are mandatory, except where otherwise indicated).
- All required attachments
- Accurate responses against all eligibility and classification data fields.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Project/Application Title

(Maximum 15 words)

Enter a title or name for the project. The title must be a maximum of 15 words.

This should be written clearly and without jargon or acronyms. If the project application is successful, this title will be used in establishing funding agreements and may be included in information published on NEMA's website.

Brief Project Description

(Maximum 70 words)

Provide a succinct summary of the project activities and expected outcomes. This should be written clearly and without jargon or acronyms. If the project application is successful, this description will form the synopsis published on NEMA's website.

The description should commence with the project title, clearly state the nature of the project, and outline how the project will build knowledge, enhance resilience or preparedness, and/or mitigate risk for the target community.

Examples are as follows:

> *Example one: The Denman Stormwater Improvement Project will deliver an open swale channel to augment the Denman stormwater system, directing water to the outlet in Sandy Creek. This will significantly reduce the risk of flooding to the surrounding community and community infrastructure.*
>
> *Example two: The Rural Bushfire Prevention Project will enable rapid identification of bushfire ignitions using satellite and terrestrial camera technology integrated with machine learning. Early detection will support quicker responses to ignitions, reduce the impacts of bushfire on people, property, and the environment, improve the safety first responders and reduce the cost of suppression.*

Example three: The Southern Flood Study Project will assess the flood risk of three major towns, to develop a drainage strategy and a mitigation plan to address areas of concern. The drainage strategy and mitigation plan will form the basis of future Council investment in infrastructure and flood protection for residents.

Lead Agency

(Select one)

Select the name of the state or territory government Lead Agency that is responsible for considering the project proposal, for possible submission to NEMA (a list of Lead Agencies is published on NEMA's website).

The nominated Lead Agency will also be responsible for administering the funding agreement with the Commonwealth should the project proposal be successful.

Where a project involves collaboration and delivery across two or more Australian states and territories (including national projects), select the coordinating Lead Agency (see section 7.2.3 of the Guidelines) when answering this question.

Select one Lead Agency only.

APPLICANT AND DELIVERY PARTNERS

Applicant Details

Enter the details of the entity that has developed and is submitting the project proposal to the Lead Agency, including their:

- Entity name
- Applicant Type
  - ABN Entity
    - Note: This selection will require the provision of the ABN (Australian Business Number)
  - First Nations organisation
  - Not-for-profit organisation
- Applicant sub-type - select one Applicant type that best describes how the entity defines itself.
- Contact Person Title, First Name and Last Name.
- Contact Person Position – for example, 'Managing Director'.
- Email
- Address (required for Lead Agencies, not NEMA)
- Phone number (required for Lead Agencies, not NEMA)

A Lead Agency can be listed as the Applicant if they are also the project proponent.

Contact details, such as addresses and phone number, may be used by the Lead Agency to communicate with the Applicant, as required.

For all Applicant types, evidence of entity type is required for eligibility and co-contribution purposes:

- Businesses must provide a current ABN and attach evidence of their ABN (e.g. ABN confirmation advice or an extract of their ABN details from ABN Lookup) to their application.
- First Nations organisations must provide evidence that they meet the definition of an 'Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation' (ACCO) or other 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation' as set out in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap such as an Indigenous Corporation Number (ICN), evidence of Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Organisations (ORIC) registration and/or a declaration that the Applicant is a Traditional Owner or that the organisation is at least 51 per cent owned or controlled by Indigenous persons or the Indigenous Enterprise has 50 per cent Indigenous ownership.
- Not-for-profits must provide evidence of their not-for-profit status such as current Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's (ACNC) Registration, or Constitutional documents and/or Articles of Association that demonstrate the not-for-profit character of the organisation.

Delivery Partners

For the purposes of the DRF, a delivery partner is defined as 'a third-party entity that will collaborate with an Applicant or Project Proponent to deliver, or aspects of, successful DRF projects'. Examples of delivery partners may include local government bodies such as councils or private enterprises such as construction firms, legal organisations, community organisations or consulting firms. An individual can also be listed as a delivery partner.

Lead agencies can be considered a delivery partner and should be listed here if they will be contributing to the implementation of the project, provided:

- they are not the Applicant (regardless of who the Applicant is, they should not be relisted as a delivery partner)
- their role in the project extends beyond coordinating/submitting the project proposal and program administration.

List any delivery partners (including state/territory government entities) that are contributing to delivery of the project either financially or in-kind. Additionally, select an appropriate descriptor (Partner type) that best describes the delivery partner. If the delivery partner is a state or territory government entity, you will also be required to specify the jurisdiction.

