

A graphic illustration of a blue ocean with stylized white waves and several blue fish swimming. The fish are simple line-art representations with visible scales and fins. The background is a gradient of blue, darker at the bottom.

# Queensland Indigenous Fishing & Forestry Grants guideline

FIS/2023/6596

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**Please note:** When implementing this policy you must consider whether any human rights are engaged under the *Human Rights Act 2019* and whether any limitations on human rights are reasonable and justifiable. If you engage a human right you should conduct a proportionality assessment under the Act. Additionally, this policy has been reviewed on 20/11/2023 to ensure actions and decisions under this policy can be made in a way that is compatible with human rights.

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# 1 About the grants program

## Purpose

In June 2017, the Queensland Government released the *Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy: 2017–2027*, outlining its vision for the sustainable management of Queensland's fisheries resources. The strategy resulted in the development of a commercial fishing policy for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support economic development in a way that is consistent with sustainable fishing.

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to express a desire to have more economic opportunities around fishing and forestry, particularly in their own sea and land country.

There are two separate grant programs available from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF):

- a. Cape York Economic Pathways Grant - \$200,000. This Cape York grant program will be used to seed fisheries and forestry pathways for Indigenous economic development in this region; and
- b. Queensland Indigenous Business Grant - \$100,000. This grant stream is solely for fishery business purposes and apply Queensland wide. This business grant is intended to help Indigenous business expansion for increased market opportunity and jobs. This grant must have some financial co-contribution to be eligible.

For the Cape York Economic Pathways Grant program, the objectives are to:

- identify new Indigenous economic pathways, such as through charter fisheries, tourism and forestry operations, while ensuring sustainable fisheries and forestry operations are maintained in Cape York
- address key market failures in economic pathways in the Cape York region, with a view to boosting job creation and sustainable, self-determined industry growth
- support Cape York seafood and forestry exporters and their supply chain partners wanting to increase business resilience by diversifying into new markets
- enhance fishing and forestry businesses' understanding of new markets to achieve sustainable long-term growth; and
- contribute to Cape York economic growth through increased domestic and international exports of fisheries and forestry product and service marketing.

For the Queensland wide Indigenous business grant, the objective is:

- to assist Indigenous businesses to purchase assets to scale up seafood production and processing for increased market opportunity and jobs.

**Cape York Economic Pathways Grant funding limit:** \$200,000 funding is available for a 12-month period for the Cape York region.

**Indigenous Business Grant funding limit:** \$100,000 funding is available for a 12-month period Queensland wide.

**Outcome announcement:** It is anticipated successful applicants will be announced March/April.

**Grant delivery:** Grant projects must be delivered and acquitted within a 12-month period following approval. This is a requirement of successful applicants.

## 2 Background

The Queensland commercial fishing industry contributed \$397.3M in gross regional product to Queensland during the 2020/21 financial year and provided almost 3484 full time equivalent, direct and flow-on jobs. The Cape York region alone contributed to \$54M of this total, encompassing 221 full time equivalent jobs (based on data from *Summary economic and social indicators for Queensland's commercial fisheries in 2020/21*).

The charter fishing industry had an estimated 89,037 client days in 2020/21, and is estimated to have contributed \$30.9M in economic contribution state wide. The north west region (including Cape York) had an estimated 13,951 client days with an economic contribution worth \$7.6M (based on data from *Economic and social indicators for the Queensland charter fishery in 2020/21*).

The Queensland forest and timber industry has an annual turnover of around \$4 billion and includes the growing, processing, timber product manufacturing, and pulp and paper sectors (ABARES, Forest and Wood Products statistics). The sector directly employs around 12,000 people (based on ABS Labour Force statistics).

Both grant programs aim to support projects that will work to increase First Nation peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation in the commercial and charter fishing industry, seafood supply chain as well as the Queensland forest and timber industry. These grants will support these communities to have more economic opportunities around fishing and forestry, particularly in their own sea and land country and will contribute to Queensland's gross regional product and increase supply of fresh, local and sustainable seafood and timber. Currently, Indigenous commercial fishing and forestry constitutes a small percentage of overall activity. These grant programs seek to close this gap.

## **2.1 Cape York Economic Pathways Grant**

The Queensland Government will provide up to \$200,000 worth of grant funding, through a competitive expression-of-interest process, to support projects and programs that encourages or promotes economic pathways and involvement of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples within fishing, charter fishing tourism and forestry related industries within the Cape York region.

## **2.2 Queensland Indigenous Business Grant**

The Queensland Government will also provide up to \$100,000 worth of grant funding, through a competitive expression-of-interest process across Queensland. The \$100,000 provided is intended to be split amongst the top five (5) merit listed projects (\$20,000 per successful applicant). This grant will be used to support projects and programs for Indigenous businesses to purchase assets to scale up seafood production and processing for increased market opportunity and jobs that involves Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

# **3 Criteria and requirements**

## **Applicant eligibility**

The Cape York Economic Pathways Grant is open to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in the Cape York region. It is open to individuals, licensed commercial fishers, charter fishers, landowners, industry groups, peak bodies, councils, statutory bodies, incorporated bodies and associations.

The applicant must provide proof that they are an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander person. For example, a certificate of Aboriginality, or a statement from an Aboriginal land council or community organisation that the person:

- is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identifies as an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander; and
- is accepted as an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they live.

The Queensland Indigenous Business Grant is open to Indigenous businesses in Queensland. A co-contribution by the applicant is required.

\*Please note that entities applying on behalf of Indigenous peoples or individuals, must be constituted in a manner that is reflective of majority Indigenous owned with evidence to that effect\*.

