

Overview

Phase Two of the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF) will support community recovery by funding \$25 million worth of projects that will promote community well-being, social and broader recovery and future disaster resilience following the bushfires. Stream 1 involves allocation of funds to local councils for smaller-scale, short term community projects. Stream 2 will involve allocation of grants to medium and long-term community projects. This guideline covers BCRRF Phase Two Stream 2.

The funding for the BCRRF is provided through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. The BCRRF guidelines have been developed in consultation with Emergency Management Australia and are supported by the National Bushfire Recovery Agency. Funding will be made available to support community recovery of areas in New South Wales impacted by the unprecedented bushfires from 31 August 2019 onwards. Resilience NSW are the lead disaster management agency for NSW, responsible for all aspects of disaster recovery and building community resilience to future disasters.

Objective

The objective of Phase Two Stream 2 of the BCRRF is to support social recovery from bushfires for affected local communities to:

- reduce the adverse impact of the bushfires and make a sustained recovery, and
- be more resilient to future disasters and improve general wellbeing.

Funding

Phase Two Stream 2 will allocate funding aligned with the bushfire declared Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the form of a competitive grants program. Funding is available for approved projects with a value of no less than \$20,000 and no more than \$300,000. Funding will be administered by Resilience NSW.

Funding will be provided for the value of the project as per the submission. Funding may be provided in instalment(s) depending on the proposed project size and delivery duration stipulated in the application.

Applications will be assessed at a regional level using Regional Panels (RPs); Southern RP, Northern RP and Greater Sydney, Hunter & Central RP. The remit of each RP is to assess BCRRF Phase 2 Stream 2 proposals specific to the declared LGAs in the table below.

Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund

PHASE TWO STREAM 2

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Australian Government

Regional Panel	LGA Remit
Northern	Armidale, Ballina, Bellingen, Byron, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Glen Innes Severn, Gwydir, Inverell, Kempsey, Kyogle, Lismore, MidCoast, Nambucca, Narrabri, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Richmond Valley, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Tweed, Uralla, Walcha.
Greater Sydney, Hunter & Central	Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Cessnock, Dungog, Hawkesbury, Kuring-gai, Lake Macquarie, Lithgow, Mid-Western, Muswellbrook, Oberon, Penrith, Singleton, Sutherland, Upper Hunter, Wollondilly.
Southern	Bega, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Eurobodalla, Goulburn Mulwaree, Greater Hume, Queanbeyan-Palerang, Shoalhaven, Snowy Monaro, Snowy Valleys, Upper Lachlan, Wagga Wagga, Wingecarribee.

Eligibility

Applicants

Eligible applicants, referred to as lead organisations, are:

- incorporated non-government organisations including not-for-profit organisations, local community groups, business chambers and industry groups/peak bodies,
- local councils,
- joint organisations of council, and
- unincorporated community groups auspiced by an organisation that is eligible to apply in their own right

Auspice is defined as an incorporated organisation who receives, administers and acquits Resilience NSW' funding on behalf of an applicant. The auspice is required to:

- enter into a funding agreement with Resilience NSW
- accept grant funds and pay the auspiced grant applicant
- monitor and acquit the use of funds at the completion of the project.

Ideally the auspice will have the technical skills to guide and support the applicant in the delivery of the project, while acknowledging project decisions remain with applicant

Eligible lead organisations must be located within, operate within or intend to deliver the project to a NSW declared LGA(s) relating to bushfires from 31 August 2019 onwards.

Each project should have a clearly identified lead organisation that has:

- the capacity and capabilities to establish, manage and be held accountable for the delivery of the project and intended outcomes,
- the ability to report on the progress and agreed outcomes of the project,
- the ability to enter a legally binding funding agreement with the NSW Government

Lead organisations are encouraged to be formed through partnerships of one or more different types of eligible applicants listed above. Partnerships are encouraged for the purpose maximising the

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reach and efficacy of a proposed project. In this instance the lead organisation will be recognised as the partnering entity.