PROJECT LOCATION

Place Based

(Select one)

Unless there are compelling reasons for not doing so, Applicants must have meaningfully consulted with relevant local governments and affected communities, including any affected First Nations communities, before submitting a Project Proposal with a place-based focus (i.e. projects with a focus on addressing the needs of a particular location).

- If the project is place-based, indicate whether consultation has occurred ('Yes' or 'No')
- If consultation was undertaken, the applicant is required to provide an evidentiary attachment that specifies who has been consulted, their level of support for the proposal, any significant

issues or objections raised during consultations, and how the Applicant intends to address any residual issues/objections if awarded DRF funding.

- Alternatively, if consultation was not undertaken, the applicant is required to provide an evidentiary attachment that provides specific reasoning or an explanation as to why no consultation was held.
- If the project is not place-based, select 'Not Applicable'.

Geographic Extent

(Select one)

Indicate the scope of the project in spatial terms by selecting one of the following options:

- Town/City – select this option if the project will be delivered in a single town or city (i.e. an urban centre or locality with a population of more than 200 persons).
- Local Government Area (LGA) – select this option if the project area is broader than a single town or city but still within a single LGA. LGAs are an ABS Mesh Block approximation of gazetted local government boundaries as defined by each state and territory. The ABS Maps tool can be used to identify LGA boundaries and names: https://dbr.abs.gov.au/absmaps/index.html
- Multi-LGA – select this option if the project is being delivered across two or more, but not all, LGAs within a single state or territory.
- State/territory wide – select this option if the project will span or is expected to benefit an entire state or territory. This may include the non-self-governing Indian Ocean Territories (IOTs) of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- Multi-jurisdictional – select this option if the project involves collaboration and delivery across two or more, but not all, states and/or territories (this may include the IOTs). For example, a project being delivered collaboratively between New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia.
- National - select this option if the project involves collaboration and delivery across all six states and both mainland territories that make up Australia.

Jurisdiction(s)

State or territory where the project will be delivered

Select the state or territory where the project will be delivered. For multi-jurisdictional and national projects, select the state or territory that stands to benefit most from the project or, where states and territories stand to benefit equally from a project, select the state or territory of the coordinating Lead Agency. Other states and territories where the project will be delivered can be entered in the next question

Other states and territories for multi-jurisdictional/ national projects

For multi-jurisdictional/ national projects, indicate any other state(s) or territory(ies) where the project will be delivered. Do not include/repeat the state or territory selected in the previous question.

Local Government Area(s)

(Select all applicable)

For each state and/or territory selected in the previous question, select the relevant Local Government Areas (LGAs) where the project will be delivered as per the following examples:

- If the project will be delivered within a single LGA, select the name of the LGA from the listing provided which will be in the state or territory selected in the previous question.
- If the project will span multiple LGAs, select the names of all the relevant LGAs within the selected state or territory – e.g.:
    - QLD: Goondiwindi; Balonne.
    - NSW: Lismore; Richmond Valley; Byron.
- If the project is intended to benefit an entire state and/or territory, select All.

If the relevant area is not administrated by an incorporated local government body (e.g. the ACT), select the option 'Unincorporated' in your selected state or territory – e.g. Unincorporated ACT.

LGA names are in accordance with those used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and can be searched using the ABS Maps tool with the 2024 Local Government Area boundary type applied.

Site Address(es)

(Select Multiple – if applicable)

Provide the street address where your project will be undertaken (e.g. site where infrastructure will be built or service will be delivered). If you have multiple sites you must add the address of each site.

Note: If the project will span a broad area rather than specific locations (e.g. a service provided to an entire city, LGA, state or territory) or specific site addresses are yet to be determined at the time of application, provide at least one address within each jurisdiction selected above from where project delivery will be coordinated.

A site address must be a street address; do not provide a postal address, institution or building name.

Accuracy of site addresses

(Select one)

Indicate whether the address/es provided in the previous question accurately identify the proposed activity site.

If answering no to this question, provide additional details in 150 words or less that accurately identify the proposed activity site/s. This can include latitude and longitude details if applicable.

APPLICATION CLASSIFICATION

Information collected in this part of the form will be considered as part of the assessment process and may be used in public communications such as funding announcements, media releases and reports.

For applicants to note, if your application for Commonwealth funding is successful, you may be required to quantify your responses during implementation.

Primary Domain(s)

(Select one)

Select one primary domain that best aligns with the project. Descriptions of each domain can be found in section 5.1.2 of the Guidelines.

