



Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022-23 Program Guidelines

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Administering entity	National Recovery and Resilience Agency
Enquiries:	If states and territories have any questions, contact cermp@recovery.gov.au Questions should be sent no later than 27 May 2022
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1. Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022–23 Processes

The Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022–23 (the Program) is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives. This Program is funded from the \$50 million pre-disaster resilience component available from the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) in the 2022-23 financial year. The Program is designed in accordance with the relevant legislation and subsidiary guidelines.



The Program opens

The National Recovery and Resilience Agency (the Agency) publishes Program Guidelines (Guidelines) on its website: www.recovery.gov.au.



States and territories complete and submit an application

State and territory governments complete an application, in consultation with local governments and communities, and address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria.



A Program Review Panel assesses applications

The Agency assesses each application against eligibility criteria and notifies each state and territory if their projects are not eligible. An intergovernmental Program Review Panel assesses each eligible project against Program assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with relevant money and comparison with other eligible projects.



Advice to the Coordinator-General of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency

The Agency provides advice to the Coordinator-General of the Agency on the merits of each application based on the Program Review Panel's deliberations and assessments.



Funding decisions are made

The Coordinator-General makes recommendations to the Minister for Emergency Management and National Recovery and Resilience regarding the applications. The Minister, as the decision maker, decides which applications will be funded under the Program.



We notify states and territories of the funding outcome

The Agency advises states and territories of the outcome of their applications.



Announcement of projects to be funded

The Minister will announce the projects to receive funding under the Program. Announcements relating to individual projects must be managed jointly with the Commonwealth.



Establishing a Funding Agreement with each state and territory that is to receive funding

The Agency will negotiate a Schedule under the Head Agreement with the state or territory government. The relevant jurisdictional Minister responsible for emergency management will co-sign the Schedule.



Delivery of Funding and Reporting of Milestones

The Treasury will transfer the funding to the states and territories as a single, upfront payment in accordance with the requirements of the *Emergency Response Fund Act 2019* (Cth) (the ERF Act). The Agency will then monitor implementation and engage with states and territories on reporting milestones.



Evaluation of the Program

The Agency evaluates projects and the Program as a whole. The Agency bases this on information provided to it and that it collects from various sources.

1.1 Introduction

These Guidelines contain information for the Program.

States and territories must read these Guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the Program (Section 2) and available funding (Section 3);
- the eligibility criteria (Section 4) and what funding can be used for (Section 5);
- the assessment criteria (Section 6) and how to apply (Section 7);
- how applications are considered and selected (Section 8);
- how funded projects are notified (Section 9), how funding is received (Section 10) and how funding will be announced (Section 11);
- how projects will be monitored and evaluated (Section 12); and
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the Program (Section 13).

2. About the Program

About the National Recovery and Resilience Agency

Following the 2019-20 bushfires, and in response to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, the Government established the Agency on 5 May 2021. The Agency provides national leadership and strategic coordination for disaster resilience and risk reduction, and all-hazards disaster recovery across all levels of government and sectors. The Agency is responsible for driving implementation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, which sets out the foundational work required to address existing disaster risk, minimise new disaster risk, and deliver better climate and disaster risk information. The Agency and the National Adaptation Policy Office in the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment work together to build resilience to disasters and drive practical action to adapt to the changing climate.

Coastal and Estuarine hazards: an Australian Government Priority

Coastal and estuarine hazards, such as inundation, storm surges and erosion threaten a diverse set of social, natural and cultural assets, including public and private property and valued recreational and tourist areas, with flow-on social, environmental and economic impacts.

These coastal and estuarine hazards become disasters when they interact with communities that are exposed and/or vulnerable:

- 50 per cent of Australia's population live within seven kilometres of the coast, with the number of people living in exposed areas expected to grow as Australia's population increases, under existing land-use planning. Within the next 80 years, more than \$226 billion of public and private assets will be potentially exposed to coastal hazards¹.
- Sea levels have and continue to rise due to climate change. The frequency and intensity, and location of coastal and estuarine hazards, including extreme weather events² are also changing, affecting people historically unaffected.

¹ [Climate change risks to coastal buildings and infrastructure - A supplement to the first pass national assessment - DAWE](#)

² [State-of-the-Climate-2020.pdf](#)

- The Royal Commission noted that Australia’s population is ageing, building standards are progressively becoming outdated, and insurance is becoming increasingly unaffordable and inaccessible, increasing the vulnerability of the Australian population.³

The Government recognises management of coastal and estuarine hazards is a cross-cutting issue, and that there is a shortfall between the costs of coastal management and planning, and the available funds across governments. The Australian Government will invest an initial \$50 million in the Program using funding from the ERF. The Agency acknowledges that this does not fully alleviate funding pressures for hazards management in Australia.

