



Frequently Asked Questions Digital Farm Grants Program – Round 3

Overview

In 2018 and 2019 the State Government launched the inaugural Digital Farm Grants Program (DFGP) and the Digital Farm Grants Program – Round 2 (DFGP2) inviting proposals that would improve digital connectivity for Agribusinesses across regional Western Australia (WA).

The Digital Farm Grants Program – Round 3 (the Program) is to help bridge the digital gaps in regional WA. Funding of up to \$7 million is available from the State's Agricultural Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund. As with the DFGP and DFGP2, the objective of the Program is to improve business and agricultural productivity through the provisioning of business-grade connectivity for regional WA.

Eligibility

1. Location

Each proposal submitted should demonstrate the highest ubiquitous bandwidth and greatest outcomes for Agribusinesses and residents across the three remaining approximate Priority Areas in the Central, South-East and Esperance Grainbelt regions of WA – refer to the [Digital Farm Grants Program – Round 3 Priority Areas Map](#).

In addition to the location eligibility as defined above, proposals must improve connectivity for Agribusinesses and residents that are not currently serviced, or planned to be serviced by 2021, by National Broadband Network's fixed line or fixed wireless internet. The proposals submitted must not include areas that are covered by DFGP and DFGP2 or any other new or existing fixed wireless service areas. A maximum of 20 per cent overlap will be permitted.

2. Carrier Licence

The Lead Applicant must hold a valid carrier licence under the [Telecommunications Act 1997 \(Commonwealth\)](#).

This is to ensure the telecommunication network's ongoing operability and serviceability as a public carriage service.

How to apply

You can lodge your application via the [Digital Farm SmartyGrants portal](#).

What is the closing time and date for applications?

Addendum 2

Applications must be submitted strictly by Close of Business **5:00pm AWST on Friday 27 November 2020**. It is recommended that you submit your application/s **well before the closing time and date to avoid disappointment**.

Can an applicant make changes to the application after it has been submitted?

If you find a mistake in your application after it has been submitted, you should contact the Agricultural Technologies team members on (08) 6552-2133 or (08) 6552-2032 or by email at digital.farm@dpiird.wa.gov.au immediately. The Department may ask you for more information, as long as it does not change the substance of your application. The Department will not accept any additional information, nor requests from applicants to correct applications after the closing time. Requests for deadline extensions will not be approved.

How do I know that my application has been received?

When you submit your application you will receive an acknowledgement email, so that you know that your submission has been received. This may take a few moments.

Maximum Fund Amount per application

It is intended that the State contribution be distributed between the three Priority Areas of the Grainbelt region of Western Australia, subject to a full assessment, effectiveness, efficiency and value for money.

What attachments do I need to include in my application?

Proponents must provide the following documents:

1. Evidence of a valid carrier licence;
2. Financial Sustainability Forms that consist of:
 - a. **ADDENDUM 3** - Cash Flow Statement – five-year cash flow;
 - b. Capital and Project Expenditure; and
 - c. Plans and Uptakes for the Proposed Network;
3. Backhaul Arrangements.

You may attach other supporting documents such as, but not limited to, feasibility studies, signed letters of support, market analysis, Gantt Charts and design documents.

Is there a limit to the number of applications that applicants can submit?

No. There is no limit to the number of applications that an applicant can submit before the closing date for applications. Applicants are asked to complete a new application form for each project that they submit.

Can I get any assistance from the Department regarding my application?

The Department may be able to provide information and referrals that could assist your project development activities during the application period. This could include information on farms and farming groups of a local area, potential access to telecommunication infrastructures and/or its supporting infrastructures in your chosen project area.

Please get in touch with us early during the application period if you require assistance. Please be advised that the Department may conduct its own due diligence prior to provisioning any commercially sensitive information.

What are the contract conditions for this grant?

A copy of the Financial Assistance Agreement Template outlining the Terms and Conditions is available on the Department's website.

When will I know the outcome of my application?

You will be notified of the outcome of your application in writing, at the end of the selection process. For probity reasons, to treat all applicants fairly and equally, it is not possible to give you information about the status of individual applications during the assessment process.

What feedback will be available for this funding round?

General feedback summaries for funding rounds will be published on the Department's website. Individual feedback will be available upon written request.

What are the tax implications of receiving a grant?

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement.

When can I start my project?

A recipient **must not** commence work on the Project before a funding agreement is executed with the Department. Construction to commence within 12 weeks from the date of funding agreement execution. Payment will not be backdated for activities that commenced before the execution of the funding agreement, and no payments will be made unless a funding agreement has been executed.

Contact for inquiries

If you have any further questions regarding the program, please contact the Agricultural Technologies team members on (08) 6552-2133 or (08) 6552-2032 for assistance. All enquiries can also be emailed to: digital.farm@dpird.wa.gov.au.