Secondary Domain(s)

(Optional/Multi-select)

If your project aligns with more than one Domain, you may select additional secondary Domain/s.

The secondary Domain can be left blank if your project only relates to the primary Domain.

Project Activity Type

(Select one)

Select one activity type that best aligns with your project proposal. Refer to Section 5.1.2 and the Glossary in the Guidelines for further information and definitions.

Note: If selecting “Investment in social infrastructure” applicants are required to confirm that the project activities align with the definition of Social infrastructure referenced in the DRF Guideline Glossary.

Secondary Activity Type/s

(Optional/Multi-select)

If your project aligns with more than one activity type, select any relevant secondary activity types.

The secondary project activity type can be left blank if your project only relates to the primary activity type.

DRF Objectives

(Multi-select available)

Select which DRF objective(s) (set out in section 2.1 of the DRF Guidelines) the project aligns with.

Hazard type(s)

(Multi-select available)

Select the natural hazard(s) your project will directly target. You may select more than one.

If the natural hazard that your project will target is not listed, select ‘other’ and enter it as free text.

(Maximum 20 words)

Section 5.1.1 of the Guidelines refers to a number of events that are considered ineligible for funding under Round Three of the DRF. However, projects which increase resilience for these events may be eligible for funding if they primarily target eligible natural hazards.

Target Groups

(Multi-select available)

Select any group/s that the proposed project is specifically targeting. Select only if applicable. Leave blank if the project is intended to benefit the general population.

Population Sub-Groups

(Multi-select available)

Identify if the projects seeks to specifically benefit one or more of the listed population sub-groups. Select only if applicable. Leave blank if the project is intended to benefit the general population.

You may select more than one.

Estimated Size of Target Group(s)

(Select one)

Provide an estimate of the size of the community or communities, including the target group and any population sub-groups, that are expected to directly benefit from the project.

Business as Usual

(Select one)

Indicate if the project is seeking funding for 'business as usual' activities.

For the purposes of the DRF, business as usual activities are defined as follows:

> ‘ Standard capital works or recurrent essential services of Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies that the responsible body would ordinarily be expected to undertake with internal funding such as maintenance (including repairs) and renewal of roads, buildings, drainage networks, telecommunications, open spaces and other existing assets. Investments in new assets/services or asset/service enhancements (i.e. expansions or upgrades) that deliver additional and/or wider resilience or risk reduction benefits to a community will generally not be considered business as usual for the purposes of these Guidelines.’

If answering No to the before mentioned question, in 150 words or less, provide a brief statement outlining why the project is not business as usual (i.e. is not an activity that would ordinarily be funded by Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies as part of their standard capital works or essential services budgets).

Consultation with affected communities

Interests of First Nations communities

(Select one)

If the particular interests of First Nations communities are affected by the proposed project (i.e. in ways not felt by the general population), indicate whether the project been developed in consultation with those communities.

Applicants are required to provide evidence of any required consultation, or compelling reasons for not consulting. If answering yes to this question, the evidence should include a brief description of who has been consulted, their level of support for the proposal, any significant issues or objections that have arisen during stakeholder consultations, and how the Applicant intends to address any residual issues/objections if awarded DRF funding

Refer to section 7.3 of the DRF Guidelines for more information.

Service offering to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

(Select one)

All projects affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must have cultural safety embedded in any service offering

Indicate if the project involves a service offering to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

If answering yes, please note the applicant must demonstrate how the project will ensure cultural safety in line with *Closing the Gap* requirements as part of your response to Assessment Criteria 3.

Refer to section 7.4 of the DRF Guidelines for more information.

Co-benefits for communities

(Select one)

Indicate if the project is expected to deliver any co-benefits for communities (i.e. benefits that go beyond the project's intended risk reduction, resilience or knowledge outcomes, such as benefits related to insurance affordability or availability).

If answering yes to this question:

- indicate whether the co-benefits relate to insurance affordability and/or availability.
- provide a brief explanation of <u>any</u> co-benefits (maximum 200 words), including their nature, quantum and the basis on which they have been determined/estimated. Note: any co-benefits should also referenced in the response to assessment criterion 1 and supported by evidence, as an attachment to the application, where available.

Environmental Impact

(Select one)

Indicate whether the project has the potential to adversely impact a matter of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

Note: NEMA will not support proposals which include activities with the potential to adversely impact on a matter of national environmental significance.

Second National Action Plan National Actions

(Multi-select available)

Identify any National Actions to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework Priorities that the project aligns with.

Further detail on each of the National Actions can be found in the Second National Action Plan.