The Emergency Response Fund (ERF)

The ERF was established upon commencement of the ERF Act on 12 December 2019. Policy support for the operation of the ERF is outlined in the Emergency Response Fund Program guidelines (ERF Guidelines).

The Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) is the principal mechanism for the Commonwealth to provide disaster related financial assistance to state and territory governments. The ERF differs to the DRFA as the ERF is an investment fund established to provide assistance beyond what is already available to fund emergency response and disaster recovery and preparedness, where the Australian Government determines the existing recovery and resilience-building programs are insufficient to provide an appropriate response to disasters. The ERF is an investment in the long-term sustainability and adaptation of communities at risk of disruption from intensifying natural hazards.

The Program is funded under the \$50 million component of the ERF that supports initiatives to build resilience to, and prepare for or reduce, the risk of future disasters.

2.1 About the Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022–23

Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022–23

These Guidelines serve as a resource for the Agency (as the Program administrator) and state and territory governments (as Program applicants).

The Program demonstrates the Australian Government’s commitment to reduce the potentially devastating impacts of coastal and estuarine hazards on communities and economies.

The Program gives effect to all four of the [National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework’s](#) (NDRRF) national priorities by supporting and enabling locally-led and owned place-based disaster risk reduction efforts:

- NDRRF Priority 1 – improve public awareness and disclosure of coastal and estuarine hazard associated disaster risk.
- NDRRF Priority 2 – build the capability and capacity of decision makers to actively reduce coastal and estuarine hazard associated disaster risk in policy, program, planning and investment decisions.
- NDRRF Priority 3 – investing in priority national coastal and estuarine hazard risk mitigation and adaptation measures, including Nature Based Solutions.
- NDRRF Priority 4 – establishing governance pathways, such as by supporting the development of coastal management principles, to reduce coastal hazard associated disaster risk.

³ [CSI.505.001.0001_0.pdf \(royalcommission.gov.au\)](#)

The Program also helps to implement the [National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy \(2021\)](#) by enhancing community understanding of and resilience to climate change impacts, and by driving investment and action through collaboration with relevant partners.

The Program will open to state and territory government applications in March 2022.

The Program seeks to deliver on the following objectives:

- reduced future eligible expenditure under the DFRA;
- potential for improved access and/or uptake to insurance and/or insurance affordability in certain geographic locations, over the longer term;
- reduced exposure to coastal and estuarine hazards;
- encouraging sustainable development that is climate adaptive and disaster resilient, such as by protecting valued natural, economic, recreational and tourist areas, and improved health and well-being;
- improved accountability and governance, locally and regionally, to support improved management of coastal and estuarine hazard associated disaster risk; and
- implementing and sharing the results of projects and approaches that may inform future Government actions to manage coastal and estuarine hazard associated disaster risk.

3. Available funding under the Program

3.1 Funding available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$50 million over one financial year (2022–23) for the Program.

The maximum amount of Commonwealth funding per project is \$10 million.

State and territory governments (as the only applicants eligible to apply for funding) must contribute (whether financially or in-kind) at least 25 per cent of eligible project expenditure towards each project. This can include funds already invested. The source of the contribution is at the jurisdiction's discretion.

3.2 Project period

The maximum project period is three years from commencement of the Schedule(s) signed with the relevant state or territory.

4. Eligibility criteria

An application will not be considered by the Program Review Panel if it does not satisfy all of the eligibility criteria outlined in this Section (Section 4).

4.1 Who is eligible to apply under the Program?

Only Australian state and territory governments are eligible to apply for funding under the Program.

The Agency can only accept one overarching application per state or territory government encompassing all projects. In developing the overarching application cover sheet, states and territories:

- may include an unlimited number of projects;
- should identify the top ten priority projects within their jurisdictions for consideration;

- may engage third parties to deliver services on their behalf for any projects awarded funding under this Program;
- must consult with local governments and communities on each projects; and
- must provide endorsement from the relevant state or territory minister(s) responsible for disaster risk reduction.

4.2 Eligible Program Activities

Eligible project activities include:

- Adaptation and resilience actions, including investment in grey infrastructure and green-blue infrastructure (which includes nature based solutions) to:
 - protect physical coastal and estuarine cultural heritage, including that of Indigenous Australians;
 - reduce erosion and inundation risks to critical infrastructure, and natural and cultural assets in the coastal zone;
 - reduce exposure or vulnerability to climate change and disruption from coastal and estuarine natural hazards; and/or
 - reduce coastal and estuarine hazard risk to public assets.
- Planning, including:
 - local and regional disaster risk and vulnerability assessments and mapping;
 - business case development;
 - economic analyses to identify sustainable, equitable and efficient funding models to implement coastal and estuarine adaptation initiatives; and/or
 - preparation of community focussed regional and/or integrated coastal zone management programs.
- Investment in monitoring infrastructure and activities to understand the coastal and estuarine zone over time, including investigations on coastal processes, to inform future action to manage coastal and estuarine hazards

Further guidance on these terms is provided in the **Glossary**.

