

The DRF Round 4 Information Session will  
commence shortly.

We're waiting a few extra minutes to allow  
additional attendees to arrive before we start.



## DRF Round 4 Webinar – 03 June 2026

Dan Kilpatrick, Portfolio Manager, Resilience and Efficiencies

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Before we start, I wanted to apologise to those of you who received multiple emails regarding invites to this session.

We shifted from a regular Teams meeting to a Teams Town Hall meeting, so this required a cancellation.

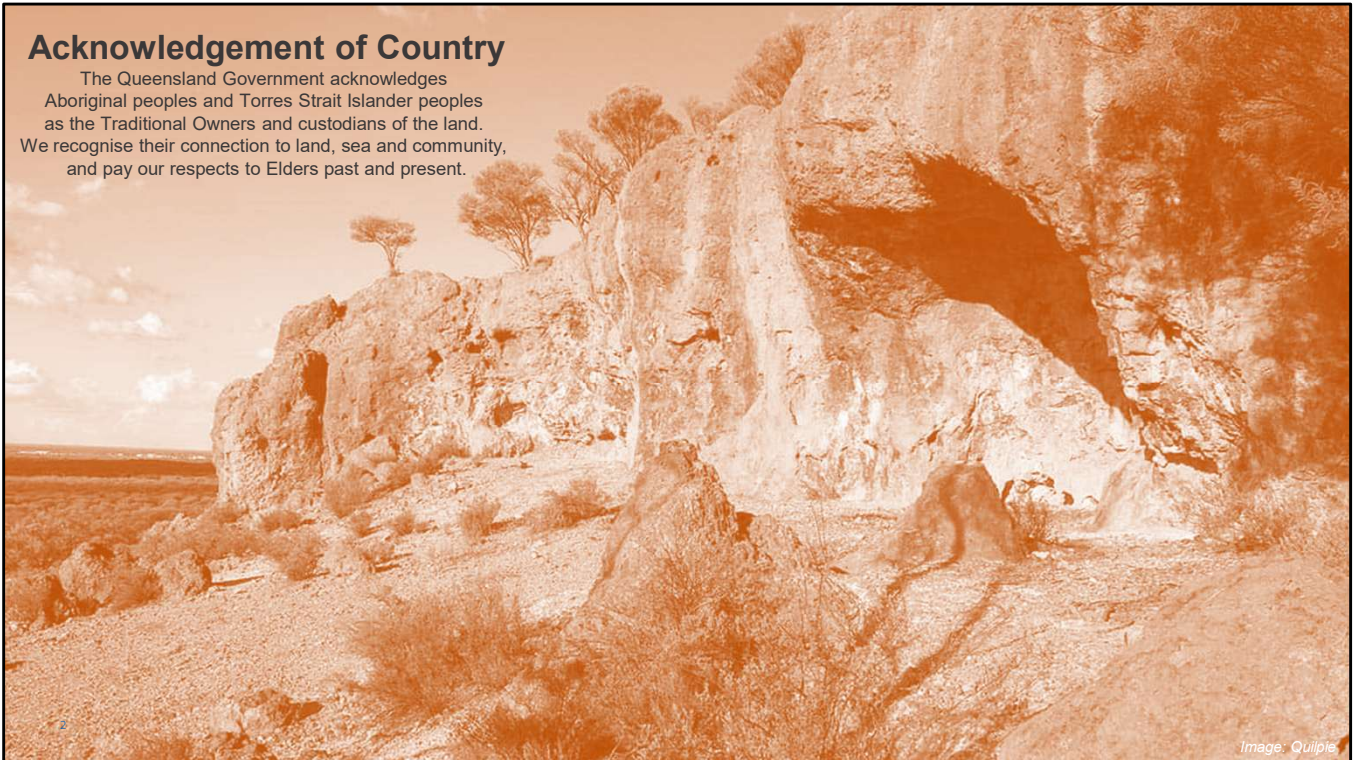
Then as we progressively added invitees there were reports received of some cancellation notifications being sent out.

Also, we apologise that invitees were unable to forward the meeting invite to others in their networks.

We thank you for your understanding.

## Acknowledgement of Country

The Queensland Government acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



Firstly I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which we gather today.

We recognise and honour their ancient cultures, and their connection to the lands, and waters.

We pay our respect to them, their cultures, and to their Elders, past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

## QRA Attending Representatives

- Charlotte Spliethoff – Manager Resilience Funding
- Anne Farley – Program Manager Disaster Ready Fund
- Siobhan Hessing – Acting Manager Resilience and Recovery Officers
- Joanne Miles – Principal Program Officer Resilience Funding
- Leah Steinberg – Principal Communications Advisor

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## Overview

- Key Dates
- QRA's Role
- The Disaster Ready Fund
- Funding Available for Round 4
- Key Changes
- Priority Funding Areas
- Guideline Brief
- Assessment Criteria
- How to Apply
- Key Considerations
- Resources



## Session Format

The purpose of this session is for QRA to provide information to prospective applicants on the Disaster Ready Fund Round 4

- Session content to be covered, then a Q&A session at the end
- Questions provided via typing messages in Q&A
- If you are interested in the response to questions submitted by other attendees, upvote it
- Questions not answered during session will be taken on notice and the answers provided to all attendees via email
- Recording, transcript and slide deck will be made available, check the QRA DRF R4 webpage tomorrow for details on how to access
- Applicants **must** have attended this session (or viewed the subsequent recording) before they apply
- We expect this to be a long session, if you need to leave during feel free to do so and ensure you access the recording at a later stage

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## DRF Round 4 - Key Dates



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### Key dates for DRF Round Four are:

- Project proposals open on 29 May 2026
- Project proposals close on 1 July 2026 (21 business days from today)
- Review of project proposals by QRA and applications to NEMA close on 25 August 2026 (roughly 8 weeks later)
- Qld Ministerial and Premier approval to be sought for the projects to be submitted to NEMA.
- Assessment of Applications by the Australian Government will occur across August to October 2026
- Outcome announcements are expected to occur from late October 2026.
- Schedules are anticipated to be signed and funding delivered to Lead Agencies from Jan to March 2027
- Implementation Plans are anticipated to be endorsed and payments to applicants from Lead Agencies can be made from mid 2027

Lead Agencies are not entitled to submit additional projects in place of

projects that are withdrawn or found to be ineligible after the closing date and time.