Select all that apply. Leave blank if none apply.

PROJECT LOGIC

The Project Logic sets out the rationale behind the project proposal.

This information will be used during the review/assessment of the application; and may be used to communicate how and why you are delivering the project.

Project Duration

(Select one)

Select the approximate duration of the project in years.

- For infrastructure projects the maximum project period is five (5) years.
- For all other (non-infrastructure) projects, the maximum project period is three (3) years.

If the duration is less or more than a full year, round up rather than down (e.g. if a project is expected to take 16 months, select 'up to 2 years').

Issue

(Maximum 100 words)

Describe the underlying issue that the project is seeking to address.

Examples are as follows:

> *The October 2022 floods highlighted gaps in knowledge about flood risks and consequences for the Goulburn River and main tributaries. With climate change there are also gaps in mitigation and adaptation plans and actions.*
>
> *Jamieson and its surrounds are in an isolated, high-risk, bushfire prone location where access and escape are limited. The community is at risk of being unable to relocate to a safer place in emergency events. It lacks a formal plan for building facilities to adequately respond to and recover from disasters.*

Solution/Goal

(Maximum 100 words)

Describe how the project intends to address the issue identified in the previous question (Maximum 100 words).

Examples are as follows:

> *This project will create a business case & project plan to develop a purpose-built command post, gathering place, and recovery centre for use during and after emergencies. Outside of*

emergencies, the facility will be a multifunctional community space. The business case and project plan will underpin a bid for construction funding from local and state governments.

This project will engage coastal engineering expertise to undertake an assessment of the Port Albert and Robertson Beach seawalls. The assessment will include a condition report, risk assessment, and will inform a capital and maintenance works program with a schedule of options to sustainably and cost effectively manage these assets on an on-going basis.

Inputs

(Maximum 150 words)

Advise what resources will be allocated towards the successful implementation of the project if it is approved to receive Commonwealth funding.

Consider the following resources;

- People and staffing
- Funding
- Time
- Knowledge
- Networks
- Places and spaces
- Equipment
- Partner organisations and groups

Outputs

(Maximum 150 words)

Describe the outputs, activities or functions that will be delivered upon the successful completion of your project.

Ensure that when you are describing your outputs, you do not confuse these with the outcomes (the changes that were caused) once your project has been completed.

Short to Medium-Term Outcomes

(Maximum 150 words)

Describe what outcomes will be achieved upon the successful completion of your project.

Outcomes are best described as the changes or differences that have been achieved once the project has been successfully implemented.

Short-term outcomes could include changes in skill, knowledge, attitude, awareness and motivation and would occur upon the completion of the project.

Medium-term outcomes could include changes to behaviours, practices, systems or the application of skills and knowledge but may generally take some time to fully develop and take effect.

Long-Term Outcomes

(Maximum 150 words)

Describe the long-term outcomes that have been achieved upon the successful completion of the project.

This response should link with your solution/goal statement and resolve the problem identified in your issue statement.

Assumptions

(Maximum 150 words)

Describe any assumptions made that could impact the successful completion of the project.

This could include assumptions regarding participants, timings, engagement with delivery partners or other unrelated entities or individuals or activities.

Provide some detail as to how and why they will be needed to be taken into account in order to successfully implement the project.

External Factors

(Maximum 150 words)

Describe any elements or factors that are beyond your scope or control but may influence the project delivery or outcomes derived from the project.

This could include political, social, cultural or geographic elements or environments.

Risk Assessment and/or Risk Reduction or Adaptation Plans

(Maximum 150 words)

Describe any risk assessments and/or risk reduction or adaptation plans that you have undertaken to support the ongoing development of your project.

PROJECT/APPLICATION BUDGET

This section of the form is intended to capture all aspects of the project's budget including high level milestones and the respective co-contributions of the Applicant and any delivery partners to each project milestone.

Co-contribution requirements for each project depend on the Applicant's entity type and are set out in section 3.1.1 of the Guidelines, as reproduced below.