4.3 Eligible locations

Projects must be delivered within the applicant's respective Australian state or territory.

5. What the funding can be used for

5.1 Eligible expenditure

States and territories can only spend the funding on eligible expenditure incurred on eligible and agreed project activities.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project; and
- be incurred by you (required project audit purposes).

States and territories must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise. Applicants must provide documentary evidence of whether and how a project will be funded if the full funding amount requested for a project is not awarded under this Program.

Applicants must disclose the amount of all funding, whether in cash or in-kind, already provided or committed to any aspect of a project submitted for funding under this Program, and the relationship of this amount to the total estimated project cost.

- If an application for a project is successful, we may ask the jurisdiction to verify project costs provided in their application. This may include evidence such as quotes for major costs.
- Not all expenditure on a project may be eligible for Program funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

You may elect to commence your project from the date we notify you that your application for that project is successful. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until such time as a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

Administration costs may be included in the funding application. Administration costs must not exceed 5 per cent of the total being sought from the Commonwealth for project costs, and must be included in the total funding amount outlined in the application for the relevant project.

In the delivery of eligible projects (refer to Section 4.2), states and territories may use funds to undertake community engagement, communications initiatives and training courses that build awareness, understanding, competency and capacity of individuals, organisations and communities to prepare for and mitigate risk of future disasters, and to engage with systems thinking, disaster resilience and adaptation planning.

5.2 What the funding cannot be used for

States and territories cannot use the funding for the following activities:

- purchase of land, including costs relating to the acquisition of land or property;
- wages;
- major assets expenditure;
- road infrastructure or improvements
- the covering of retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- activities conducted outside of Australia
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, electronic devices (e.g. phones, laptops) and rent;
- activities with the potential to adversely impact on a matter of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth);
- the introduction of plants, animals or other biological agents known to be, or that could become, environmental or agricultural weeds and pests;
- overseas travel;
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility; or
- Projects that have already received full funding or a commitment of full funding are ineligible for Program funding for the same project.
 - 'Full funding' is funding that equals the full estimated cost of the project as verified by an independent, relevant, suitably qualified and accredited industry professional. Full funding is committed when the applicant jurisdiction has received written and reliable confirmation that full funding is available and will be allocated to the project within a reasonable timeframe.

Estimated and actual project costs for a project must not include:

- costs already incurred or expected to be incurred by the applicant or any third party in the development of a project application related to this Program; or
- costs already incurred or expected to be incurred by any party in relation to the maintenance, improvement or construction of a project related to this Program.

6. Assessment Criteria

States and territories must address all of the following assessment criteria for each project in their application. Each criterion is weighted equally.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence states and territories provide in responding to the Assessment Criteria should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested.

The application form is available on the Agency's website. States and territories should submit their overarching application cover sheet, individual project applications and supporting documentation through the online application portal.

In assessing applications, the Program Review Panel will consider the following criterion:

Criterion 1

The prioritisation of projects submitted by the state and territory government.

States and territories must prioritise up to 10 projects, in addition to any other applications or projects submitted. States and territories must then demonstrate:

- how the projects submitted align with the [National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework](#), which will allow a national-level assessment of relative priority across states and territories.

Criterion 2

The relative coastal and estuarine hazard associated disaster risk to be mitigated by the project.

States and territories must demonstrate this by identifying:

- an indication of the risk before and after the proposed project;
- the risk assessment methodology used to determine the project risk rating;
- how the project has been prioritised and designed to:
 - avoid exacerbating and/or reduce current risks;
 - avoid creating new risks; or
 - avoid maladaptive consequences, including negative social and environmental outcomes; and
- a description of the mitigation impact of the proposed project and how the project will enable adaptation to future climate and disaster impacts.

Criterion 3

The direct and broader benefits from the proposed project.

States and territories should demonstrate this by detailing the avoided impacts and costs through a suite of counterfactuals (if a disaster happened, how much would it have cost), and the value created by the project. This should include any relevant environmental, social and economic benefits of the project (e.g. greater tourism activity, improved ecosystem services, community health and well-being) that support local and regional resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Criterion 4

Availability of other Australian Government funding sources for the project.

The ERF was established to enable the Australian Government to draw on funds where it determines the existing recovery and resilience-building programs are insufficient to provide an appropriate response to disasters.

Therefore, states and territories must provide a statement as to why this project **is unlikely** to be funded through other funding sources, including but not limited to other funding sources within the Agency, i.e. applications submitted for other funding sources including government, non-government and philanthropic.