The Lead Agency must provide written endorsement (i.e. agreement in writing) from the relevant minister(s) in that state or territory (ministerial endorsement) of the projects submitted to NEMA, including any multi-jurisdictional and national projects it is submitting.

**Applicants will be advised if their application has been progressed to NEMA.**

## QRA's Role

- QRA is Queensland's Lead Agency for DRF
- QRA undertakes an 'indicative assessment' to identify projects for NEMA to assess
- Ultimately NEMA's decision
- QRA is an impartial entity in this process, to ensure fairness and equality is applied across the applicant base, we cannot support individual applicants in developing the content of their application
- This information session is the primary source of info for all applicants
- Incomplete applications will not be assessed
- If your proposed project does not align with the Guidelines and the eligibility criteria detailed within it will not be assessed
- Queensland can only send 30 applications to NEMA for Round 4
- Minister and Premier endorsement will be sought on the final 30 applications before being sent to NEMA for consideration
- DRF is extremely competitive, for example for Round 3 QRA received almost 200 applications for Round 3, 62 were sent to NEMA for consideration and less than 18 were ultimately funded
- \$200M across entire country, Round 3 QLD received \$51.4M

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## Disaster Ready Fund

### Purpose

- Australian Government program that funds initiatives to reduce natural disaster risks and build community resilience before disasters occur.

### Program Delivery

- DRF is administered by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in partnership with state/territory governments through Lead Agencies.

### Process

- Grants are awarded annually through a competitive process.
- After the funding round closes to applications an initial review is undertaken by QRA.
- QRA then submits the most competitive applications to NEMA.
- NEMA assesses all projects submitted nationally, assesses and announces successful projects.

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**What is the DRF?** — The Disaster Ready Funding (DRF) is the Australian Government’s main program for supporting projects that help communities reduce risk from natural hazards and build resilience before disasters strike. It’s focused on prevention, mitigation, and preparedness—not emergency response. Examples of possible outcomes include fewer homes flooded, safer ways to evacuate, stronger community readiness, and better planning for future infrastructure.

**How DRF Works** — Funding is delivered through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), working with states and territories. In Queensland applications are managed by QRA. You don’t apply directly to the Commonwealth.

**Competitive Grants** — DRF grants are awarded through an annual competitive process. Proposals must meet criteria and are compared to others—so good preparation and quality applications matter. Not all proposals will be funded because each jurisdiction has caps on the number of applications it can submit to NEMA and annual funding is limited.

**QRA will conduct an inductive assessment** of proposals against the published eligibility and assessment criteria, with the most competitive applications submitted to NEMA for Commonwealth assessment.

## Funding available for DRF Round 4

### Total Funding Available

- Up to \$139.477 million nationally in project funding.

### Project Funding Streams

- 75% (\$104.608 million) for infrastructure projects
  - grey infrastructure
  - green-blue infrastructure (including nature-based solutions)
  - social infrastructure
  - natural hazard monitoring infrastructure
- 25% (\$34.869 million) for other eligible types.

### Project Value

- Minimum total project value (Cwth funding plus co-contributions) for Infrastructure projects: \$0.5 million
- No minimum value for other project types
- Maximum project value is \$104.608 million for infrastructure and \$34.869 million for non-infrastructure projects

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As was the case for Round Three, Round Four **prioritises large-scale infrastructure** that will deliver enduring disaster risk reduction and resilience benefits for communities, but **also supports non-infrastructure projects**.

- 75 per cent (\$104.608 million) of project funds is notionally allocated for infrastructure projects, such as cyclone shelters, levees, sea walls and early warning systems.
- 25 per cent is allocated for other eligible project types (\$34.869 million), such as planning for future infrastructure and capacity building.

Grey Infrastructure refers to engineered assets that reduce the risk or impact of natural hazards for a community or communities. This includes, for example, built structures such as flood levees, sea walls, drainage systems and cyclone shelters that provide physical defences against natural hazards.

Green-Blue Infrastructure is infrastructure that reduces risk of 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, mangrove reforestation, greenways along floodplains, urban reforestation, green firebreaks and cultural burning.

Social infrastructure is comprised of the buildings and physical spaces that facilitate the delivery of social services and support the quality of life and wellbeing of communities. These include, for example, places for community support such as hubs for volunteer training/coordination.

Natural hazard monitoring infrastructure refers to infrastructure assets and networks for detecting, monitoring and reporting on natural hazards that better prepare a particular community or communities for future disasters. Examples include, but are not limited to, early warning systems that improve the safety of communities.

Infrastructure projects must have a total value of at least \$0.5 million (Commonwealth funding and your co-contribution combined). No minimum applies to other project types.

Funding requests can't exceed what's available in each stream.

## Key Changes for Round 4

- **Application cap** the number of applications that each jurisdiction may submit to NEMA, has been reduced. For Queensland, the cap is now 30 applications and organisations may only submit one application to QRA. If an org has multiple applications for consideration, they will be expected to prioritise internally and only submit one. If an org sends QRA more than one, all application points of contact will be advised and QRA will request one application is prioritised. While the application cap applies to each lead organisation, it does not restrict participation as a delivery partner.

Queensland's application cap has been established due to the shortened timeframes within DRF Round 4 to apply and assess applications, the reduced Lead Agency cap, and the reduced overall budget for the round.

NEMA is only accepting 196 applications across the entire country.

- **Updated eligible hazard and activity types**, with some previously eligible types no longer eligible
- **Priority projects to be preferred** by the Commonwealth Assessment Panel as part of funding recommendations
- **Three years maximum project duration** for all project types
- **Business as Usual (BAU)** guidance has been reviewed and further refined at Appendix C of the Guidelines.