Co-contribution category	Commonwealth funding towards eligible project costs	Minimum co-contribution towards eligible project costs
First Nations organisations as defined in the Glossary. Local councils located in 'very remote' and 'remote' locations per the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Remoteness Structure, listed in Appendix A to the Guidelines.	Up to 90 per cent of eligible project costs	At least 10 per cent of eligible project costs
Other 'low rate-based' councils, determined using the ratio of Financial Assistance Grant to Net Rate Income, listed in Appendix B to the Guidelines. Not-for-profit organisations as defined in the Glossary to the Guidelines.	Up to 80 per cent of eligible project costs	At least 20 per cent of eligible project costs
All other Applicants.	Up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs	At least 50 per cent of eligible project costs

Before completing this part of the form and the associated DRF Round Three Indicative Budget Template, please note:

- it is strongly recommended that you familiarise yourself with relevant sections of the Guidelines, including the amount of funding available and limits for different project types (section 3), co-contribution requirements for different Applicant types (section 3.1.1), allowed co-contribution types and sources (section 3.1.2), and what funding can and cannot be used for (section 5).
- All amounts must be GST exclusive, provided in Australian dollars and must be rounded to the nearest dollar. Decimal places will not be supported.
- Applicants and Lead Agencies must check and confirm that all amounts are correct before submitting project proposals and applications.

Commonwealth Funding Sought or Received

Will activities for which Commonwealth (DRF) funding is being sought have commenced, or be completed, before the Implementation Plan is endorsed?
(Select one)

Indicate if activities for which Commonwealth funding is being sought will have commenced, or been completed, before the Implementation Plan is endorsed. NEMA anticipates that Implementation Plans will be submitted and endorsed from early 2026.

If responding yes, this project is not considered eligible for DRF funding. Refer to Section 5.1 of the DRF Guidelines.

Have you received Commonwealth funding from any other source (including previous DRF Rounds, but excluding DRF Round Three) for the project described in this application?

Indicate if you have received Commonwealth funding from any other source for the project described in this application.

If yes, applicants are asked to provide the following details:

- Funding Source
- Funding Amount
- Date Awarded/Received
- In 150 words or less, please provide a brief description of how this funding will complement and not duplicate the proposed use of DRF funds requested in this application.

Apart from any funding already received and noted above, have you sought Commonwealth funding from other sources including previous rounds of the DRF for the project described in this application?

To monitor for potential duplicative funding offers, please indicate if you have sought Commonwealth funding from any other source for the project described in this application.

If yes, applicants are asked to provide the following details:

- Funding Source
- Funding Amount
- Date Applied
- Status of Application (Pending Decision, Outcome known),
    - If the status is "Pending Decision", applicants are asked to provide a date of expected outcome.

DRF Round Three Indicative Budget Template

Unless advised otherwise by the relevant Lead Agency:

- Applicants must complete and submit the *DRF Round Three Indicative Budget Template* (the Budget Template, available from Lead Agencies) to Lead Agencies as part their project proposals. This is in addition to the requirement to submit a business case, including a project budget, as a mandatory attachment to applications.
- the Budget Template captures high level project milestones and funding details for the Applicant and any delivery partners across three separate sheets:
    1. a Budget Summary
    2. a Budget Breakdown
    3. details of any Australian Government bodies or entities wholly funded by the Australian Government who are partnering on the project.

       Note: sheets 2 and 3 must be completed in order to generate the budget summary on sheet 1.
- all monetary amounts are to be GST exclusive and must be entered in Australian dollars to the nearest dollar (i.e. budgets must not include cents).
- only text and numerals are to be entered.
- some cells have been pre-filled with example data. This information should be deleted before entering actual project data.
- further instructions are included in the Budget Template itself - see the red text at the bottom of each sheet.

Additional notes for Lead Agencies:

- for DRF Round Three, Lead Agencies are not required to submit completed Budget Templates to NEMA.
- Instead, budget information will be collected by NEMA via:
    - fields in NEMA's online application form (see 'High Level Project Milestones' and 'Project Funding' below) that correspond with data in the Budget Template, and
    - mandatory attachments – e.g. budgets provided as part of business cases and evidence of cost estimates.
- As such, Lead Agencies using the Budget Template will need to copy this data into NEMA's online application form prior to submission; completed templates cannot be uploaded to NEMA's online application portal in lieu of this step.
- Lead Agencies that choose not to use the Budget template will need to collect this data via other means in order to complete the High Level Project Milestones and Project Funding sections of NEMA's online form (see below).

High Level Project Milestones (Lead Agencies Only)

Note: this section appears in NEMA's online form only and is to be completed by Lead Agencies using data from completed Budget Templates or other sources if NEMA's Budget Template has not been used.

Enter the details for each high level budgetary milestone linked to the project. These details include;

- a milestone number to link to budget specific funding items
- providing the title or a brief description of the milestone; and
- Proposed activity duration in number of months.

Project Funding (Lead Agencies Only)

Note: this section appears in NEMA's online form only and is to be completed by Lead Agencies using data from completed Budget Templates or other sources if NEMA's Budget Template has not been used.