Criterion 5

Evidence of consultation and collaboration with the community, local government and any other relevant stakeholders (e.g. Traditional Owners and Custodians) to define the problem and develop a proposed solution.

States and territories must demonstrate this by detailing:

- any consultations undertaken (such as direct correspondence with stakeholders or community survey results) with relevant local governments, communities and any other relevant stakeholders in reference to each project submitted. The outcomes of those consultations (if any) must be provided.
- that they have consulted with Local Government Associations about the availability of the Program in their jurisdiction.

Note: State and territory governments may provide documentary evidence of consultations (but not consultations finalised more than five years prior to date of application submission). Outcomes arising from consultations must be directly related to the project and have continued relevance.

Criterion 6

The likelihood of project success, including evidence of capacity to complete the project to meet industry standards, to deadline and within estimated budget.

States and territories must demonstrate this by identifying:

- how the project aligns it to any existing interrelated strategies, such as coastal and estuarine management plans (if relevant);
- evidence of capacity and capability and previous experience in undertaking similar scale projects;
- the potential for maladaptation through the project (including any potentially negative social, environmental or economic outcomes) and how these will be avoided or managed; and
- an assessment of value for money.

7. How to apply

Before applying, states and territories should read and understand these Guidelines and review the application form.

These documents are published on the Agency website at www.recovery.gov.au.

The Agency's website is the authoritative source for information on this Program. Any amendments and addenda⁴ will be published on the Agency's website. States and territories should register for

updates on the website to ensure they are automatically notified of any changes. To apply states and territories must:

- complete online overarching application cover sheet available through the Agency's website;
 - in completing the application cover sheet, states and territories must outline:
 - the number of applications being submitted to the Agency; and
 - the amount of funding requested of the Agency for each project.
- complete an online project application form for each individual project;
- provide all the information requested;
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria;
- include all necessary supporting documentation (Section 7.1 refers); and
- submit the application through the online portal by **17.00 ACT Local Time on 17 June 2022**.

States and territories are responsible for ensuring that their applications are complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995 \(Cth\)](#) and the Agency will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude the application from further consideration.

If states and territories find an error in their application after submitting it, they should contact the Agency immediately on cermp@recovery.gov.au. We are not obligated to accept any additional information, nor requests from jurisdictions to correct their application after the closing time.

If we find an error, inconsistency or omission, we may ask for clarification or additional information from states and territories that will not materially change the nature of their application in fairness to other applicants.

States and territories should keep a copy of their application and any supporting documents.

We will acknowledge that we have received applications within three working days.

If states and territories need further guidance around the application process or if they are unable to submit an application online they should contact the Agency at cermp@recovery.gov.au.

7.1 Attachments to the application

We request states and territories provide the following supporting documentation for each of the projects. This forms part of the applicant's response to the Selection Criteria (item 6). Failure to provide the required attachments will result in a lower rating in the assessment process and may lead to the project(s) being found as not suitable.

- a business case, including an assessment of the expected triple bottom line (environmental, social and economic) outcomes for the proposal (required);
- an indicative budget including details of the mandatory 25 per cent co-contribution (required);
- a project management plan including risk management, monitoring and evaluation (required);
- documentary evidence of the relevant state or territory minister for disaster risk reduction's endorsement of the overarching application to the Agency and the (up to) ten projects identified as priority projects (required); and
- Documentary evidence of consultation with the community, local government and any other relevant stakeholders in support of response to Criterion 5 (optional).

States and territories must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the application form.

States and territories should only attach requested documents. We may not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence states and territories provide in their attachments should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. Please also ensure attachments documents are correctly referenced using either an alphabetical or numerical referencing.

7.2 Timing of program processes

States and territories must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates specified on the cover page of these Guidelines.

We will only accept a late application where an applicant can demonstrate exceptional circumstances prevented them from submitting the application by the closing date and time.

The Agency will decide, at its absolute discretion, if exceptional circumstances apply to a late application. The Agency will notify applicants as soon as practicable if the late application is deemed eligible for further assessment.

7.3 Questions during the application process

If states and territories have any questions during the application open period, contact cermp@recovery.gov.au. Questions should be sent no later than 27 May 2022. We will respond to questions within five working days.

If applicable, answers to questions will be posted in the Question and Answer sheet on the Agency's website: www.recovery.gov.au.

8. The Program Review and Assessment Process

8.1 Who will assess applications?

The Program Review Panel will comprise members agreed by the Agency's Coordinator-General.

Program Review Panel members may be drawn from relevant Commonwealth Agencies such as:

- Australian Climate Service;
- Bureau of Meteorology;
- CSIRO;
- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment;
- Department of Finance;
- Department of Home Affairs;
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications;
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet;
- Department of the Treasury; or
- the Agency.