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**It's important to read the Guidelines for Round Four before applying as changes have been made – this is an overview of the key changes**

**Application cap:** this has been halved for all jurisdictions

**Three years maximum project duration** for all project types – this period commences from the date of NEMA's written endorsement of the project's implementation plan.

**BAU** is case and context dependent – i.e. whether proposed works or services are standard activities that the Applicant would ordinarily be expected to fund depends on the precise nature of the works or services and what expectations exist of the particular body or bodies that are responsible for their delivery, which can vary between projects and Applicants. This will be assessed by the Commonwealth's Assessment Panel on a case-by-case basis, drawing on its expertise and having regard to a range of information and factors.

## Key Changes for Round 4

- **Competitive merit assessment** will be based on four criteria: three weighted technical criteria plus a fourth non-weighted criterion that assesses overall value.
- **Co-contribution sources** have been clarified (land valuations not eligible).
- **Evidence requirements** have been reduced for ABN applicants and clarified for other applicant types.
- **Additional support materials** including an applicant checklist and cost benefit analysis template have been developed and are available via the QRA DRF R4 webpage
- **The DRF Audit and Reporting Framework** has been updated to simplify and standardise grantee reporting across all DRF rounds.

## Commonwealth Priority Areas for DRF Round 4

### Large-Scale Infrastructure

- For example, cyclone shelters, levees, sea walls and early warning systems that will deliver enduring disaster risk reduction and resilience benefits for a community or communities.

**Additional Priority** will be given to the following where applications are similarly rated:

- **Construction-Ready Infrastructure:** Infrastructure projects ready to commence construction mid 2027.
- **Insurance Co-Benefits:** Risk reduction projects with demonstrated co-benefits for insurance (e.g. reduced premiums) will similarly be preferred.

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The Australian Government has identified a number of priority areas for Round Four funding.

**Large-Scale Infrastructure:** 75% of project funds—about \$104.6 million—are set aside for large infrastructure projects over \$0.5 million, such as cyclone shelters, levees, sea walls, and early warning systems. These projects are designed to provide long-term disaster resilience for communities.

**Construction-Ready Infrastructure:** All infrastructure projects must be able to start construction within the funding period. Those prepared to begin construction once implementation plans are approved, expected from mid-2027, will be preferred by the Australian Government where applications are similarly rated.

**Insurance Co-Benefits:** Projects offering additional benefits related to insurance will also be preferred. The Australian Government will test claims with relevant experts as part of its assessment process. Applicants should consider partnering with experts and provide relevant evidence

(refer to Guidelines for examples) to substantiate any insurance claims.

## Required Co-contributions (Page 11)

Co-contribution category	Commonwealth funding towards eligible project costs	Minimum co-contribution towards eligible project costs
First Nations organisations as defined in the Glossary. Local councils located in 'very remote' and 'remote' locations per the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Remoteness Structure, listed in Appendix A.	Up to 90 per cent of eligible project costs	At least 10 per cent of eligible project costs
Other 'low rate-based' councils, determined using the ratio of Financial Assistance Grant to Net Rate Income, listed in Appendix B. Not-for-profit organisations as defined in the Glossary.	Up to 80 per cent of eligible project costs	At least 20 per cent of eligible project costs
All other Applicants.	Up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs	At least 50 per cent of eligible project costs

Eligibility for **each co-contribution category** will be determined **based on the Applicant type** nominated in the Application form, irrespective of any delivery partners, together with any supporting evidence.

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- Eligibility for **each co-contribution category** will be determined **based on the Applicant type** nominated in the Application form, irrespective of any delivery partners, together with any supporting evidence.

## Co-contribution Types and Sources (Page 11/12)

Co-contributions can include, but are not limited to:

- a **financial** (cash) contribution provided at the time of project commencement;
- **in-kind** contributions, such as wages directly attributable to the delivery of the project, and/or supplies, materials, and specific equipment required to execute the project:
  - In-kind contributions cannot include historic work undertaken or staff time spent prior to project commencement or land valuations.
- **historical investments**, funds the Applicant or a delivery partner has already invested in a program or project on or any time after 1 July 2024
  - No more than 50 per cent of the required co-contribution amount can be derived from historical investments.
- All parties named on an Application as being involved in delivery of a proposed project must contribute to the project financially, in-kind and/or through historical investments.

The Australian Government will not fund project cost overruns.

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- Co-contributions must be directly linked to delivery of the DRF project.
- Historical Investments: only where the Australian Government's contribution from the DRF is expected to extend or enhance that program or project subject to alignment with the DRF Objectives.
- Where historical investments form part of a co-contribution, the Application must clearly identify this in the project budget and describe how the DRF project will extend or enhance the prior investment. Evidence of the historical investment should also be provided as an optional attachment.
- The Applicant and/or delivery partner must be able to commit to the formal co-contribution prior to the Lead Agency signing of the relevant Schedule.
- If an in-principle co-contribution does not result in the actual co-contribution prior to the signing of the Schedule, the Minister may withdraw the Australian Government's offer of funding for the project/s.

- With the exception of financial assistance provided to local government under the Australian Government's Financial Assistance Grants program, Australian Government funding from any other source (including past and current Commonwealth grants and contributions funded from Commonwealth appropriations) cannot be used to meet minimum co-contribution requirements.

## Applicant Eligibility (Page 14/15)

Applicant either (4.2):

- **has an** Australian Business Number (ABN)
- **is a** state, territory or local government body in an eligible jurisdiction; or
- **is a** First Nations organisation or a Not-For-Profit organisation (as defined in the Glossary);
- **has the** capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement; and

**Is not** an entity listed in section 4.3.

- the Applicant or a delivery partner is an organisation included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme', or
- the Applicant is:
  - an Australian Government body (including government business enterprises) or other entity that is wholly funded by the Australian Government
  - an individual
  - an overseas resident/organisation, or
  - any entity type not included in section 4.2.

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**With the exception of organisations included on the National Redress Scheme's** list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme', any individual or entity may partner on a project led by an eligible Applicant provided minimum co-contribution requirements are not met from Australian Government funding/funded sources (see section 3.1.2).