Enter the details of how each co-contributor (applicant, delivery partner) is contributing to the relevant high level milestone. These details include;

- The milestone reference
- the amount of Commonwealth funding being sought for the milestone;
- the co-contribution entity type:
    - State/territory Government body
    - Australian Government body or wholly funded entity
    - Other

- As applicable:
    - the amount of any financial (cash) payments being offered for the milestone;
    - the amount of any in-kind allocations being offered for the milestone;
    - the amount of historical investment contributed
- the total amount budgeted for the milestone. This will be automatically calculated by adding together the Cth funding amount, the financial co-contribution, historical co-contribution and the in-kind co-contribution.
- If applicable, in 150 words or less, provide a description of any historical and/or in-kind co-contributions. For example:

    Applicant - Historical contribution comprises $X invested by the state government in a 2023-24 pilot project that successfully demonstrated the feasibility of ... The DRF project will enhance or extend this historical investment by ... (max 150 words)

    Delivery Partner 1 - In-kind contribution comprises wages, supplies and equipment, including $X for a research scientist (0.5FTE for 2 months), $Y for ... (max 150 words)

Note:

- With the exception of the Cth funding requested and the co-contribution amounts being offered (both financial and in-kind) for each budget milestone, all other amounts, such as the budget totals for the applicant, delivery partners and state or territory government entities, will be automatically calculated.
- Ensure that names, milestone details and the contribution status for the Applicant, delivery partners are correct.

Project Funding Summary (Lead Agencies Only)

Note: this section appears in NEMA's online form only and will calculate/populate automatically based on data entered by Lead Agencies in the High Level Project Milestones and Project Funding sections of NEMA's online form.

Commonwealth funding sought – this is the amount of funding being sought from the Commonwealth.

Co-contribution being offered – This is the total co-contribution (financial and in-kind) being offered by the Applicant, delivery partners and/or state or territory government entities.

Total project value – This is the total value of the project and is derived from the combined total of Commonwealth funding being sought and all co-contributions (both financial and in-kind) being offered by the Applicant, any delivery partners and any state or territory government entities.

For each component of the budget summary, the proportional percentage (this is a value determined by which is a percentage value of the total project value) will be automatically calculated and shown.

The proportional percentage value is calculated based on the amount of the Commonwealth funding being requested and the total amount of co-contributions being offered relative to the total project value.

For example, if the Commonwealth funding amount and Co-contribution amount were $500,000 each (i.e. Total project value of $1,000,000), a value of 50% for the Commonwealth proportion and 50% for the Co-contribution proportion will be shown.

All sources combined (Lead Agencies Only)

Note: this section appears in NEMA's online form only and will calculate/populate automatically based on data entered by Lead Agencies in the High Level Project Milestones and Project Funding sections of NEMA's online form.

Based on the Applicant, Delivery Partner and state or territory government entities co-contribution details entered above, the financial co-contributions and the in-kind co-contributions will be automatically calculated in the online form and displayed here. Additionally the total co-contribution amount will also be automatically calculated and display all co-contributions being offered towards the project.

Co-contribution Declaration and Summary

Confirm that:

- any 'Historical Co-contributions' entered in the budget relate to funds that have already been invested since 1 July 2023;
- any 'In-Kind Co-contributions' entered do <u>not</u> include historic work or staff time spent on a project; and
- descriptions have been provided for any historical and/or in-kind co-contributions entered, including how the DRF project will extend or enhance any historical investments.

If answering no to any of these questions, please refer to section 3.1.2 of the Guidelines for relevant requirements. All eligibility requirements must be met in order for a project to be considered.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

(Maximum 750 words per criterion)

The Assessment Criteria specify the key considerations that project proposals must address. These criteria are used by the Assessment Panel to assess the merits of proposals and determine application ranking.

Applicants must address all three assessment criteria and provide evidence and justification in their response to each criteria. The amount of detail and supporting evidence should be commensurate with the project size, complexity and funding amount requested.

Section 6 of the DRF Guidelines provides further information regarding the Assessment criteria, including where and what evidence is required.

Responses are limited to 750 words per criterion. If you wish to include other content (e.g. charts and graphs) or additional evidence these can be included as supporting attachments and should be referenced in the relevant response.