Program Review Panel members will have suitable subject matter expertise, qualifications and experience to conduct the Program's assessment process that complies with the prescriptions in the ERF Act and the ERF Guidelines.

The Program Review Panel will ensure that recommended projects under the Program are not more appropriately funded from another funding source and are highly likely, based on relevant evidence, to contribute to the delivery of the Program's strategic objectives.

Where necessary, the Program Review Panel may request applicants further substantiate any claims associated with coastal and estuarine hazards, disaster recovery funding, insurance, and community impact or other criteria where the evidence provided by an applicant is considered insufficient or non-compelling.

The Program Review Panel, in its deliberations under this Program, may engage the services of a subject matter expert or representative from a non-government organisation, and may consider the advice of, and data provided by, Commonwealth agencies, including but not limited to the Bureau of Meteorology, the Australian Climate Service and the CSIRO.

The Program Review Panel will apply the eligibility criteria outlined in section five and assessment criteria outlined in section six. Assessment will result in projects receiving a rating, which will be used to inform funding allocations and recommendations.

The Program Review Panel will provide advice to the Coordinator-General of the Agency regarding the applications.

The Coordinator-General will recommend projects to the Minister for Emergency Management and National Recovery and Resilience (the Minister) for funding approval. The Coordinator-General may delegate to a Commonwealth Official the responsibility to make recommendations to the Minister regarding any funding allocations to projects under the Program, in accordance with the requirements of the ERF Act.

The Minister may take into account other advice or considerations in making a final determination on successful projects. This includes a geographical and project type balance, with an equitable distribution across state and territory jurisdictions where possible and reasonable and in line with the project funding caps. 'Equitable distribution' does not necessarily mean an equal distribution of program funds.

8.2 Assessment of applications

The inter-government Program Review Panel will assess each eligible project on its merit against the assessment criteria as follows:

- how well it meets the criteria;
- how it compares to other projects;
- whether the project provides value with relevant money.⁵ When assessing the extent to which an application represents value with relevant money, the Program Review Panel will have regard to:
 - the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the funding;
 - the relative value of the funding sought;
 - extent to which the geographic location of the project matches identified priorities;
 - the extent to which the evidence in the project demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives; and
 - any national interest, financial, legal, regulatory, governance or other issue or risk that is identified during any due diligence processes conducted in respect of the project.

8.3 Who will approve the funding under the Program?

In accordance with the ERF Act, the Minister is responsible for deciding which projects to fund. In making these decisions, the Minister may take into account the findings of the Program Review Panel,

⁵ See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

the advice and recommendations of the Coordinator-General, the availability of funds for the purposes of the Program, and other considerations relevant to the applicable legislation and Program.

The Minister's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of the funding;
- the funding amount to be awarded; and
- the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.

Projects may be approved for full or part funding from this Program. Any funding shortfall either due to the funding approved or by the budget being exceeded during the life of the project is the responsibility of that state or territory.

If efficiencies are realised on completion of the project, jurisdictions, with the Agreement of the Agency, may put the remaining funding to **other projects under this Program** in that jurisdiction. Should a jurisdiction use the funding toward other coastal hazards mitigation measures that state and territory must report that expenditure in line with section 11 of these Guidelines to the Australian Government.

9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise states and territories of the outcome of their applications in writing. This will include advice of any specific conditions attached to the funding.

9.1 Feedback on the application

Applicants can receive feedback regarding the outcome of any unsuccessful projects. Written feedback will be provided on request.

10. Successful applications

10.1 The Funding Agreement

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth.

Following the Minister's decision, and after applicants have been notified of the Minister's decision on projects to be funded and the quantum of funding allocated, Schedules will be developed under the [Federation Funding Agreement](#) - Environment between the Commonwealth and each relevant state or territory government (the funding agreement or Schedule).

The Schedule will detail the project delivery, program reporting and milestone requirements, and other relevant considerations.

States and territories who are successful will be consulted on the detail in the Audit and Reporting Framework ahead of the signing of the Schedule.

The Schedule must be finalised before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any expenditure incurred until the funding agreement (Schedule) is finalised and executed. If jurisdictions choose to start their projects before they have an executed funding agreement (Schedule), they do so at their own risk.

10.2 Multicultural Access and Equity

The Australian Government's *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy* obliges Australian government agencies to ensure their policies, programs and services - including those provided by contractors and service delivery partners - are accessible to, and deliver equitable outcomes for, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Applicants should consider how they will ensure their services will be accessible to people from CALD backgrounds. For example, service delivery partners may require cultural competency skills. In addition, services, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with clients who have limited English proficiency. Based on an assessment of the client target group, costs for translating and interpreting services should be factored into project applications.

10.3 How we pay the funding

The Schedule will state the:

- total funding amount to be paid, exclusive of GST;
- any financial contributions jurisdictions must make;
- any in-kind contributions jurisdictions will make; and
- any financial contribution provided by a third party.