## Applicant Eligibility (Page 14/15)

Applications must include evidence of the Applicant's entity type for eligibility and co-contribution purposes as follows:

- Businesses must provide a current ABN
- First Nations organisations must provide evidence that they meet the definition of an 'Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation' (ACCO) or other 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation' as set out in the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#)
- Not-for-profits must provide evidence of their not-for-profit status
- Local councils in 'very remote' and 'remote' locations and other 'low rate-based councils' do not need to provide separate evidence that they qualify for reduced co-contributions.

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**Failure to provide the required evidence** may result in an Application being deemed ineligible unless the application is assessed as eligible and meeting the co-contribution requirements against another co-contribution category.

**First Nations organisations must provide evidence** that they meet the definition of an 'Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation' (ACCO) or other 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation' as set out in the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#)

- for example, an Indigenous Corporation Number (ICN), evidence of Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) registration and/or a declaration that the Applicant is a Traditional Owner, or
- an organisation that has at least 51% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander ownership and/or directorship and/or management

**Not-for-profits must provide evidence of their not-for-profit status** – for example, a current Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's (ACNC) Registration, or Constitutional documents and/or

Articles of Association that demonstrate the not-for-profit character of the organisation.

**Local councils in ‘very remote’ and ‘remote’ locations and other ‘low rate-based councils’** will be verified using the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ Remoteness Structure and ratio of Financial Assistance Grant to Net Rate Income, as per the lists and methodologies at Appendices A and B, and do not need to provide separate evidence that they qualify for reduced co-contributions.

## Eligible Hazard Types (Page 16)

Project activities can target one or a combination of the following Natural Hazards:

- Bushfire
- Earthquake
- Flood (including coastal floods/coastal inundation, riverine floods, and flash floods)
- Storm (including electrical storms, rain downbursts, blizzards, snow and hail)
- Cyclone (including tropical, ex-tropical, and sub-tropical cyclones, and intense low pressure systems such as east coast lows)
- Storm surge (including coastal erosion)
- Landslide (including avalanches, mud flows and rock slides)
- Tsunami
- Tornado
- Terrestrial heatwave (a marked warming of air over a large area when the maximum and minimum temperatures are unusually hot over 3 days, compared to the local climate and past weather)

Ineligible:

- Marine Heatwave
- Pollen Storms
- Drought → The Australian Government's Future Drought Fund provides funding each year to support initiatives that build drought resilience.

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### No longer eligible natural hazards: Marine Heatwave, Pollen Storms

All other natural and non-natural hazards, including drought,<sup>14</sup> biological and virological (including biosecurity) hazards, and cyber-attacks are ineligible. However, projects which increase resilience in these areas are not excluded if they primarily target eligible Natural Hazards.

The Australian Government's [Future Drought Fund](#) provides funding each year to support initiatives that build drought resilience.

## Eligible Funding Activities (Page 16)

### To be eligible projects must:

- have the primary purpose of increasing understanding of natural disaster impacts, building resilience to future natural disasters and/or reducing natural disaster risk, in line with the DRF's objectives (see section 2)
- be risk informed, aligned with plans and priority targeted, in accordance with the DRF's Investment Principles (see section 2)
- target one or more eligible natural hazard types (see section 5.1.1)
- involve one or more eligible activity types in the built, social, natural and/or economic domains (see section 5.1.2)
- deliver 'enduring benefits' (as defined in the Glossary) for a community or communities at risk of being affected by future natural disasters, in an eligible location (see section 5.2)
- meet requirements for eligible expenditure (see section 5.3), minimum project values (see section 3.1), co-contributions (see section 3.1) and maximum project duration (see section 3.2), where applicable

## Eligible Funding Activities (Page 16)

### To be eligible projects must not:

- have commenced activities for which Commonwealth funding is being sought, or be completed, before Implementation Plans are endorsed
- have received funding from other sources for the same activities
- be activities that would normally be paid for by a state, territory or local government as part of BAU operations as defined in the Glossary and Appendix C.

**Note:** Applicants must demonstrate why an activity is not BAU as part of their Application and should consider the guidance at Appendix C when formulating their justifications.

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## Eligible Activity Types and Domains (Page 17/18)

Activity types	Notional funding allocation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investment in grey infrastructure</li> <li>2. Investment in green-blue infrastructure (including nature-based solutions)</li> <li>3. Investment in social infrastructure</li> <li>4. Investment in natural hazard monitoring infrastructure</li> </ol>	\$104.608M
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Development of business cases and/or feasibility studies for future infrastructure (including investigation, modelling, concept planning and detailed design activities).</li> <li>6. Capacity and capability building projects that improve the resilience of governments, industries, community sector organisations and/or at-risk communities to the impacts of future disasters.</li> <li>7. Projects that improve understanding of disaster risks and impacts, including disaster modelling, risk assessments and mitigation plans.</li> </ol>	\$34.869M
Domains	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Built domain – Those human-made assets that underpin the functioning of a community. Examples include: buildings and other structures, cities and towns and utility networks.</li> <li>2. Social domain – The relationships connected by networks of communication. Examples include: individuals, families and common interest groups that form whole communities, health and wellbeing, social welfare services, social capital, emergency services.</li> <li>3. Natural domain – Encompasses the natural and cultural resources of the community. Examples include: ecosystems, coasts, heritage, water resources and land.</li> <li>4. Economic domain – The system whereby the affected community's material and service needs are met through appropriate labour and employment, business development, land use, financial resources, and interaction with the broader economy. Examples include: insurance institutions, private sector, financial institutions, public sector.</li> </ol>	

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Where a project spans multiple activity types and/or domains, the Application must identify one primary activity type and one primary domain that best describe the project. Applications may also identify one or more secondary activity types and/or domains that describe other project components.

To be eligible for funding in the infrastructure funding stream:

Applications must nominate activity type 1, 2, 3 or 4 as their primary activity type in the Application form, must ensure that the project meets the corresponding definition in the Glossary, and must meet all other eligibility criteria (including that the project's primary purpose be aligned with one or more of the DRF's objectives and that the activity not be BAU as defined in the Glossary and at Appendix C).