ATTACHMENTS

For Round Three, there are a number of mandatory attachments associated with the Individual Project Application form. These are specified in Section 7.6 of the DRF Guidelines and can be summarised as follows:

- For *all projects*:
    - evidence of the Applicant type (e.g. ABN, not-for-profit registration or ORIC registration) for eligibility and co-contribution purposes
        - all Applicants who select ABN entity as the Applicant type must enter an ABN in the Individual Project Application form and provide evidence of the ABN by attaching their ABN confirmation advice or an extract of their ABN details from ABN Lookup.
        - First Nations organisations must provide evidence that they meet the definition of an 'Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation' (ACCO) or other 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation' as set out in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap such as an Indigenous Corporation Number (ICN), evidence of Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Organisations (ORIC) registration and/or a declaration that the Applicant is a Traditional Owner or that the organisation is at least 51 per cent owned or controlled by Indigenous persons or the Indigenous Enterprise has 50 per cent Indigenous ownership.
        - Not-for-profits must provide evidence of their not-for-profit status such as current Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's (ACNC) Registration, or Constitutional documents and/or Articles of Association that demonstrate the not-for-profit character of the organisation.
    - a clear business case for the proposal, including a project plan, budget and risk management plan commensurate with the size and scale of the project
    - evidence of consultation or compelling reasons for not consulting, where required under section 7.3.
    - cost estimates prepared by a quantity surveyor or other relevant professional (e.g. actuarial or accounting advice that verifies project costs are accurate and realistic, ideally less than 12 months old) for projects valued over $1 million, or quotes or cost estimates prepared by the Applicant (ideally less than 6 months old) for projects valued under $1 million.

        Note: all estimates must include a contingency as a separate line item (minimum of 10 per cent, but consideration of a higher contingency up to 30 per cent for projects in complex or remote delivery environments is recommended).
- additionally, for *infrastructure projects*:

  - a cost benefit analysis (CBA). Refer to **Appendix A** of this How to Guide for further guidance on preparing the CBA.
  - copies of relevant designs and approvals (e.g. schematic plans, planning permits, development and building approvals, etc)
  - evidence that the Applicant either owns the land/infrastructure being built/upgraded upon or has the landowner's permission to use the land/infrastructure
- additionally, for *joint Applications* (see section 7.2.4), letters of support from each delivery partner listed in the Application, including:
  - details of the delivery partner
  - an overview of how the delivery partner will work with the Applicant and any other delivery partners in the group to successfully complete the project
  - an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the delivery partner will bring to the group
  - the roles/responsibilities the delivery partner will undertake, and the resources (financial or in-kind) that it will contribute

  Note: NEMA will provide a template through Lead Agencies that can be used for this purpose.
- additionally, for *multi-jurisdictional and national projects* (see section 7.2.3), confirmation in writing from the Lead Agencies in relevant states and territories that they have no objections in principle to the project being implemented in their jurisdictions

  Note: NEMA will provide a template through Lead Agencies that can be used for this purpose.

Failure to provide this information may result in an application being ruled ineligible (e.g. if evidence of entity type is not provided) or be taken into account in assessing an Application (e.g. if evidence of consultation, cost estimates or partner support is missing in circumstances where they are required)

In addition to the mandatory attachments, Applicants may provide up to eight additional, optional attachments in support of each project proposal. Where optional attachments are provided, Applicants must reference these in their responses to the assessment criteria and identify the document name or attachment number.

Supported upload document types include PDF, doc, docx and xlsx. The maximum file size is 10MB per attachment.

Before submitting an Individual Project Application, Lead Agencies must ensure that any mandatory and optional attachments have been uploaded to NEMA's online form.

CATEGORISATION (Lead Agencies Only)

Lead Agency rating against DRF assessment criteria and rating matrix

Lead Agencies are responsible for scoring and rating each project against the DRF assessment criteria and rating matrix as 'Highly Suitable', 'Suitable' or 'Not Suitable' as part of their initial review of project proposals and for completing this part of the form prior to submitting Individual Project Applications to NEMA.

In accordance with Sections 7.2.1 of the Guidelines:

- Only "Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable' projects may be submitted to NEMA and will be considered/assessed by the Commonwealth's DRF Assessment Panel.
- Projects categorised as 'Not Suitable' by Lead Agencies should not be submitted to NEMA and will not be assessed by the Panel.
- The Panel will undertake their own assessment of Individual Project Applications deemed 'Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable' by Lead Agencies and may take into account, but are not bound by, the categories assigned by Lead Agencies.

Lead Agency ranking against state/territory priorities

With reference to section 7.2.1 of the Guidelines, Lead Agencies are also required to consider Project Proposals against state or territory priorities as outlined in any publicly available disaster plans or strategies and assign each 'Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable' project a priority ranking:

- 'High',
- 'Medium', or
- 'Low'

Note: The Assessment Panel may take this into account in scoring projects, including against assessment criterion 2.

