

Queensland 2020-21 Betterment Fund Guidelines

August 2021





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The 2020-21 Betterment Fund is jointly funded by the Australian Government and Queensland Government

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Introduction and background

- 1. The Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), which came into effect on 1 November 2018, include an Efficiencies Framework, where efficiencies realised in delivery of the DRFA reconstruction program are retained by the state and allocated to disaster mitigation and resilience activities in accordance with the Commonwealth's disaster mitigation principles.
- 2. The 2020-21 Betterment Fund will be the first program funded under the DRFA Efficiencies Framework, accessing efficiencies realised from delivery program of 12 events that occurred in the 2018-19 disaster season.
- 3. The 2020-21 Betterment Fund will enable restoration of essential public assets damaged in 2020-21 to a more resilient standard. This will build the resilience of infrastructure and communities, and reduce future costs associated with disasters.
- 4. The Betterment Fund will be administered by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).
- 5. The success of betterment funds delivered under Category D of the DRFA has been proven. The Queensland Government, through QRA, developed a betterment framework in 2013. Since then, more than 480 betterment projects have been approved with a value of more than \$240 million across four programs.

Objectives of 2020-21 Betterment Fund

- 6. The objectives of the 2020-21 Betterment Fund are to restore essential public assets damaged in 2020-21 to a more resilient standard:
 - so infrastructure and communities are more resilient to future disasters
 - so future costs associated with disasters are reduced
 - to address Queensland's assessed natural hazard risks, and
 - in alignment with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience objectives of strengthened disaster risk management and investment in disaster risk reduction.

Eligibility

 Eligible applicants are local governments and state agencies with assets that are eligible for Category B Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets (REPA) funding under the DRFA for events in 2020-21. This includes the following activations:

Far North Queensland Low Pressure System, 15 - 26 April 2021 Southern Queensland Severe Weather, 20 – 31 March 2021 Tropical Cyclone Niran and Associated Low Pressure System, 25 February – 3 March 2021 Far North Queensland Tropical Low, 24 – 30 January 2021 Tropical Cyclone Imogen and Associated Low Pressure System, 2 – 12 January 2021 Western Queensland Thunderstorms 21 - 30 December 2020 South East Queensland Coastal Trough, 12 – 15 December 2020 K'gari (Fraser Island) 9 November – 23 December 2020 South East Queensland Hailstorm, 31 October 2020

- 8. Eligible projects are betterment works proposed for assets that:
 - meet the DRFA definition of an essential public asset
 - have sustained damage as a direct result of an event listed at paragraph 7, and
 - meet all eligibility requirements for DRFA REPA funding under the event.
- 9. Eligible costs must be related to the approved scope of the betterment proposal and be consistent with Section 9.2 of the <u>Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines (QDFG</u>). Eligible costs may include:
 - local government labour and plant costs directly associated with delivering the eligible works
 - extraordinary wages such as overtime, additional allowances
 - plant operating consumables
 - contractor and hire costs, and
 - materials.
- 10. Ineligible costs include:
 - non-specific indirect and overhead costs
 - profit margins of applicant including (but not limited to) that associated with the applicant's supply or use of plant, labour or materials
 - costs that are reimbursable under other funding sources, including insurance, and
 - costs of works completed prior to approval of the betterment project.

Funding

- 11. A total of \$20 million is available under the 2020-21 Betterment Fund.
- 12. Betterment funding is calculated as the difference between the Category B estimated cost to restore an eligible essential public asset to its pre-disaster function and the cost to build back the damaged asset to a more resilient state.
- 13. An upper-limit of \$1 million in betterment costs applies to a single betterment project.
 - A betterment 'project' is all betterment works on a single essential public asset or group of related public assets.
 - Determining whether a suite of activities are deemed one 'project' involves a common-sense approach to the location, sites, assets and submission.
- 14. The \$1 million upper-limit amount refers to the betterment component only, not the estimated total project cost.
- 15. Applicants may apply for betterment funding for more than one project.
- 16. Betterment funding is approved as a capped amount to an approved project. Only the actual eligible cost, up to the capped amount and directly associated with delivering the approved betterment works, is eligible for reimbursement.
- 17. Any funds not expended in the delivery of the project will be returned to the state for allocation to other mitigation or resilience measures.
- 18. Achieving improved resilience for Queensland communities requires commitment by all levels of government, as such, applicants are required to provide a co-contribution to the project. A co-contribution is considered an in-kind or monetary contribution from the applicant (or otherwise sourced by the applicant), relating to eligible costs and/or costs associated with an enhanced or increased project scope.
- 19. In recognition of limited revenue generating capacity, Indigenous councils are not required to make a contribution.