Projects

Phase Two Stream 2 funding is focused on delivering projects that support sustained community recovery and improved community resilience in bushfire impacted areas. Projects can be aligned to local, regional or across multiple Local Government Areas. Projects will need to contribute to one or more of the following Disaster Recovery Outcomes:

- The needs of vulnerable groups are addressed in disaster recovery
- The community is aware of the disaster recovery processes
- The community can express its changing disaster recovery needs
- Community members are aware of the risks of future disasters
- The community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters
- Business and not-for-profits have in place adequate mitigation practices for risks and threats
- Government, private sector, civil society and organisations are engaged in plans for preparedness and management of the recovery

Example projects

Projects eligible for funding could include but are not limited to:

- Regional social events and digital communication initiatives that support social recovery, commemoration and improve community connectedness;
- Programs and initiatives that support community recovery and well-being including support for connectedness, improved identity of place, cultural heritage and environmental restoration;
- Community education programs to improve regional knowledge and resilience in response and preparedness to future natural disasters and how to be better prepared for hazards into the future;
- Local and Regional community strengthening activities that focus specifically on capacity building, and knowledge building and sharing.

Activities that are not eligible for funding

- Applications that seek support for supplementing, increasing or continuing ongoing service delivery that is the core business of the lead organisation;
- Activities that have already occurred or are part-completed at the time of the application.
- Duplication of the same or similar project applications by the same lead organisation between BCRRF Stream 1, BCRRF Stream 2 and other similar government funding programs;
- Applications that request ongoing program funding;
- Applications for projects and/or activities that are not related to the community recovery attributed to the bushfire event;
- Applications that request covering existing debts or budget deficits;
- Works that involve building new assets or infrastructure capital works.

Submission and Assessment Process



1. Submission of projects proposals

A nominated representative(s) from the applying lead organisation will submit the project proposal online through the Resilience NSW [Online Grants Portal](#). All applications need to be completed in full and submitted prior to the closing date. The required information will include:

- Details of the project,
- The LGA(s) the project is being delivered within/ for,
- Needs justification,
- Geographical reach,
- Social benefits and community engagement,
- Key milestones,
- Risks and evaluation,
- Planned outcomes, and
- The value of the project and associated costs

The closing date for submissions for BCRRF Stream 2 has already been extended on two occasions. In this regard, no further requests for extensions beyond 11 December 2020 will be considered. .

2. Assessment of projects applications

Applications will be assessed only once the application period has closed. Applications will be checked for alignment with eligibility criteria and only eligible applicants will then be assessed by the Regional Panels. Each application will be delegated to the respective Regional Panel based on the LGA remit listed in the above table. The Regional Panel will assess each proposal and short-list priority proposals. Where a proposed project covers more than one region a joint Regional Assessment Panel will be convened. The Regional Panels may comprise of representatives from:

- Resilience NSW,
- Regional NSW,
- the Bushfire Regional Recovery Committee or sub-committees for the respective bushfire recovery region or equivalent

The following factors will be taken into consideration when determining priority projects:

- identified need and level of community support for the delivery of the project,
- the geographical reach of the project within the affected bushfire region as well as the engagement reach within those communities

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- how the project supports the local area's and/or region's social, community and broader recovery,
- how the project will improve the community resilience to future natural disasters,
- the project meets a local recovery need not covered by existing programs,
- whether the project aligns with existing government commitments and priorities,
- how the project result in ongoing and sustainable benefit to the community,
- Alignment to one or more of the Disaster Recovery Outcomes,
- The value for money that the project provides,
- The consideration of evaluation in the project's design and delivery

4. Approval of projects proposal

Each bushfire Regional Panel will inform Resilience NSW of the short-listed proposals that are supported for approval by Resilience NSW. Additional information will be requested of applicants if required. These supported proposals will be reviewed by Resilience NSW to ensure:

- Required documentation is complete,
- The lead organisation meets the eligibility criteria,
- Project(s) align with the program objectives and selection considerations,
- The proposal does not contain ineligible costs, and
- The proposal does not contain any sensitive or contentious activities.