**Projects do not have to be construction-ready when applying, but must include a construction component and be able to commence construction within the project period.**

## Examples of Eligible Activities (Page 19)

Examples of projects that may be eligible under Round Four include, but are not limited to:

- Construction of community infrastructure that reduces natural disaster risks, mitigates impacts and/or builds resilience (including, for example, by placing downward pressure on insurance premiums) for communities such as flood levees, sea walls, drainage basins, cyclone shelters, early warning systems, artificial reefs, and culturally appropriate places for First Nations people.
- Building the resilience of governments, industries and communities to future natural disasters through the development and implementation of risk assessments, mitigation plans and capacity/capability building activities.
- Supporting community sector organisations to develop social capital, train staff or have materials in place prior to the impact of a natural hazard, including initiatives to support the most at-risk communities and/or cohorts at disproportionate disaster risk.
- First Nations-led projects that improve community preparedness for and resilience to the impacts of future natural disasters.

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Examples of projects that are **out of scope for Round Four include**, but are not limited to:

- Updates to land use planning instruments and building codes.
- Maintenance, repairs and upgrades to roads, buildings, drainage networks and other existing infrastructure that meet the Glossary definition of BAU.
- Projects that will deliver short-term (i.e. non-enduring) or highly localised (i.e. sub-community level) benefits only, such as for a single or small number of individual/s, household/s or business/es.

### **Eligible locations**

Projects **must** be delivered within the Lead Agency's respective jurisdiction/s or area of operation, except where agreement to delivery in another Australian jurisdiction is sought and provided (i.e. for multi-jurisdictional projects);

## Eligible Expenses (Page 19/20)

To be eligible, the expenditure must:

- be incurred **between** the project start date and end date as nominated in the Implementation Plan, unless otherwise permitted by these Guidelines (see sections 5.4 and 10.5),
- be a **direct cost** of the project, and
- not be ineligible expenditure as outlined in section 5.4.

Eligible expenditure could include, for example:

- construction and/or procurement of materials, including supply costs, to deliver the project;
- staff (incl. contractor and consultancy) salaries and on-costs, including administration costs such as training, utilities and travel, that are directly attributed to the provision of the project;
- writing, reporting, consultation and engagement costs insofar as they are directly relevant to the delivery of the project;
- upgrading existing assets so long as the upgrades are not BAU and meet all other eligibility requirements;
- community engagement and communications initiatives directly related to the delivery of the project;
- planning costs;
- reasonable project administration costs incurred by the Applicant

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- **Project activities** for which Commonwealth funding is sought **must not commence** until the project's Implementation Plan has been endorsed by NEMA and the Lead Agency has an executed funding agreement in place with the Applicant for the project.
- **Applicants must only spend Australian Government funds and co-contributions provided under the DRF on eligible expenditure incurred on or associated with approved project activities as defined in Schedules and Implementation Plans.**
- Contingencies for inflation and other potential cost increases such as due to changes in labour and supply costs, delays or unforeseen events must be factored into budgets for each project and should be commensurate with the size and complexity of the proposed project<sup>16</sup>. Where contingency amounts are not identified as separate line items, NEMA will assume these have been factored into costings for assessment purposes.
- Minimum of 10 per cent, but consideration of a higher contingency up to

30 per cent for projects in complex or remote delivery environments is recommended.

## Ineligible Expenditure (Page 20/21)

- Projects that have already received full funding or a commitment of full funding, including projects that have received funding from another source for the same purpose, as articulated in the Application (i.e. 'double-dipping').
- Activities that do not have the primary purpose of increasing understanding of disaster impacts, building resilience to future disasters and/or reducing disaster risk
- Retrospective costs, with the exception of project costs incurred prior to the Implementation Plan being endorsed, which may be funded using co-contributions at the Lead Agency's and Applicant's discretion and risk (see section 10.5)
- Purchase of land or existing infrastructure and essential services, including the costs associated with sub-division of land
- Repair or replacement of existing infrastructure where there is no demonstrated significant increase in benefit
- Activities that would normally be paid for by a state, territory or local government as part of BAU operations as defined in the Glossary and Appendix C.
- General wage costs not related to the direct delivery of the funded activities
- Costs incurred in the preparation of a grant Application or related documentation
- Maintenance of existing machinery or infrastructure, including roads
- Activities conducted outside of Australia
- Subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent
- Overseas travel
- Interstate travel, where that interstate travel is not undertaken as part of a multi-jurisdictional project (see section 7.2.3)
- The introduction of plants, animals or other biological agents known to be, or that could become, environmental or agricultural weeds and pests, and
- Activities undertaken primarily for commercial (profit-generating) purposes.

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This list is not exhaustive.

Other costs may be ineligible where the Program Delegate determines they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objectives of the program. These will be notified to Lead Agencies ahead of Applications closing, where possible.

NEMA will **not** support Applications that include activities with the potential to adversely impact a matter of national environmental significance, including but not limited to activities that fail to be approved under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

## Consultation with Communities (Page 30)

- Unless there are compelling reasons for not doing so, Applicants must have meaningfully consulted with relevant local governments and affected communities, including any affected First Nations communities, before submitting a Project Proposal with a place-based focus.
- In addition, and in keeping with commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (see section 7.4), Applicants must have meaningfully consulted with relevant First Nations communities wherever their particular interests are affected by a proposed project (i.e. in ways not felt by the general population), irrespective of whether the project is place-based.
- Evidence of any required consultation, or compelling reasons for not consulting in these cases, must be provided as part of the Application and will be taken into account in scoring Applications against assessment criterion 3. Applicants should consider this in development of their Project Proposal.

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**An example of a reason not to have consulted:** an infrastructure upgrade on land owned by the Applicant, where the Applicant is also the relevant Local Council.

## Assessment Criteria (Page 21)

QRA and NEMA will assess Applications based on the weighting assigned to each technical criterion (criteria one, two and three) and the overall value of each project (criterion four) following the process outlined in section 8 of the Guidelines.