Assessment criteria

QRA will assess project proposals against the objectives, eligibility criteria and following assessment criteria:

- a) Issue identification: The proposed project addresses an assessed natural hazard risk. The project is justified as the preferred option to address an identified need, risk or vulnerability (for example, as identified in the State Disaster Risk Report or a local hazard risk assessment), and is supported by an options analysis, which includes the potential outcome of inaction.
- b) **Cost-benefit analysis**: The proposed project restores an essential public asset to a more resilient standard so future costs associated with a disaster are reduced. The proposal includes the preliminary estimate of proposed works, financial and non-financial benefits, and the avoided costs when calculating benefits. Note: rigour of analysis is expected to vary according to the complexity, risk profile and attributable cost of the proposed project, including any regulatory requirements.
- c) Community benefits: The proposed project restores an essential public asset to a more resilient standard so communities are more resilient to future disasters. The community resilience benefits of the proposed project have been identified and quantified.
- **d)** Evidence based: The proposed project is informed by investigation and/or consultation, demonstrating a measured approach to the identified risk, the forecast effectiveness of the betterment solution, and compliance with legislative requirements.
- e) Innovation: The proposed project may demonstrate innovative mitigation solutions to long-standing risks and may introduce new methods or approaches to enhance the existing landscape.
- 20. In prioritising projects, QRA will consider:
 - whether local and regional needs are balanced
 - whether duplication of effort and funding is avoided
 - whether vulnerable groups/diverse populations are supported, and
 - whether alternative funding streams may be available for projects.
- 21. The Chief Executive Officer, QRA provides final project approval.
- 22. Details for unsuccessful betterment project will be retained by QRA and may be reconsidered should further funding become available.

Timeframes/key dates

- 23. Betterment projects should be lodged at time of lodging the corresponding REPA submission, unless otherwise agreed with QRA. Although REPA submissions may be submitted to QRA up until 30 March 2022, it is anticipated that the Betterment Fund will be exhausted quickly, meaning applicants should endeavour to submit their betterment projects as soon as possible for consideration.
- 24. Where REPA submissions were lodged or approved prior to the announcement of this funding program, applicants should submit their betterment projects as soon as practicable as an Estimate Update, including the approved REPA scope.
- 25. All approved projects with awarded tenders/contracts must lodge Estimate Updates to QRA by no later than **30 March 2022**, unless otherwise agreed in writing with QRA.
- 26. All approved projects must be completed by 30 June 2023.
- 27. All approved project close-out submissions are due to QRA within three months of the project completion date, and by no later than **30 September 2023**.

Application requirements

- 28. Applicants will be required to prepare and lodge the betterment project within the corresponding REPA submission, and attach a completed **Betterment Project Application Form**, and supporting documents including:
 - preliminary or detailed designs (infrastructure projects)
 - options analysis
 - cost benefit analysis
 - details of resilience outcomes
 - results of investigation/consultation
 - project plan, and
 - demonstration of the co-contribution.

Detailed design review

29. Where there are significant changes subsequent to the project approval, applicants must provide QRA with updated project details for consideration, and where appropriate, an Estimate Update to account for changes to the Category B component of the project (noting the betterment funding is approved as a capped amount).

Progress reporting

- 30. Monthly progress reporting is mandatory throughout project delivery. Monthly progress reports are created and lodged via the Monitoring and Reporting System (MARS) Portal, detailing:
 - actual expenditure reported against the approved capped amount
 - percentage of scope of works completed
 - project start and finish dates
 - reasons for, and details of, any variances in scope, cost or time, and
 - details of complementary works.
- 31. Once actual expenditure has exceeded the initial submission advance, applicants can progressively claim expenditure incurred up to 90 per cent of the approved capped value or the Estimated Final Cost, whichever is the lowest.
- 32. Claims for expenditure must be lodged with a progress report and a general ledger or transaction report (or similar financial document produced from the applicant's financial system) supporting the claimed amount and demonstrating the actual expenditure incurred against the approved scope of works.