Successful proposals must be approved for funding by Resilience NSW before project contracting and delivery. Applicants will be informed of the status of their application as soon as possible after approval. Applicants will be informed in writing on whether the application has been successful or unsuccessful.

Project Contracting and Delivery Process

Before a funding agreement (contract) is signed, Resilience NSW may request further details be provided by the lead organisation including further detail on the budget or project plan. The funding agreement is based on the information contained in the application and any additional information provided. Applicants will be expected to have an appropriate level of insurance cover the details of which will be determined in the funding agreement



1. Project contracting

Successful lead organisations will be notified in writing via email and/ or letter. Applicants may be requested to keep the grant confidential if an announcement will be made by the NSW Government or the Australian Government.

The nominated representative(s) from the successful lead organisation will need to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with the Resilience NSW to receive funding.

Funding may be provided in instalments over the project delivery duration, depending on the project value, size and delivery duration; as determined in the funding agreement. Any unspent monies must be returned to Resilience NSW.

Delivery milestone reporting will be negotiated between Resilience NSW and the lead organisation/ nominated representative(s), dependent on the risk profile, size and type of project activities to be delivered.

2. Project delivery

Lead organisations and the nominated representative(s) will be responsible for delivering their project(s) in accordance with the funding agreement, including evidence of expenditure, completion of milestone activities and any outcomes via Resilience NSW [Online Grants Portal](#). Resilience NSW will monitor the progress of each activity for compliance against the funding agreement.

3. Outcomes reporting

Lead organisations and the nominated representative(s) will be responsible for reporting on the project progressively through milestone reporting periods established in the funding agreement. Quarterly reporting will be required as a minimum for all lead organisations. More regular reporting may be required dependent on the risk profile, size and type of project activities to be delivered. Similarly, a completion report will be required by all lead organisations within two months after the completion of the project. This can include collecting information on how the completed activities have met the Disaster Recovery Outcomes of the BCRRF. Lead organisations must provide proper financial reports and operational records and registers. Failure to do so may affect an organisation's eligibility for continued funding through the BCRRF Program.

Timeframes

Activity	Dates
Submissions of projects	29 September 2020 to midday 11 December 2020.
Project review and Approval	Assessment and approval expected late January/February 2021.
Contracting of lead organisations	As approved. Final contracts expected to be completed February 2021.
Project delivery	Commence once contracted. Projects and expenditure completed by 30 June 2023. Extensions may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Extensions cannot be granted without prior approval from Resilience NSW and the Australian Government.
Reporting	Minimum quarterly reporting is required by all lead organisations. More regular reporting may be required based on the risk profile, size and delivery duration of the project. Completion reports due two months after project completion. Additional reporting on outcomes may be required up to 12 months from completion.

Contact

For further information and technical queries relating to the application form and Enquire please contact the Resilience NSW via email at bcrf@resilience.nsw.gov.au.

Public Acknowledgment

Under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, all projects under the BCRRF must appropriately acknowledge and recognise that it is jointly funded under the Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

Lead organisations must acknowledge the funding contributions of the Australian Government and New South Wales Governments at any public events, in announcements, or any other promotional material or publicity relating to the projects funded the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Funding Program. Should any materials differ from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement requirements the lead organisation must seek prior approval from the Australian Government.

These publications must also include both the Australian Government and State Government logos and the following disclaimer: 'Although funding for this product has been provided by both the Australian and New South Wales Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either Government'.

Governance

Record keeping

For expenditure under the BCRRF, lead organisations must keep an accurate audit trail for seven (7) years from the end of the financial year in which the expenditure is claimed, or until such time as

the claim is acquitted by the Australian Government. This will require transaction listing of eligible expenditure that reconcile to the claimed amount and support each transaction.

For assurance purposes, the Australian Government may at any time, through the Resilience NSW request documentation request from lead organisations to evidence the state's compliance under the Disaster Recovery Funding Agreements.

Assurance activities

The Australian Government or NSW Government may at any time undertake assurance activities to reconcile audited state claims either directly or via an independent advisor. Eligible lead organisations may be required to provide documentation to support assurance activities.

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