

Funding Opportunities – MDB Projects

Listed below are potential funding opportunities for Water Working Groups in the Northern Inland NSW region. Most relate specifically to irrigation, but some (RDA Fund, Strengthening Basin Communities) are relevant to local government regional development initiatives and urban water supplies.

1. Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance

Target = irrigation water providers/private irrigation infrastructure operators

Funder = Commonwealth Govt (under Water for the Future program)

Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance helps irrigation water providers to:

- develop modernisation plans for their districts - this assistance offers eligible applicants funding of up to \$350,000 to complete a modernisation plan. Assistance is available for planning exercises to be completed within 12 months of entering into a Funding Agreement
- upgrade irrigation infrastructure and
- assess options to adapt to a future with less water

Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance is part of the \$5.8 billion Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure program (part of [Water for the Future](#)) which is funding key rural water projects to improve the efficiency and productivity of water use and management.

The scope and detail of a modernisation plan varies with the particular characteristics of the district to which it applies.

The closing date for applications under this Program is **29 October 2012**, unless all available funds are committed earlier.

Link - <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/srwui/irrigation-modernisation/index.html>

2. Strengthening Basin Communities Program

Target = Local Government

Funder = Commonwealth Govt (under Water for the Future program)

The Australian Government has committed \$200 million from [Water for the Future](#) to establish the Strengthening Basin Communities program. This program is implemented through two separate components: the Planning component and the Water Saving Initiatives component.

- [The Planning component](#) is to provide grants for local governments in the Murray-Darling Basin to assist in community-wide planning for a future with less water.
- [The Water Saving Initiatives component](#) is to provide competitive grants to enable local government authorities and urban water service providers to support projects that improve water security by reducing demand on potable water supplies.

Awaiting information on the next round for proposals and new guidelines, likely to be announced in July-Aug 2011.

Link - <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/basin-communities/index.html>

3. Regional Development Australia Fund

Target = Local Government, Incorporated not-for-profit organisations

Funder = Commonwealth Govt

The Regional Development Australia Fund will fund projects that support the infrastructure needs, and will enhance the economic and community development, of Australia's regions. Program funds will maximise outcomes through effective partnerships across all levels of government, and the business and not-for-profit sectors. Regional Development Australia committees will play a key role in identifying projects to be supported, and confirming that proposed projects align with their Regional Plans

- Projects must be "investment ready", that is ready to proceed within six months of signing the Funding Agreement.
- An applicant can apply for funds of between \$500,000 and \$25 million (GST exclusive).
- The RDAF will fund priority infrastructure projects identified by local communities in regional Australia that include economic and community infrastructure projects.
- Include co-funding from sources other than the Australian Government for all project grants, except in extenuating circumstances.
- Leverage dollar for dollar funding for funding requests from the RDAF valued at over \$5 million from sources other than the Australia Government.

The next round of funding will open in the last quarter of 2011.

Link - <http://www.regional.gov.au/regional/programs/rdaf.aspx>

4. Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program in New South Wales

Target = private irrigation infrastructure operators

Funder = Commonwealth Govt (under Water for the Future program)

Private irrigation infrastructure operators within the Murray-Darling Basin in NSW are invited to submit proposals for projects that will generate water savings. The program aims to acquire water entitlements resulting from these water savings. These projects will improve the efficiency and productivity of water use and management, both off and on-farm, by private irrigation infrastructure operators (part of [Water for the Future](#)).

Eligible projects may include the following activities:

- Upgrading, closure, restructuring or reconfiguration of water delivery systems;
- Upgrading of on-farm irrigation infrastructure for direct customers of eligible infrastructure operators.
- Upgrading or installation of delivery system operation technologies and bulk water meters; and
- Changes to river operation or storages where there are both environmental benefits and water savings to be achieved (subject to State government approval).

The closing date for applications under this Program is **4pm 22nd July 2011**, unless all available funds are committed earlier.

Link - <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/srwui/piiop.html>

Link - <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/srwui/impa.html>

5. South-East Queensland Irrigation Futures - Phase 2

Target = irrigators

Funder = Qld Govt (Dept Environment and Resource Management)

Landholders who operate an irrigation enterprise in the south-east Queensland region (from Noosa in the north, Toowoomba City to the west, and the Queensland/NSW border to the south) are eligible to join the program.

The aims of the SEQ-IF2 program are to achieve:

- gains in water-use efficiency of up to 10 per cent in participating industries
- uptake of Farm Management Systems
- changes in on-farm water management practices including the uptake of more water-efficient irrigation equipment and operations
- increased involvement of growers in priority natural resource management actions.