Extension of time

- 33. Extension of time (EOT) to the approved project completion date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Applicants are required to formally request an EOT, detailing the unforeseen circumstance impacting on project completion, the actions taken to minimise the impact, and the adjusted project plan and milestones.
- 34. Regional Liaison Officers can assist with the process of formally lodging an EOT request.

Project acquittal reports

- 35. Project acquittal reports must include:
 - final progress report detailing the completed works at line item level and reasons for variances in cost or scope delivered
 - final actual expenditure reported against the approved capped betterment funding
 - detailed general ledger or transaction reports evidencing the final expenditure claimed (including details of final co-contributions), and
 - evidence demonstrating the completed betterment works.
- 36. Photographic evidence demonstrating the completed works should represent the extent of the completed works (JPG including EXIF metadata, GPS coordinates and time/date taken) at line-item level.
- 37. The quantity and distribution of photographic evidence of the completed works should be sufficient to enable assessment of the treatment type and extents of reconstruction and betterment works.
- 38. It is recommended that additional post construction photographic evidence be collected by the applicant for use as pre-disaster evidence should a subsequent disaster occur in the following years.
- 39. Supporting documents are to be made available for sampling if requested by the QRA. This may include:
 - internal costing/payroll reports for internal plant/payroll costs claimed to be available for sampling
 - source documents such as tax invoices or requisitions to be available for sampling, and
 - timesheets to be available for sampling.
- 40. Following assessment and approval, the final eligible actual expenditure for the completed approved scope of works, submitted and delivered according to required timeframes, less the co-contribution (if applicable) is reimbursed.

Monitoring and evaluation

41. The program will be evaluated against a series of key evaluation questions which cover the domains of Appropriateness, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of betterment projects will occur beyond the delivery of works.

Assurance activities

- 42. Agencies/applicants may be required to provide documentation to support any assurance activities. These assurance activities may include, but are not limited to:
 - audit, site visits or inspections
 - obtaining relevant documentary evidence to support estimated reconstruction costs and or value for money assessments, and
 - verification reviews on measures or projects.

Certification

43. All submissions, including progress reports, must be certified within MARS by the applicant in line with its delegations.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

44. When claiming reimbursement of expenditure the amount to be lodged must be the GST exclusive actual cost incurred.

Funding agreement

- 45. It is a requirement that all recipients of QRA funding enter into a Head Agreement with QRA.
- 46. Where a recipient is successful in its application for funding, QRA will issue a Project Funding Schedule which, when executed by both parties, will be considered a binding Project Funding Agreement under the terms and conditions of the Head Agreement.
- 47. The Project Funding Schedule will detail the terms and conditions specific to the approved funding, including reference to the relevant funding guidelines that govern the program, funding type and amount, key date and milestone schedules, payment claim and reporting requirements.

Procurement

- 48. The procurement of goods or services must be in accordance with the applicant's procurement policy. When procuring goods or services local governments must act in accordance with the *Local Government Act* 2009 and the Local Government Regulation 2012 and their own procurement policy. State government agencies must comply with the Queensland Procurement Policy.
- 49. If expenditure is in breach of the applicant's procurement standards, reimbursement of these costs are unable to be sought under the DRFA.

Record keeping

- 50. All agencies must keep an accurate audit trail.
- 51. Records must be available for seven years from the end of the financial year the claim is acquitted by the Australian Government.
- 52. For assurance purposes, the Queensland and/or Australian Government may at any time, via QRA, request documentation from agencies to evidence the state's compliance with any aspect of the DRFA. This may include, but not be limited to, access to project level information, to confirm acquittal in accordance with the DRFA.

Public acknowledgment of funding source

- 53. Funding recipients must acknowledge relevant funding contributions in public materials. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Media releases regarding the approved project
 - Acknowledgement or statements in project publications and materials
 - Events that use or include reference to the approved project, and
 - Plaques and signage at construction sites or completed works.
- 54. To comply with this requirement, all public advice and media releases should refer to the relevant funding source, as detailed in the Project Funding Schedule/Agreement.
- 55. Contact QRA for assistance and to coordinate approval for any materials by emailing media@qra.qld.gov.au.