Once the funding agreement has been finalised, the Commonwealth Treasury will transfer the funding allocation as a single payment through the normal monthly payment mechanism to states and territories. States and territories will be required to report how the funding has been spent in accordance with the reporting milestones outlined in the Schedule.

11. Announcement of successful applications

If successful, the project and approved funding amount will be listed on the Agency website (www.recovery.gov.au). The Australian Government Minister for Emergency Management and National Recovery and Resilience will make the first announcement about successful projects.

A state and territory can request to have this announcement managed jointly with the Commonwealth.

12. Monitoring and evaluation of projects

12.1 Keeping us informed

States and territories should let the Agency know if anything is likely to affect their funded projects.

We need to know of any key changes to organisations or business activities, particularly if they affect states and territories ability to fulfil the terms of the funding agreement, carry on business, and pay debts due.

If states and territories become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the funding agreement, they must contact us immediately.

States and territories must notify the Agency in a timely manner of events relating to their projects and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.2 Reporting

The Agency will establish an Audit and Reporting Framework for CERMP Projects. The objectives of the Audit and Reporting Framework will be to:

- provide the Commonwealth with reasonable assurance over each state and territory's projects for coastal and estuarine hazard risk mitigation;
- provide the Commonwealth with reasonable assurance over state expenditure included in the Financial Statement Form;
- inform the Commonwealth's biannual reporting through Interim and Performance Reporting; and

- direct states and territories to engage the services of a state or territory appointed auditor to undertake the assurance activities.

As part of the Audit and Reporting Framework, states and territories must submit the following:

- **quarterly** reports in line with the funding agreement and the Framework’s implementation plan. States and territories must have systems in place to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in their bilateral agreement. We will expect states and territories to report on progress against agreed project milestones and outcomes, as per table below:

Milestone/Objective	Location (LGA/region /national)	Agreed End Date	Actual/ Anticipated End Date	Status	Current % Complete	Total funding (\$)	Funding Spent \$

- contributions of participants directly related to the project, as per table below:

Name of Partner	Type of Contribution	Value of Contribution	Comments

- Expenditure of the funding.
- Reporting on the projects will be managed in accordance with the Schedule to the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment, through the establishment of an Auditing and Reporting Framework for CERMP projects with each state and territory. Reporting will provide a snapshot of the progress of the delivery of the project at the point in time when it is received by the Commonwealth.
- States and territories will be required to provide:
 - an Interim Update required three months after the Schedule commences and completed on a biannual basis;
 - a Performance Report required six months after the Schedule commences and completed on a biannual basis; and
 - a Final Report, no later than three months from the date that the project was completed.
- Further specific reporting details to meet Agency reporting requirements will be discussed with states and territories, and agreed for implementation through the development of the Schedules.

Ad-hoc reports

We may ask states and territories for ad-hoc reports on their funded projects. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

Final report

When states and territories complete their project, they must submit a final report as outlined in the funding agreement.

Final reports must:

- identify if and how outcomes have been achieved;
- include the agreed evidence as specified in the funding agreement;
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred; and
- be submitted in the format provided and in line with the timing outlined in the funding agreement.

12.3 Financial declaration

We may ask states and territories to provide a declaration that the funding was spent in accordance with the funding agreement and to report on any underspends of the funding.

12.4 Project visits

We may visit jurisdictions during or at the completion of their project(s). We will provide states and territories with reasonable notice of any visit.

12.5 Evaluation

The Agency will evaluate the Program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives of the projects have been achieved to ensure iterative and adaptive learning, informing future Australian Government actions. We may use information from the application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview states and territories, or ask for more information to help us understand the Program's impact and to evaluate how effective the Program was in achieving its outcomes. The Agency may establish case studies of successful projects in consultation with the relevant state or territory.

The Agency may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.6 Acknowledgement

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

Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022–23 – an Australian Government initiative.

If states and territories make a public statement about a project funded under the Program, we require them to acknowledge the funding by using the following:

'This [name of project] received funding from the Australian Government.'

States and territories should nominate a point of contact to liaise with the Commonwealth on any media or announcements relating to the Program. States and territories should notify the Agency and the Minister's office regarding any planned announcements relating to this Program and each project.

First announcements relating to individual projects must be managed jointly with the Commonwealth (see Section 11).

13. Probity

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that grant assessment and selection processes under the Program are fair, performed according to the published guidelines, incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and are otherwise consistent with relevant legislation, rules and guidelines.

These Guidelines may be updated from time-to-time by the Agency. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on the Agency's website at www.recovery.gov.au.

13.1 Enquiries and feedback

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) complaints procedures are published on the PM&C website: www.pmc.gov.au/pmc/complaints. These procedures apply to complaints about this Program. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

Any questions states and territories have about decisions under this Program should be sent to cermp@recovery.gov.au.

