



QUEENSLAND RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Resilient Homes Fund – Property Level Flood Information Portals

Guideline



Australian Government



Queensland
Government

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PART A – OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Overview

This guideline supports eligible Queensland Councils to apply for funding as part of the Property Level Flood Information Portals program, an initiative of the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund (RHF) which is jointly funded (50:50) by the Queensland and Australian governments under Category D of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) is the administering agency for this project.

Background

In response to the significant flooding which occurred in the 2021-2022 disaster season, the State and Federal Governments approved the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund (RHF) to support resilience measures in Queensland homes across 39 impacted local government areas. The RHF package includes five interconnected initiatives:

1. Industry and community education program
2. Resilient household rebuild program
3. House raising program
4. Voluntary house buy back program
5. Property level flood information portals

A total of \$9.8 million has been allocated for the development of local government portals under the property level flood information portals initiative. Of this allocation, \$2 million will be made available through a grant process for the purpose of enhancing existing local government portals or developing new solutions required to support council's existing systems.

An understanding of flood risk is critical to being flood resilient. The property level flood information portals initiative will support the development of local government property level flood information portals, to assist impacted residents to understand, be better informed and better prepared for flood related disasters by having access to up-to-date flood risk information. The initiative will also ensure the broader benefits of flood studies and risk assessments are realised, through dissemination to public, private, and government stakeholders, including support to flood emergency responses.

Eligible applicants

Funding is available to local government councils activated under the following events:

- Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, 10 November – 3 December 2021
- Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth, 29 December 2021 – 10 January 2022
- South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, 22 February – 5 April 2022
- Southern Queensland Flooding, 6 May – 20 May 2022

For a copy of activations, please refer to QRA's activations website:

<https://www.qra.qld.gov.au/disaster-funding-activations/activations>

Benefits of the program

The property level flood information portals will support the community to become more sustainable and resilient by:

- Better understanding their flood risk

- Implementing practical solutions, where appropriate, to increase their resilience to future flooding events
- Accelerating community recovery following the 2021-22 disaster event/s
- Reducing costs for the community and all levels of government following future flood events.

Every homeowner/resident will have access to flood information as it relates specifically to their property/place of residence for the purpose of understanding their flood risk and preparing for future events.

Scope of the program

This initiative creates the functionality for councils to host, populate and publish property-level flood information which will enable any member of the public within their local government area to enter their address and obtain property-scale flood information such as floor level relative to forecast flood gauge levels.

Any work required by local governments to create the data which is displayed in the portal is not eligible under this program.

Project standards

Any activities and subsequent deliverables carried out under this initiative are required to align with the program's objective of raising community awareness and should align where possible with QRA-led solution for consistency across the state. They are also required to be compatible with the QRA solution from a data sharing perspective.

Where possible, the elements requiring alignment will be advised prior to applications being made and may also be negotiated prior to approval to ensure program eligibility requirements are met.

Eligible projects/activities

The following activities are considered eligible activities in accordance with the Resilient Homes Fund Joint (Commonwealth and Queensland governments) Guidelines for the development of new, and enhancement of existing, local government portals.

- Scoping of requirements.
- Solution design and development.
- Licensing, implementation, and integration.

New portal systems will only be considered eligible where they are required to support and/or integrate with existing council systems (and where the QRA led solution will not do this).

Eligible costs

Eligible costs must be directly associated with the delivery of approved eligible projects/activities.

All projects/activities and expenditure lodged must comply with the applicant's financial, purchasing and travel policies and Queensland Government procurement guidelines. The below list identifies some of the common examples and is not intended to be prescriptive, comprehensive, or exhaustive. Examples of eligible costs include:

- a. contractor costs to undertake specialist services related to delivery of the project
- b. purchase of consumables used in undertaking the eligible activities
- c. purchase of materials used for completing eligible activities

- d. local government day labour costs to staff to deliver eligible activities
- e. extraordinary wages such as overtime and allowances, and costs associated with travel expenses, allowances and accommodation to undertake eligible activities
- f. project management costs proportionate with the funding amount sought including remuneration of temporary technical, professional and/or administrative staff for time directly related to scoping and managing delivery of the activities (excludes executive and overhead charges).

Ineligible projects/activities

Projects must meet the program objectives. Examples of ineligible projects include:

- a. the acquisition or preparation of flood studies, cadastral, ground or floor level survey and other input data necessary to support the portal's functionality (not to be confused with the preparation of raw flood model outputs into a useable and publishable format)
- b. peer review and calibration of flood model outputs
- c. community awareness and education of the portal (not to be confused with any content and messaging that forms part of the delivery product).
- d. ongoing operation and maintenance of the portal solution (e.g., annual software subscription, software support, etc.)

Ineligible costs

The below list identifies some of the more common examples of ineligible costs and is not intended to be prescriptive, exhaustive, or comprehensive. Examples of ineligible costs include:

- a. non-specific indirect and overhead costs
- b. legal costs
- c. costs that are reimbursable under other funding sources
- d. costs of works/activities completed prior to the eligible event.

Should an applicant have any specific inquire relating to whether a specific expense can be accommodated under the program, please contact QRA via email to floodteam@gra.qld.gov.au for clarification.