The program includes field demonstrations of better irrigation management assessments of irrigation systems, field trials, workshops, extension services, incentive schemes to assist irrigators, research and development, development of tools for irrigators and industry extension staff, training for industry extension staff, information for adaptation to climate change.

The program has been extended for another four years from July 2009.

Link - <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/rwue/seqif.html>

6. Enterprising Regions Program

Target = community/regional development organisations

Funder = NSW Govt (NSW Dept Trade & Investment, Regional Infrastructure & Services)

This program assists community/regional development organisations undertake planning activities and implement projects which have broad based local support and the potential to generate economic benefits.

Applications for assistance must be submitted by a sponsoring organisation such as: local councils incorporated associations including business, industry and community organisations regional development organisations including Regional Development Australia committees.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Broad support from stakeholders such as the business and wider community for the project, eg by providing letters of support from the local council/s and organisations such as local business or industry groups and tourism organisations and/or;
- The project is aligned with a local, regional or industry plan eg Regional Business Growth Plans;
- The potential economic benefits of the project;
- That project funding will be matched by organisations outside of I&I NSW (small communities are an exception).

Application process is continuous, **applications can be received at any time.**

Link - <http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/assistance-and-support/grants/regional-communities/enterprising-regions-program>

7. Water Adjustment Innovation Fund

Target = businesses in communities affected by water management reforms

Funder = NSW Govt (NSW Dept Trade & Investment, Regional Infrastructure & Services)

This fund provides \$7 million over 5 years to help businesses in communities affected by water management reforms to invest in the development of innovative products and services that benefit the environment.

Preference will be given to the development of projects that create local employment and investment, ensuring the sustainability of those communities.

Businesses, business clusters and industry groups located in catchment areas west of the Great Dividing Range are eligible to apply. Projects should be discussed with your nearest Industry & Investment NSW regional office (Armidale 67713284, Tamworth 6766 1360).

Application process is continuous, **applications can be received at any time.**

Link - <http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/assistance-and-support/grants/regional-communities/building-the-country#WaterAdjustmentInnovationFund>

8. Local Infrastructure Support Fund

Target = local government, infrastructure investors, private sector

Funder = NSW Govt (NSW Dept Trade & Investment, Regional Infrastructure & Services)

This fund provides \$52 million over 5 years supporting infrastructure projects that are directly linked to economic development opportunities.

The fund aims to help offset the costs of specific critical infrastructure required for business establishment, expansion or relocation in regional NSW.

Applications for assistance can be accepted where infrastructure requirements are preventing a specific business investment decision occurring. The application process involves two-stages: expressions of interest followed by suitable projects being invited to submit a detailed application for further assessment.

Projects should be discussed with your local I&I NSW office prior to submitting an expression of interest.

Application process is continuous, **applications can be received at any time.**

Link - <http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/assistance-and-support/grants/regional-communities/building-the-country#LocalInfrastructureSupportFund>

9. Healthy HeadWaters Water Use Efficiency Project

Target = irrigators

Funder = Qld Govt (Dept Environment and Resource Management)

Irrigators in Queensland Murray Darling catchments who hold supplemented or unsupplemented surface water entitlements may be eligible for financial assistance to improve the efficiency of water use on their property.

This project will involve irrigation planning and improvements to on-farm infrastructure.

Under the [infrastructure project](#), irrigators are invited to submit proposals for increasing water use efficiency on their property. This requires the identification of the cost of the proposals, benefits to their production and the water savings that can be achieved through implementation of water efficient infrastructure. Proposals will be assessed by the department and the Australian Government, and those approved will receive funding to undertake infrastructure upgrades and transfer a proportion of water savings to the Australian Government.

Applications for round two will be accepted from **3 May 2011 to 29 July 2011**.

Link (Infrastructure project) - <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/water/health/healthy-headwaters/infrastructure-project.html>

Funding is also available to eligible irrigators to obtain initial advice on options to improve their on-farm water use efficiency. Up to 80 per cent of the cost of [obtaining assistance with planning](#) from an irrigation consultant, to a maximum of \$1500 is available to eligible irrigators in the Queensland part of the Murray-Darling Basin

Specialist Advice funding will cover up to 80 per cent of an irrigator's costs to engage an irrigation consultant (to a maximum of \$1,500 per business ABN) **during the period of April to July 2011**. The irrigation consultant will be required to provide the irrigator with a written report of their findings by 29 July 2011.

Link (assistance with planning project) - <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/water/health/healthy-headwaters/planning-assistance.html>

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