CERTIFICATION

Conflicts of Interest Declaration

Indicate whether the Applicant, any delivery partners or the Lead Agency have any interests that have the potential to compromise the performance or integrity of the DRF in relation to the assessment or delivery of the project, noting that conflicts may be actual or perceived.

If answering 'yes', list any relevant interests and describe how the Applicant and Lead Agency propose to manage any potential conflicts (add additional rows as needed).

Refer to Section 13.2 of the Guidelines for further information and examples.

Acknowledgements

Before submitting the Individual Project Application form, the Applicant and Lead-Agency must read and agree to the acknowledgements and assurances listed in this part of the Individual Project Application form.

5. Appendix A – Cost Benefit Analysis Guidance

Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) is an evaluation method used to estimate and compare the total costs and benefits of a project, expressed in dollars, from the perspective of the relevant community. This helps determine if the project offers value with relevant money as part of assessment criterion 3 and is a mandatory attachment for infrastructure funding stream projects as per sections 6.3 and 7.6 of the DRF Round Three Guidelines.

To conduct a CBA that effectively supports your DRF Project Proposal, all CBAs should at a minimum:

- involve a level of rigour and detail that is proportionate to the project's value, size and complexity. For example, a simplified CBA approach that focuses on major costs and benefits only and relies on general assumptions (e.g. benchmark costs for similar projects) may be appropriate for lower value projects, whereas a detailed CBA approach that considers all economic, social and environmental costs and benefits and calculates costs and benefits using parameters and inputs specific to the project location and to a higher degree of accuracy would be expected for multi-million dollar projects.
- identify and describe project impacts as costs (any loss in societal wellbeing) and benefits (any gain in wellbeing), and then value them in dollar terms, to the extent possible. Various methods for estimating the value of non-market goods and accounting for uncertainty in CBAs are outlined in the 'Dealing with costs and benefits that are difficult to value' section of the Cost Benefit Analysis guidance note published by The Office of Impact Analysis. Where impacts cannot be valued, the reasons why that is the case should be set out clearly.
- ensure both direct and indirect costs and benefits are accounted for. These may include, but are not limited to:
    - Direct costs of the project such as capital and operating costs, as well as indirect costs that accrue to the relevant community as a whole, such as environmental impacts, disruptions to businesses and services while the project is being delivered, rate increases to support ongoing maintenance of an asset, etc.
    - direct benefits such as disaster risk reduction, improved community resilience, and avoided disaster losses, as well as indirect benefits such as employment opportunities and co-benefits such as reduced insurance premiums.
- discount costs and benefits over the life of the project to determine their present value[1] and if there are net benefits (that is, benefits greater than costs) for the proposal.

[1] Net present values should be calculated at an annual real discount rate of 7 per cent. As with any uncertain variable, sensitivity analysis should be conducted, so in addition to the 7 per cent discount rate, the net present values should also be calculated with real discount rates of 3 per cent and 10 per cent. Box 1 in the Cost Benefit Analysis guidance note published by The Office of Impact Analysis provides an example of how to calculate net present values.

Recommended steps in the CBA process are as follows:

1. **Define problems and opportunities:**
    a. Clearly state the issues and opportunities the project aims to address, with reference to the objectives of the DRF.
2. **Establish the base case and project options:**
    a. Compare the current scenario without the project (base case) to the proposed interventions (project options).
    b. Make sure the base case reflects a 'do nothing' or 'business as usual' approach.
3. **Identify costs and benefits over the life of the project:**
    a. Include all relevant societal costs and benefits, such as avoided disaster-related losses and improved resilience.
4. **Monetise (attach dollar values to) costs and benefits:**
    a. Convert all costs and benefits into monetary terms for effective comparison.
    b. Use real prices and exclude inflation.
5. **Account for non-monetised impacts:**
    a. Identify impacts that cannot be monetised, such as environmental and social outcomes.
6. **Discount future costs and benefits to obtain net present value (NPV):**
    a. Use a standard discount rate of 7% (with sensitivity analyses at 3% and 10%) to calculate the NPV (the present value of benefits minus the present value of costs).
7. **Analyse risks and sensitivity:**
    a. Assess uncertainties and test different assumptions to ensure robust outcomes.
8. **Report results clearly:**
    a. Summarise the results of the CBA, including whether the NPV is positive (i.e. improves efficiency) or negative (i.e. project is inefficient).

For further guidance and examples of cost-benefit methodologies refer to Chapters 2 and 3 of the Guide to economic appraisal published by Infrastructure Australia and the Cost Benefit Analysis guidance note published by The Office of Impact Analysis.