**Criterion One** – Contribution to disaster risk reduction, resilience and/or knowledge (weighted 40%)

**Criterion Two** – Alignment with national and state/territory/local disaster resilience and risk reduction plans, strategies and frameworks (weighted 30%)

**Criterion Three** – Capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (weighted 30%)

**Criterion Four** – Overall Value of the Project (weighted 0%)

To be considered for DRF funding, Applications **must**:

- meet all eligibility requirements;
- achieve a rating of at least 'Satisfactory' for each of the weighted technical assessment criteria (criteria 1, 2 and 3) – i.e. final scores equivalent to at least 5 out of 10 against the scoring matrix at Appendix E
- achieve a rating of at least 'Suitable' for the combined technical score – i.e. a final weighted total
- score of 50 or more out of 100 against the rating matrix at Appendix E; and
- achieve a rating of at least 'Good' overall value for the non-weighted assessment criterion (criterion 4) – i.e. a final score of at least 2 out of 3 against the scoring matrix at Appendix F, when rounded to the nearest whole number.

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- Except for criterion four, all of the assessment criteria must be separately addressed for each Project Proposal submitted as part of an Application.
- Responses to criteria one, two and three are limited to 1000 words (maximum) per criterion. A separate response is **not required** for criterion four.
- The amount of detail and supporting evidence provided should be relative to the project size, complexity and funding amount requested, and must satisfy any minimum/mandatory requirements set out below.

## Assessment Criteria One (Page 22)

Must demonstrate alignment with one or more of the DRF objectives by identifying how and to what extent the project reduces disaster risk, increases resilience, adaptive capacity and/or preparedness for disasters, and/or increases understanding of natural disasters.

This must include, at a minimum:

- the natural hazard/s the project is addressing, current and future risks posed to the target community (including consideration of climate change impacts) and how these have been assessed, or if there is limited or no existing hazard or risk information, how the project funding will contribute to increasing understanding of the hazard, level of risk and potential future disaster impacts;
- the disaster risk, resilience or knowledge benefits the project will deliver for the community during and beyond the term of funding, including the estimated level/s of disaster risk, resilience, and/or understanding prior to and upon conclusion of the proposed project, along with any enduring benefits;
- any other purposes and benefits associated with the project, including but not limited to:
  - information demonstrating that these are secondary objectives or ancillary benefits, rather than the primary purpose of the project.
  - any insurance-related co-benefits (i.e. benefits for insurance affordability or availability that go beyond the intended risk reduction, resilience and knowledge outcomes).
- how the project will avoid and manage the potential for maladaptation including any unintentionally negative social, environmental or economic outcomes; and
- for infrastructure projects, how climate change may impact the investment over its intended lifespan, and how these risks will or may be mitigated.

In addition: If the project seeks to improve understanding of natural hazards and disaster risk, the Project Proposal must outline how the new hazard and risk information will be shared with affected communities.

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The evidence provided to support this must include, but is not limited to:

- references to and/or extracts from relevant hazard risk assessments
- for projects claiming insurance co-benefits, information that substantiates the claims such as estimates or modelling prepared by an insurer or other relevant professional (e.g. actuary) showing expected insurance impacts, detailed engineering specifications or before-and-after mapping showing that the infrastructure removes or substantially reduces risk from future hazards, and/or comparative case studies showing how similar infrastructure projects in comparable locations successfully lowered insurance premiums or reduced losses.

Note: evidence of insurance benefits will be reviewed by external advisers through the process outlined at section 8.1.2. Projects will only be preferenced by the Assessment Panel where it considers insurance-related claims have been demonstrated, taking into account the external advice.

## Assessment Criteria Two (Page 23)

The Application and Project Proposal must demonstrate this through identifying:

- how the project aligns with one or more of the priorities, outcomes and national actions identified in the Application and Project Proposal must demonstrate this through identifying:
  - how the project aligns with one or more of the priorities, outcomes and national actions identified in the [Second National Action Plan](#); and
  - how the project aligns with and/or supports delivery of any other relevant national, state, territory or local disaster resilience or risk reduction plans, strategies or frameworks, or how the project will develop or contribute to development of these plans, strategies or frameworks where they do not currently exist.

The evidence provided to support this may include, but is not limited to:

- references to and extracts from relevant parts of national, state, territory or local plans, strategies or frameworks.

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## Assessment Criteria Three (Page 23)

The Application must demonstrate this through identifying:

- the Applicant's track record managing similar projects and access to personnel and/or partners with
- the right skills and experience
- sound project planning to deliver the project, which addresses scope, implementation methodology, timeframes, budget, community consultation, and risk management
- compliance with relevant legislative requirements, government policies and industry standards, such as:
  - where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be impacted by the project, how the project will ensure cultural safety in any service delivery?
  - where the project will affect the particular interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, how the project aligns with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reforms and/or will contribute to progress against targets?
- readiness to formally commence the project once Implementation Plans are endorsed (anticipated from mid-2027) and ability to complete the project within the maximum project period

In addition, for infrastructure projects, the Application must demonstrate:

- how the infrastructure and benefits of the project will be operated and maintained into the future
- readiness to commence construction either immediately upon commencement of the project (i.e. once Implementation Plans are endorsed, which is anticipated from mid-2027) or later in the project period. This should include a description of the steps that have been and/or are planned to be taken to prepare for construction including:
  - the status of any required regulatory and/or development approvals
  - project designs and costings
  - authority from the land or infrastructure owner to undertake the project at the nominated site(s)
- the sources and status (e.g. confirmed, in principle) of all funding contributions.