If jurisdictions do not agree with the way their complaint is handled, they may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Agency.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

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

13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance or integrity of the Program. There may be an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest if Agency staff, any member of a committee (including the Program Review Panel) or advisor thereof and/or states and territories or any of their 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 official or member of an external committee (including the Program Review Panel)
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict an applicant 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 some form of benefit (for example, funding) under the Program.

States and territories will be asked to declare, as part of their application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If states and territories later identify an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, they must inform the Agency in writing immediately at cermp@recovery.gov.au.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government officials will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#). Program Review Panel members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

13.3 Privacy

We treat personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting states and territories know:

- what personal information we collect;
- why we collect personal information;
- how we use personal information; and
- who we give personal information to and why.

Personal information can only be used or 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 funding applicants and recipients under the Program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on the Agency website as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

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

As part of the application, states and territories must declare their ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles, as if they were an agency for the purposes of that Act and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that they engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information collected, used, stored, or disclosed in connection with the activity. Accordingly, states and territories must not do anything, which if done by the Agency would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

13.4 Confidential Information

Other than any information available in the public domain, states and territories agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the Program, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where states and territories 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 states and territories to arrange for applicants' employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to non-disclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the Funding Agreement confidential to the extent that we are satisfied it meets all of the three conditions below:

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

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

- the Program Review Panel and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us administer or manage the Program effectively;
- employees and contractors of the Agency so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities;
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purpose, 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; or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

13.5 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this Program, may be subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (Cth) (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.

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator
National Recovery and Resilience Agency
PO Box 6500
Canberra ACT 2602

By email: FOI@recovery.gov.au

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Accountable authority	See subsection 12(2) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013
Adaptation	The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.
Administration costs	The administration costs associated with managing a successful project under the Program, will fall to the state and territory to manage. These costs may form part of the application for funding but cannot be more than five percent of the total project costs estimated in the application. Administration costs must be included in the application at the time of submitting and included in the total estimated project cost.
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.
Agency	The National Recovery and Resilience Agency, which from 1 July 2021 has responsibility for administering the Program.
Applicant	The state or territory government applying for funding under the Program.
Assessment criteria	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.
Audit report	The audit report required to be undertaken against actual (not estimated) project costs.
Bilateral Agreement	A Schedule under the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment, to which ONLY the Commonwealth and the relevant state or territory government are parties for the purposes of the Program.
Council of Australian Governments (COAG)	Primary Australian intergovernmental forum operating from 1992 to 2020.
COAG Reform Fund	A Special Account for the purpose of making grants of financial assistance to states and territories; provides for the terms and conditions of grants to be detailed in written agreements between the Commonwealth and states and territories.

Term	Definition
Coastal hazards	Coastal erosion and storm tide inundation that have the potential to impact on public safety and development along the coast.
Commencement date	The expected start date for the project.
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 <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (Cth).
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)	The guidelines, which establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities (such as the Agency) 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.
Completion date	The expected date that the project must be completed.
Coordinator-General	The Head of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency.
Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR)	The Council on Federal Financial Relations, comprising the Commonwealth Treasurer as Chair and all state and territory treasurers, is responsible for overseeing the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments.
Date of effect	The date on which a Funding Agreement is signed or a specified starting date.
Decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award funding. The <i>Emergency Response Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth) mandates the decision maker for funding as the Commonwealth Minister responsible for emergency management.
Disaster	A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts (National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework).
Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018	The arrangements under which the Australian Government provides financial assistance to state and territory governments to assist relief and recovery activities following an eligible disaster.

Term	Definition
Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Management System	The processes and controls implemented by a state or territory government agency and third-party organisations (where applicable) in relation to an estimated reconstruction cost, as defined by the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018.
Eligibility criteria	The mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for funding under the Program.
Emergency Management Minister	The Minister whose title includes “Emergency Management”—that Minister; or otherwise—the Minister declared by the Prime Minister, by notifiable instrument, to be the Emergency Management Minister for the purposes of the <i>Emergency Response Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth).
Emergency Response Fund (ERF)	<p>The Emergency Response Fund (ERF) is provided for under the <i>Emergency Response Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth), with operational guidance provided in the Emergency Response Fund Program guidelines (ERF Guidelines).</p> <p>The ERF makes available up to \$50 million annually to build resilience to, prepare for, or reduce the risk of future disasters, or build the long-term sustainability of communities that are at risk of being affected by a future disaster.</p>
<i>Emergency Response Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth) (the ERF Act)	The legislation that established the Emergency Response Fund.
Estuaries	Estuaries are coastal water bodies where freshwater runoff from the land meets the saltwater of the sea.
Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework	The FFA Framework can be conceived as comprising five elements: the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA FFR); CFFR and its role as gatekeeper; the FFA architecture; the FFA Principles; and the administrative arrangements.
Federation Funding Agreement – Environment	An agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the states and Territories.
Funding Agreement	The agreement that sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the funding.
Funding Drawdown	Program funding drawn from the Emergency Response Fund and deposited to the COAG Reform Fund; must occur prior to 30 June; may occur prior to finalisation of Bilateral Agreements under this Program.
Funding Shortfall	Project funding required that exceeds the funding allocated to a project under the Program. A funding shortfall will not be met by the Commonwealth.