Annexure 1: Betterment lodgement

- 56. Betterment project scope must be lodged through QRA's MARS Portal as part of a REPA submission that has been enabled for Betterment. Once Betterment has been enabled a Betterment *Funding* column is available for applicants to identify REPA and Betterment related line items by selecting a category. The options are:
 - Blank REPA line items outside of the Betterment project scope, locations
 - *REPA with associated Betterment* REPA scope to restore event damage at the identified Betterment site, that would be required if the Betterment project did not take place
 - Betterment Project (Category E) proposed Betterment alternative treatments to increase resilience of the asset
- 57. Betterment may be lodged as one of three scenarios (via an already approved submission, via a lodged submission not yet approved or by drafting a new submission) for the relevant activated event listed at **7. Eligible applicants**.

Approved submission

- 58. Through either the RLO or QRA Support, request an **Estimate Update Scope Change** to be enabled.
 - Provide the approved MARS submission number and
 - Request Project Allowed to be enabled this will add a Betterment *Funding* column and a Stats function to the REPA submission.
- 59. Once the Estimate Update draft is created the submission will be back in draft to allow the Betterment to be added.
 - Identify the Betterment submission by entering Betterment and proposed project name in the Submission description field and
 - Identify the REPA line items to restore event damage at the proposed Betterment project site by selecting REPA with associated Betterment in the Funding column

	Damage det	Betterment	Damage details	Geo coding		Treatment details					
				Chainage (m)						
Name	Site name	Funding ∇	Description	Start	End	Treatment	Unit	Length (m) \equiv	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Quantity
Selwyn-Toolebuc Road	Category B	REPA with associated Betterment	Approved REPA Treatment	19,020	19,790	Heavy formation grading incorporating 50mm of imported material	≙ m3	770.00	7.00	0.050	≙ 269.500
Selwyn-Toolebuc Road	Category B	REPA with associated Betterment	Approved REPA Treatment	19,790	20,160	Gravel Resheeting 100mm	≙ m3	370.00	7.00	0.100	₽259.000
Selwyn-Toolebuc Road	Category B	REPA with associated Betterment	Approved REPA Treatment	19,870	20,160	Bulk excavate surplus material and remove from site	≙ m3	290.00	7.00	0.050	1 01.500

 Add the proposed alternative complete Betterment project scope line items (inclusive of any REPA line items still applicable to the Betterment project) corresponding to the REPA with associated Betterment lines identified above and Identify the Betterment project by selecting Betterment Project (Category E) in the Funding column

	Damage details	Betterment	Damage details	Geo co	ding	Treatment details						
				Chaina	je (m)							
Name	Site name 𝒴	Funding	Description =	Start	End	Treatment	Unit	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (Quantity	
Selwyn-Toolebuc Road	Category E	Betterment Project (Category E)	Betterment works to upgrade gravel causeway. Works to be undertaken following	19,020	19,790	Bulk fill - imported	≙ m3	50.00	6.00	0.100	€30.000	
Selwyn-Toolebuc Road	Category E	Betterment Project (Category E)	Betterment works to upgrade gravel causeway. Works to be undertaken following	19,790	20,160	Reconstruct reinforced concrete	≙ m3	50.00	6.00	0.200	€60.000	
Selwyn-Toolebuc Road	Category E	Betterment Project (Category E)	Betterment works to upgrade gravel causeway. Works to be undertaken following	19,870	20,160	Rock protection	≙ m3	50.00	2.00	0.300	≙ 30.000	

- Pending assessment and approval, *Betterment Project (Category E)* line items will supersede the *REPA with associated Betterment* line items
- Any line items not associated with the Betterment scope should be left blank under the Funding column.
- 60. Once the above steps are complete and prior to lodging, click on the *Stats* panel to the right of the line items and populate the REPA and Betterment values for the Betterment project. These Project funding values are to be entered in the supporting Betterment Project Application Form.