PART B – APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process will consist of the following:

1. Applications invited
2. Councils submit their application form detailing the project they wish to put forward for funding consideration, including a breakdown of activities required to deliver the proposed project and the funding amount requested.
3. QRA undertake a compliance assessment of the proposed project against the guidelines to ensure all activities and associated deliverables are eligible activities under the guidelines and meet the program objectives.
4. QRA advise councils the outcome of their application.
5. QRA administers grants to councils.

Application Process

Application to the fund will be undertaken by each council using the Application Form available at <https://www.qra.qld.gov.au/resilient-homes-fund>.

Following the close of applications, the QRA will assess the applications for compliance and award funding to the successful councils.

Key dates

A summary of key dates is provided below:

Item	Date
Applications open	14 December 2023
Applications close	31 March 2024
Applicants notified of funding approval no later than	30 May 2024
Project delivery deadline	30 June 2026

PART C GOVERNANCE

The following governance and administrative arrangements will apply to successful projects.

Funding Agreement

It is a requirement that all recipients of QRA funding enter into a Head Agreement with QRA.

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.

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.

Variations

All variations to a Project Funding Agreement, scope or change in control of a project are to be agreed formally in writing.

Where there are material changes following a project approval, grant recipients must provide QRA with updated project information.

Procurement

The procurement of goods or services must be in accordance with the applicant's procurement policy. When procuring goods or services, local governments must align with the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Regulation 2012 and their own procurement policy.

If expenditure is in breach of the applicant's procurement standards, reimbursement of these costs is unable to be sought under this program.

Record keeping

All state agencies and local councils must keep an accurate audit trail. DRFA records must be available for seven years from the end of the financial year the claim is acquitted by the Australian Government.

For assurance purposes, the Australian Government may at any time, via QRA, request documentation from state agencies or local councils 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.

Progress reporting and payment claims

Progress reporting is mandatory throughout project delivery, to ensure applicants update QRA on status of scope/activity, dates and expenditure.

Approved applicants are required to create and lodge monthly progress reports through the Management and Reporting System (MARS) Portal, detailing:

- a. actual expenditure reported against the approved scope/activities and capped amount (recommended value)

- b. percentage of works completed
- c. project milestones, start and finish dates
- d. any variances in scope, cost or time
- e. details of complementary works.

An executed Project Funding Schedule is required before the initial 30 per cent advance is paid to successful applicants. Once actual expenditure has exceeded the initial 30 per cent 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). The remaining 10 per cent of the final actual costs will be paid upon project acquittal.

Claims for expenditure must be lodged with a progress report, a detailed general ledger or transaction report in editable format (or similar financial document produced from the applicant's financial system) demonstrating the actual expenditure incurred against the Recommended Value of the approved activities/works.

Extension of time

An extension of time beyond the detailed eligible timeframes may be requested in exceptional circumstances.

Applicants are required to contact QRA via email to floodteam@gra.qld.gov.au as early as possible, detailing the unforeseen circumstances impacting project completion, the actions taken to minimise the impact, and the adjusted project plan and milestones.

Project acquittal report

The final project acquittal report, and associated documentation, must be received by QRA within three months of the completion of the project. For example, if a project is completed on 20 June 2024, the final project acquittal report is due by 20 September 2024. If a project is completed on 31 December 2024, the final project acquittal report is due by 31 March 2025.

Project acquittal reports must include:

- a. a final progress report detailing the completed approved works activities against the approved project works activities
- b. final actual costs reported against the approved capped amounts
- c. detailed general ledger evidencing the final actual claimed expenditure and submitted total project costs (including details of contribution) delivery against project milestones
- d. a Final Project Report and evidence demonstrating the completed works/activities, for example photo evidence representative of the extent of the completed works (JPG including EXIF metadata, GPS coordinates and time/date taken) and relevant reports. details of complementary works
- e. Supporting documents to be made available for sampling by QRA if requested.

Acquittals must be certified by the applicant in line with its delegations on lodgement.

QRA will undertake a final assessment of each project to ensure approved scope is delivered within timeframe, expenditure is eligible and assurance requirements are satisfied.

Assurance activities

Applicants may be required to provide documentation to support any assurance activities. These assurance activities may include, but are not limited to:

- a. audit, site visits or inspections
- b. obtaining relevant documentary evidence to support estimated/actual costs and/or value for money assessments
- c. verification reviews on measures or projects
- d. compliance with legislative and policy requirements.

Certification

All project documentation, including applications, progress reports and final reports, must be certified by the applicant in line with its delegations.

Good and Services Tax (GST)

Where the end-recipient of the grant is registered for GST, the claimed value must exclude GST and be actual expenditure, paid prior to lodging the submission. Where the end-recipient of the grant is not registered for GST, the claimed value may include GST.

Insurance

Applicants must claim on any applicable insurance policy prior to seeking reimbursement under the DRFA. Where insurance funded restoration works are undertaken concurrently with eligible DRFA scope, the applicant must be able to differentiate between the insurance funded and DRFA funded scope.

Public acknowledgment of joint Australian Government and State Government assistance

Eligible applicants must acknowledge DRFA funding contribution in public materials, which includes but is not limited to:

- a. Media releases regarding the approved project
- b. Acknowledgement or statements in project publications and materials
- c. Events that use or include reference to the approved project

To comply with this requirement, all public advice and media releases should refer to the relevant funding source, as being *“jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements”*.

Operational messaging and advice, such as road closures and tender advertisements, are excluded from this requirement.

Contact QRA for assistance and approval for any releases at media@qra.qld.gov.au or telephone (07) 3008 7200.