Term	Definition
Grant	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. under which relevant money⁶ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money⁷ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government’s policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
Green-Blue Infrastructure	<p>For the purposes of this Program, Green-Blue Infrastructure is infrastructure that demonstrably reduces risk of coastal hazards for a particular community or communities, by delivering a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. . It incorporates green spaces (or blue if aquatic ecosystems are concerned) and other physical features in terrestrial (including coastal) and marine areas. This includes, for example but not limited to, mangrove reforestation, greenways along floodplains, or bioswales.</p>
Grey Infrastructure	<p>For the Purposes of this Program, Grey Infrastructure involves engineered assets that reduce the risk of coastal hazards for a particular community or communities. Grey Infrastructure may be blended with Green-Blue Infrastructure to maximize ecosystem services.</p>
Head Agreement	<p>The Federation Funding Agreement – Environment.</p>
Integrated Coastal Zone Management/Coastal Zone Management	<p>The process for managing coastal issues in a framework integrated across biota and habitats, time and space, and levels of government.</p>
Maladaptation	<p>Where intervention in one location or sector could increase the vulnerability of another location or sector, or increase the vulnerability of the target group to future climate change.</p>
Minister	<p>The Commonwealth Minister for Emergency Management and National Recovery and Resilience.</p>
National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework	<p>Developed by the Australian Government and endorsed at the Council of Australian Governments meeting held on 13 March 2020, the Framework outlines the strategic priorities, drivers for action and guiding principles for national disaster risk reduction activities.</p>

⁶ Relevant money is defined section 6 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth).

⁷ Other CRF money is defined in section 105 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth)

Term	Definition
Nature-based solutions	Actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits. In the context of this Program, nature-based solutions refers to actions to protect, sustainably manage, conserve and restore natural or modified ecosystems to reduce disaster risk, with the aim to achieve sustainable and resilient development.
Program	The Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program 2022–23 administered by the Agency.
Program Outcome Notification	The Commonwealth decision notification notice provided to an applicant jurisdiction; notifies the applicant of projects to be funded under the Program and the amount of Commonwealth funding allocated to each.
Program Start Date	Date on which a Bilateral Agreement or Schedule under the FFA – Environment has been signed by both the Commonwealth and a jurisdiction.
Program End Date	Date a Bilateral Agreement expires between the Commonwealth and a state or territory. This is taken to occur when all performance reporting and final milestone payments for all Projects funded within a jurisdiction have been satisfied.
Program Administrator	The staff member and/or section within the Agency responsible for the day to day administration of the Program.
Program Review Panel	The expert panel established to ensure the success of the Program through impartial assessment of Program applications against the assessment criteria and development of evidence-based recommendations for the Minister.
Program Scaling	Process to reconfigure a successful project that can no longer be delivered to the outcomes agreed in the relevant Bilateral Agreement under the FFA – Environment. This requires a business case submitted to Agency for review and agreement.
Project	A single project for which a state or territory applicant seeks funding under the Program; submitted with other projects as part of a single comprehensive state or territory application.
Publicly funded research organisation	Publicly-funded research organisations such as universities or the Commonwealth Science and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
Recipient	A state or territory government allocated program funding for a project or projects under this Program.
Schedules	Agreements under the FFA – Environment.

Term	Definition
Selection criteria	Includes eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
Selection process	The method used to select projects to fund under the Program in accordance with these Guidelines.
State Appointed Auditor	An auditor appointed and funded by a jurisdiction to conduct audit and assurance activities as prescribed in the relevant Bilateral Agreement.
State or Territory Application	The form and accompanying documentation that must be completed by an applicant seeking funding under the Program.
Unspent Funds	Funds remaining from the actual cost of a project under the Program, which, at project completion as per the relevant Bilateral Agreement, have not been transferred to a third party account.
Value with money	<p>Value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the application representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>Assessing value with relevant money involves consideration of when administering the Program, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each project proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of the project proposal and activities; • fitness for purpose of the project proposal in contributing to and achieving Program government objectives; • that the absence of funding is likely to prevent the applicant’s and Australian Government’s outcomes being achieved; and • any relevant risks to the Agency, for example, arising from the applicant’s relevant experience and performance history.