



**AgriFood Skills Australia / Rural Training Council of Australia
Rural and Related Industry Sectors Training Fund
Call for Expressions of Interest**

Objective

AgriFood Skills Australia is seeking Expressions of Interest for funding under the AgriFood Skills Australia / Rural Training Council of Australia Rural and Related Industry Sectors Training Fund. The Fund was established to provide funding assistance for rural and related industry sectors to implement innovative vocational education and training solutions. The objective of the Fund is to support targeted project activities that will improve workforce skills development, combat skills shortages and address the need for higher level technical skills within the industry.

The Fund seeks to foster more sustainable and efficient practices that will allow rural and related industry sectors to remain competitive in national and international markets. Project proposals should look to assist individual rural, agricultural and related sector workers, enterprises and organisations to further integrate technology and skills development strategies.

The rural and related areas covered by the fund include rural production (crops and livestock), agriculture, amenity horticulture, conservation and land management, and animal care and management.

The Fund will assist successful applicants to develop and implement vocational education and training solutions that help individuals, agricultural enterprises and industry bodies build and acquire higher level technical skills through innovative delivery processes. This may include mentoring and facilitation, stakeholder participation in course or program design, and collaborative partnerships between rural and related industry sectors and vocational education and training system stakeholders.

Selection Criteria

Preference will be given to organisations and projects that:

- have the ability to influence and expand the development of sustainable vocational education training solutions to equip new entrants and existing rural and related industry workers with higher technical skills;
- are national in focus or would have national application;
- are innovative and/or offer widely applicable models;
- deliver clear benefits to agricultural and related industry sectors; and
- involve collaboration and partnership arrangements with key stakeholders in agricultural and related industry sectors including the National Farmers Federation, member bodies, Commodity Councils and related industry groups.

Applications must identify the personnel that will undertake the project. The specified personnel must:

- have the capacity, knowledge and skills, including previous experience and expertise, to deliver the stated outcomes;
- have demonstrated knowledge of the needs of the project area; and

- be in a sound position to influence the rural and related industry sector/s to which the project relates.

Total project funding is limited (\$600,000 total), and the funding process is expected to be highly competitive. Ideally, AgriFood is seeking Expressions of Interest for projects to the value of approximately \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Eligibility Criteria

Project Requirements

Projects must:

- be conducted and administered in Australia;
- be complete within a period of 12 - 15 months;
- not duplicate any existing agricultural vocational education and training projects; and
- include provision for independent audit and acquittal.

Applicant Requirements

Eligible groups include:

- 'not for profit' rural, agricultural and related industry sector associations;
- recognised industry advisory bodies; and
- rural and related industry advocacy groups and organisations.

Commercial enterprises, schools, TAFE / private training organisations and tertiary institutions are **not eligible** to apply.

Funding will not be provided to:

- undertake academic research projects;
- support continuing administration/operational costs of an organisation;
- a devolved funding program, where the applicant intends to distribute funds to other parties;
- purchase, lease or acquisition of buildings, equipment, land or vehicles;
- ongoing maintenance of projects to which organisations have committed or already secured funding support; or
- administrative costs incurred when applying for funding assistance.

Fund Management

AgriFood Skills Australia's Board will select Expressions of Interest based on the recommendations of a specialist panel established and administered for the purpose.

Applicants whose Expressions of Interest are successful will be required to submit a detailed formal project plan before final funding approval. Successful projects must report against timelines and key performance indicators on a regular basis.

Applications & Further Information

For further information, please contact Robert Wilson at AgriFood Skills Australia on (02) 6163 7200 or by email at robert.wilson@agrifoodskills.net.au.

Applications close on 5 March 2010.

Applications should be forwarded to:

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Or by email to:

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Arthur Blewitt
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