



March 2024

Responses to questions: Australian Forest and Wood Innovations research centres expression of interest

Background

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry sought expressions of interest (EOI) from organisations to establish 2 AFWI research centres between 11 October 2023 to 6 December 2023.

During the open phase of the process, the department respond to emailed questions relating to the EOI process. If relevant, the same information was published on the department's AFWI webpage for transparency for other applicants. Applicant's confidential information contained in questions were removed from the published responses.

This document lists all the questions and responses that were provided on the department's website during the open phase of the process.

Q. Can video content be used to support an application?

A. There is nothing in the Expression of interest guidelines that excludes the submission of video as a supporting portion of an application. If submitting a video, please be conscious of the email file size limits and provide an accompanying transcript (answered 19 October 2023).

Q. How is 'industry' defined and does it include state governments and Indigenous businesses?

A. For the purpose of this EOI 'Industry' is defined as commercial entities operating within the forest and wood products sectors. Industry includes entities involved in production forest management, harvesting, transportation of forest products, wood and fibre processing, and the use of forest and wood products.

State owned forestry enterprises and Indigenous businesses that operate within the forest and wood products sectors, on a commercial basis, fall under this definition (answered 25 October 2023).

Q. Is the success of proposals dependant on the support of states and how is this support determined?

A. All EOIs will be assessed against the mandatory criteria, and the five equally weighted selection criteria set out in the EOI documentation.

Support from state governments, or state agencies, will be considered by the panel when assessing the five equally weighted selection criteria. State government, or state agency support is not a mandatory requirement.

Support for an EOI can be demonstrated through a high-level letter of support for the proposed research centre.

Financial and/or in-kind support can be offered in support of a proposal to host a research centre, or for individual research projects once centres are established (answered 20 November 2023).

Q. How do stakeholders determine which proposals to support without visibility of all proposals?

A. It is the applicant's responsibility to approach stakeholders to seek support for their applications. Stakeholders can then choose to support any proposal they see merit in.

Research centres, once established, will be required to work with stakeholders on all research proposals (answered 20 November 2023).

Q. Do proponents need to demonstrate that they have made a genuine attempt to understand the research needs of the forest and wood products industries (as opposed to their own research interests)?

A. Successful proponents, that are asked to establish AFWI research centres, will be required to have industry support for all research undertaken.

AFWI Headquarters will engage with industry and with the research centres to refine the research that will be progressed under these specialised research themes (answered 20 November 2023).

Q. As part of Criterion 2, applicants are asked to provide information about the lead researchers that will contribute to the proposed research centre. What is meant by 'relevant citations'?

A. For the purpose of this EOI, 'relevant citations' are intended to include publications and research outputs that have been produced by the contributing lead researchers and are relevant to the forest and wood products industries (answered 23 November 2023).

Q. Can my organisation participate in a proposal if our fixed indirect costs are greater than 10%?

A. Indirect cost limits are not intended to restrict the participation of parties in research activities but are instead intended to limit administration costs and maximise AFWI funds that are committed to research.

If indirect costs, greater than 10%, are proposed for a proposed project under the conditional or national open call, proposals will require appropriate matching funding, as per the funding allocation conditions.

All research proposals will be assessed by the research advisory committee and the board for value for money (answered 24 November 2023).

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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