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## Assessment Criteria Three - Continued (Page 24)

The evidence provided to support this must include, but is not limited to:

- a clear business case for the proposal, including a project plan, budget (using the Budget template issued by NEMA unless advised otherwise by your Lead Agency) and risk management plan commensurate with the size and scale of the project.
- evidence of robust consultation with and support from local government(s) and/or affected communities, including First Nations communities where relevant, or compelling reasons for not having consulted, where required under section 7.3.
- cost estimates prepared by a quantity surveyor or other relevant professional

In addition, for infrastructure projects:

- a cost benefit analysis (note: NEMA will provide a template on its [website](#) and through Lead Agencies that can be used for this purpose. Alternatively, Applicants may submit their own CBA template/report provided all minimum requirements set out at Appendix D are met).
- evidence that the Applicant either owns the land/infrastructure (e.g. certificate of title) or has the land or infrastructure owner's permission to undertake the project (e.g. official permit, signed lease agreement).
- copies of any designs and approvals showing construction readiness or progress towards construction readiness (e.g. schematic plans, planning permits, development and building approvals, environmental approvals).

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- All budgets, cost estimates and cost benefit analyses submitted as part of an Application must:
- Cost estimates are ideally less than 12 months old for projects valued over \$1 million, or quotes or cost estimates prepared by the Applicant (ideally less than 6 months old) for projects valued under \$1 million.
- Where a cost estimate has been prepared by a quantity surveyor or other professional, this should be stated along with their qualifications in the cost estimate itself or elsewhere in the application (e.g. as part of the response to assessment criterion three).
- factor in contingencies for inflation and other potential cost increases such as due to changes in labour and supply costs, delays or unforeseen events, which should be commensurate with the size and complexity of the proposed project.
- Where contingency amounts are not identified as separate line items, NEMA will assume these have been factored into costings for

assessment purposes. Minimum of 10 per cent, but consideration of a higher contingency up to 30 per cent for projects in complex or remote delivery environments is recommended.

- be consistent with funding figures entered elsewhere in the Application.

## Assessment Criteria Four (Page 25)

Overall value is the extent to which an Application represents value with relevant money, both in its own right and compared with other projects.

For the purposes of the DRF, these considerations include the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each Application, having particular regard to:

- the fitness for purpose of the project in contributing to the objectives and any stated priorities for the grant opportunity, and its proportional impact compared with other projects
- the alignment of the project with the DRF investment principles, including that projects are risk informed, aligned with plans and targeted at achieving one or more priorities under the Second National Action Plan
- the appropriateness of the project budget and relative value of the grant sought, including:
  - whether the budget is sufficiently detailed and justified
  - the type/s (new financial and in-kind investments vs historical investments) and amounts of any co-contributions as a proportion of the total project value
- any risks to project delivery (for example, arising from the Applicant's experience and performance history) and the appropriateness of the risk management plan submitted with the Application
- any other sources of funding that may be available, including through other more appropriate grant programs
- whether the proposed activities would normally, and should therefore, be paid for by a state, territory or local government

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### Criterion Four – Overall Value of the Project

- Under the Australian Government grants framework, value with relevant money is a prime consideration when committing public resources and a judgement based on an Application representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources, as determined from a variety of considerations.
- See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.
- Comparison of the costs and benefits of feasible options when selecting grantees is a key step in achieving value with relevant money (see section 12 of the CGRPs). To ensure equity between DRF Applicants, comparisons will only be made with other projects competing in the same funding stream (i.e. infrastructure or other).
- This framework consists of several elements including the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#), the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024](#), relevant Estimates

Memorandums and templates issued by the Department of Finance.

These documents may be found at [GrantConnect<sup>24</sup>](#) and on [NEMA's website](#). Any alterations and addenda will be published on both websites. By registering on the [GrantConnect](#) website, you will be automatically notified of any changes to these grant opportunity guidelines.

Applicants should also ensure they read and understand any information or instructions published by Lead Agencies in relation to the process for submitting Project Proposals. Lead Agencies' websites provide information about the process for submitting Project Proposals in their respective states and territories. A list of

Lead Agency contacts for the DRF Program is available on [NEMA's website](#).

**Applicants should check these websites regularly for any updates.**

## How to apply

- QRA has developed a Queensland Excel-based application response form, applicants **must** complete this form
- Use the DRF R4 Offline Application Form for guidance. **DO NOT** submit the Offline Application Form. Complete and submit the Queensland response form.
- Question numbers have been added to the offline application form that align with the Excel based response form.
- Question 80H is an additional question added to the response form by QRA and is mandatory
- If a question has an Asterix (\*) it is mandatory. If a question isn't mandatory and you don't have a relevant response, leave it blank
- Do not tamper with the Excel based response form. Widening and shrinking of columns is permissible.
- Some cells in the Excel based response form already have the options listed. These questions allow for multiple options to be selected. Please remove all options that are not relevant for your application.
- Keep question answers in one cell. If there are multiple answers, create separate lines within the one cell via ALT+ENTER.
- Submit applications by emailing the Response Form and all attachments to [disasterreadyfund@qra.qld.gov.au](mailto:disasterreadyfund@qra.qld.gov.au)
- Every project application must be submitted in a separate email on a separate Response form.
- Applications must be submitted with the email subject line: Final Submission for DRF Round 4 – [Applicant Name]

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## Excel-based Response Form Walkthrough

This form will be published on the QRA DRF R4 webpage along with the recording of this session, when available. Please check the webpage tomorrow

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## Application Checklists

3 checklists have been developed to support completion of competitive/eligible applications for the following project types:

1. Infrastructure (non-flood based) applications (NEMA checklist)
2. Other Project applications (NEMA checklist)
3. All Flood based applications (QRA checklist)

Applicants are encouraged to utilise these to support the development of their application

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## Mandatory Attachments (Page 31/32)

Applicants must submit the following documents as attachments to their Project Proposals:

- evidence of the Applicant type for eligibility and co-contribution purposes, as detailed in section 4.2.
- a clear business case including :
  - a project plan
  - budget (using the Budget template issued by NEMA)
  - risk management plan commensurate with the size and scale of the project.
- evidence of consultation or compelling reasons for not consulting, where required under section 7.3.
- cost estimates prepared by a quantity surveyor or other relevant professional

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Infrastructure projects valued at more than \$1M: cost estimates prepared by a quantity surveyor.

Other projects more than \$1M: cost estimates prepared by relevant professionals (e.g. actuaries or accountants).