	Statistics Submission funding breakdown		Columns	
	Funding	Submitted	V	
	Betterment Project (Category E)	\$62,030.59	Filters	
	REPA with associated Betterment	\$42,271.11	12	
	Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets	\$0.00	Σ	1
	Total submission	\$62,030.59	Stats	
	Project funding breakdown	C		J
	Funding	Submitted		
ſ	Total project funding	\$62,030.59		
J	Category B	\$42,271.11		
	Category E	\$19,759.48		

- 61. Complete a Betterment Project Application Form, one per project.
- 62. Attach the completed Betterment Project Application Form to the Estimate update submission as well as all supporting Betterment project evidence
- 63. Seek RLO assistance to validate and quality check the Estimate update submission, the Betterment scope, the Betterment Project Application Form and supporting evidence prior to lodgement
- 64. Refer to MARS Portal user guide activation and submission preparation on the QRA website, sections:

4.7 Validate data quality

4.10 Lodgement

Lodged submission

65. Through either the RLO or QRA Support request the submission to be withdrawn.

- Provide the approved MARS submission number
- Request Project Allowed, to be enabled this will add a Betterment *Funding* column and a *Stats* function to the REPA submission.
- 66. Once the submission is withdrawn the submission will be back in draft to allow the Betterment scope to be added.
 - Enter the Betterment project name in the Submission Description field
 - Identify the REPA line items to restore event damage at the proposed Betterment project site by selecting REPA with associated Betterment in the *Funding* column

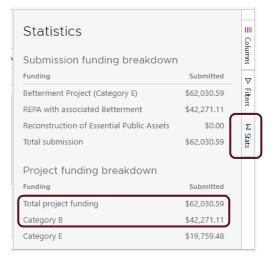
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- Add the proposed alternative Betterment project scope line items (inclusive of any REPA line items still applicable to the Betterment project) corresponding to the REPA with associated Betterment lines identified above, and
- Identify Betterment scope by selecting Betterment Project (Category E) in the Funding column

	Damage details	Betterment	Damage details	Geo codin	g	Treatment details						
				Chainage	(m)							
Name	Site name 🛛	Funding	Description =	Start	End	Treatment	Unit	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (Quantity	
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- Pending assessment and approval, the Betterment Project (Category E) line items will supersede the REPA with associated Betterment line items
- Any line items not associated with the Betterment scope should be left blank in the Funding column

67. Once the above steps are complete and prior to lodging, click on the *Stats* panel to the right of the line items and populate the REPA and Betterment values for the Betterment project. The Project funding values are to be entered in the supporting Betterment Project Application Form.



- 68. Complete the Betterment Project Application Form, one per project.
- 69. Attach the completed Betterment Project Application Form to the Submission as well as all Betterment project supporting evidence.
- 70. Seek RLO assistance to validate and quality check the REPA Submission, the Betterment scope, the Betterment Project Application Form and supporting evidence prior to lodgement.
- 71. Refer to MARS Portal user guide activation and submission preparation on the QRA website, sections:

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DRAFT submission

- 72. Create the DRAFT REPA submission.
 - Select the REPA activated event applicable to the asset damage and Betterment project Refer 7 – Eligible applicants
 - Identify the Betterment project by entering Betterment and the project name in the Submission Description
- 73. Through either the RLO or QRA Support request Project Allowed Betterment to be enabled.
 - Provide the DRAFT MARS submission number
- 74. Once Project Allowed is enabled start preparing the DRAFT submission.
 - Develop REPA scope line items to meet REPA submission requirements, including evidence supporting the exact location, nature and extent of damage to the asset caused by the event
 - Identify the REPA line items related to the proposed Betterment project site by selecting REPA with associated Betterment in the Funding column

	Damage det	Betterment	Damage details	Geo coding		Treatment details					
				Chainage (m)						
Name	Site name	Funding $ abla$	Description	Start	End	Treatment	Unit	Length (m) \equiv	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Quantity
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- Add the proposed alternative Betterment project scope line items (inclusive of any REPA line items still applicable to the Betterment project) corresponding to the REPA with associated Betterment lines identified above and
- Identify Betterment scope by selecting Betterment Project (Category E) in the Funding column

	Damage details	Betterment	Damage details	Geo codin	g	Treatment details						
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75. Once the above steps are complete and prior to lodging, click on the *Stats* panel to the right of the line items and populate the REPA and Betterment values for the Betterment project. The Project funding values are to be entered in the supporting Betterment Project Application Form.

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