Other projects and infrastructure projects less than \$1M: quotes or cost estimates prepared by the Applicant (ideally less than 6 months old)

## Additional Mandatory Attachments (Page 32)

For *infrastructure projects*:

- a cost benefit analysis
- evidence that the Applicant either owns the land/infrastructure or evidence of the land or infrastructure owner's permission to use the land/infrastructure
- evidence that the project will be ready to commence construction once Implementation Plans are endorsed (anticipated from mid-2027); or
- a clear outline of planned steps and timelines for commencing construction during the project period, including copies of any existing designs and approvals showing construction readiness

note: NEMA's provided a template on its [website](#) and through Lead Agencies that can be used for this purpose. Alternatively, Applicants may submit their own CBA template/report provided all minimum requirements set out at Appendix D are met

## Additional Mandatory Attachments (Page 32)

For *projects with insurance co-benefits*:

- evidence of any claimed insurance co-benefits, eg:
  - Estimates or modelling prepared by an insurer or other relevant expert showing expected insurance impacts,
  - Detailed engineering specifications or before-and-after mapping showing that the infrastructure removes or reduces risk from future hazards, or
  - Comparative case studies showing how similar infrastructure projects in other locations successfully lowered insurance premiums or reduced losses.
- Evidence of any other (i.e. non-insurance related) co-benefits should be provided separately as an optional attachment.

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## Additional Mandatory Attachments (Page 32/22)

For *joint Applications*:

- letters of support from each delivery partner listed in the Application, including:
  - details of the delivery partner
  - an overview of how the delivery partner will work with the Applicant and any other delivery partners in the group to successfully complete the project
  - an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the delivery partner will bring to the group
  - the roles/responsibilities the delivery partner will undertake, and the resources (financial or in-kind) that it will contribute

For *multi-jurisdictional and national projects*:

- confirmation in writing from the Lead Agencies in relevant states and territories that they have no objections in principle to the project being implemented in their jurisdictions

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Note: NEMA has provided templates for these letters through Lead Agencies that can be used for this purpose.

## Attachments (Page 33)

- Failure to provide this information will result in a Project Proposal being ruled ineligible.
- Applicants may provide up to eight additional (optional) attachments per project in support of their Project Proposal (e.g. evidence that supports historical co-contributions and claims made against the assessment criteria).
- Where optional attachments are provided, Applicants must reference these in their responses to the assessment criteria and identify the document name or attachment number.
- For all supporting documents (both mandatory and optional), the amount of detail provided should be commensurate with the project size, complexity and grant amount requested
- Individual file sizes cannot be greater than 50MB.

The amount of detail commensurate to project size and scope - Greater detail would be expected in the business case and budget for a \$5 million project compared with a \$250,000 project.

## Key Considerations

### Application:

- Read the Guidelines and supporting “How to Guide” and FAQs.
- Ensure the application addresses the criteria emphasising the priority areas if applicable
- Ensure the application is submitted with all the mandatory documents
- Must not be ‘business as usual’ (BAU) as defined in the Glossary to the Guidelines (Refer Appendix C – page 70)
- Adhere to word counts
- Submit on time

### Budgets include:

- Contingency and escalation costs
- Budget is based on a start in Q3-Q4 2026/27.
- Is fully costed and verified
- Priority will be given to projects with confirmed co-contributions

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Read the Guidelines carefully for eligible natural hazards and eligible activities. Have participated in or viewed the on-line presentation

Projects that meet the priority areas will be given a higher ranking.

Focus remains on infrastructure – eligible categories include grey infrastructure, green-blue infrastructure, social infrastructure and natural hazard monitoring infrastructure.

Planning for future infrastructure, including feasibility studies, business case development and design, will remain eligible in the ‘other’ projects funding stream.

Ensure all mandatory documents have been included in the application. An application **will not proceed** past the triage stage if all the mandatory documents have not been included.

Ensure budgets contain adequate contingencies/escalation as well as consider the project start being Q3-34 26/27 financial year.

## Key Considerations

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their Project Proposal is complete and accurate. Knowingly giving false or misleading information can be a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995/26](#). NEMA will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude an Application from further consideration.

If Applicants find an error in their Project Proposal after submitting it to a Lead Agency, they should contact the relevant Lead Agency immediately.

NEMA is responsible for the final assessment and approval of the projects.

To ensure fairness and equity, QRA cannot support individual applicants and will not provide advice on specific projects.

QRA will assist with questions relating to the application process and timing.

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- Remember: DRF is extremely competitive, we received almost 200 applications for Round 3, only 62 were sent to NEMA and only 18 were ultimately funded
- Incomplete applications will not progress to the assessment stage
- Applications that do not align with Guidelines will not progress to the assessment stage.
- QRA does not have to accept any additional information, or requests to correct/amend Project Proposals after the closing time.
- Applications not in alignment with the Guidelines will not progress to the assessment stage
- Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by the following: reasonably unforeseeable; beyond the applicant's control; and unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.
- **Very important to have attended or viewed this presentation and read the**

**guidelines prior to applying.**

## Key Considerations

### Commencement of Successful Projects (Page 44)

- Project activities funded by the Commonwealth cannot formally commence until NEMA has endorsed the relevant Implementation Plan in writing.
- The commencement of other project activities (i.e. parts of a project funded from other sources) is at the discretion of Lead Agencies, noting that applicants do so at their own cost and risk (see section 10.1).
- The Australian Government is not responsible or liable for any activities undertaken before an Implementation Plan covering the project is endorsed.
- The Commonwealth Minister may withdraw an offer of funding if project activities for which Commonwealth funding was sought/awarded are commenced or completed before Schedules are co-signed or the relevant Implementation Plan is endorsed.

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## Resources

### NEMA

- <https://www.nema.gov.au/our-work/key-programs/disaster-ready-fund>

### QRA

- <https://www.qra.qld.gov.au/funding-programs/resilience-funding-programs/disaster-ready-fund/disaster-ready-fund-round-four-2026-27>

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## Q&A



*Image: Bradley's Gully Diversion Channel 2 April 2025, Murweh*



[www.qra.qld.gov.au](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au)