Before applying for a grant, applicants should consider whether their project:

- has the appropriate experience within the project team to complete the project
- has endorsement by a business consultant where a consultant has been used to develop a business plan to support the application
- is technically sound and utilises best practice
- will provide public benefit to the Cape York region and/or Queensland wide (depending on the grant); and
- has support from Traditional Owners and elders.

## Funding requirements

Organisations that are registered for GST must quote GST exclusive prices in their project costings, as they are able to recoup the GST paid. Organisations that are not registered for GST will pay GST on goods and services without recouping this GST, and so should quote GST inclusive prices in their costings.

## 4 Scope of funding

Applications must demonstrate that the proposed project or activity meets at least one of the following criteria.

Criterion	Project examples
A. Economic growth	Contributing to regional economic growth and jobs through increasing domestic and international exports of fishery and forestry products and service marketing . Opening up new markets and improving access to existing markets. Increasing stability and viability of existing and new supply chains.
B. Responsible and sustainable fishing and forestry practices and education	<p>Promoting responsible fishing practices, developing and implementing codes of practice (CoP) with the inclusion of Traditional Owners and communities, developing and implementing best management practices within Indigenous commercial fishing, seafood supply chain and developing training programs or videos for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to get involved in commercial fishing, seafood supply chain.</p> <p>Promoting, developing and implementing responsible forestry practices with the inclusion of Traditional Owners and communities. Implementing sustainable plantation and native forestry management practices with Indigenous foresters and industry supply chain members. Developing programs to educate and uplift training and skills in forestry practices.</p>
C. Promotional campaigns	Promoting Indigenous fishing, seafood supply chain and forestry businesses, promoting inclusion of these businesses in Queensland's sustainable seafood and timber industry, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island commercial fisher mental wellbeing
D. First Nations Investment Principles	Application contributes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Closing the gap targets or social determinants of Indigenous health</li><li>ii. Preserves, protects and promotes Indigenous cultural intellectual property; and</li><li>ii. Intergenerational, rural or remote economic development</li></ul>

Further criteria might also include:

- Indigenous business ownership and sound governance model
- business plans supporting the application developed by a business consultant and application endorsed by the consultant
- innovative or novel idea or concept ready for investment and/or business expansion
- ability to leverage existing funding or linkages to concurrent funding programs

- benefits to the local community in terms of capacity and capability building (e.g. training, knowledge transfer) or other economic benefits (e.g. investment, employment)
- ability to show results within reasonable timeframes (e.g. 1 year)
- time taken to become self-sustainable; and
- addressing key market failures in economic pathways, with a view to boosting job creation and sustainable, self-determined industry growth.

\*Please note that applicants applying for the Indigenous Business Grants program must include financial co-contribution to be eligible\*.

## **Out-of-scope projects and activities**

The grant programs are **unable** to fund:

For the Cape York Economic Pathways Grant:

- projects that do not deliver tangible, practical benefits to the sustainability or profitability of Indigenous forestry, commercial or charter fishing businesses
- projects or programs that will not stimulate primary demand, provide benefit to multiple Indigenous forestry participants and commercial fishers across industry
- projects without Indigenous community support
- general operating or travel costs not directly associated with a project or program
- ventures, materials or projects developed for personal Indigenous forestry, commercial or charter fishing businesses that do not provide benefit more broadly to the Indigenous forestry, commercial and/or charter fishing sectors or fisheries
- projects or activities using grant money to fund staff wages or salaries
- projects involving staff from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- projects outside of the Cape York region; and
- projects more than \$40,000

For the Queensland Indigenous Business Grant:

- projects that do not deliver tangible, practical benefits to the sustainability or profitability of Indigenous seafood supply chain businesses
- general operating or travel costs not directly associated with a project or program
- projects or activities using grant money to fund staff wages or salaries
- projects involving staff from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- projects requesting more than \$20,000; and
- Projects that have financial co-contribution of less than 25%

## **5 Assessment criteria**

An assessment panel, appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, will assess applications against the following criteria:

- the extent of benefit the project will provide to Indigenous forestry, commercial or charter fishing, seafood supply chain businesses and industry
- the extent of Indigenous support, demand or need for the project; and
- whether the project is technically sound, is supported by a viable business plan where applicable (the business plan should be developed by a business consultant and project endorsed by the consultant), and the expertise and capability of the applicant/s to deliver the project or activity.

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.

Other factors that may increase your chance of success include:

- For the Cape York Economic Pathways Grant - the total amount of funding requested, with projects requesting \$40,000 or less prioritised, to ensure benefit is maximised across the Cape York region; and
- For the Queensland Indigenous Business Grant – financial co-contribution over 25 per cent of projects requesting \$20,000 or less will be prioritised.

## 6 Assessment process

Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel against these guidelines and assessment criteria to ensure that funding and benefit is delivered appropriately.

The assessment panel will include members from the department and agreed partner government agencies. The assessment panel will declare any conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest exists, the relevant member of the panel will abstain from participating in the assessment of the project application in question.

The assessment panel will make a recommendation to the Deputy Director-General, Fisheries and Forestry, for consideration and endorsement for funding. Following this, the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities will announce the successful applicants and the department will progress payments. The name and project of successful grant recipients will also be published on the departmental website.

## 7 Other requirements and considerations

The applicant/project should:

- address and meet the eligibility criteria; and
- consider the assessment criteria and provide evidence of a clear benefit to Indigenous forestry, commercial fishing, seafood supply chain or charter fishing industry.

Successful applicants must ensure the outcomes of the project are shared publicly.

## 8 How to apply

An expression-of-interest process will be open for a six week period.

Applications will only be accepted through the online form available at [daf.smartygrants.com.au](https://daf.smartygrants.com.au).

Late submissions will not be accepted.

For assistance completing your application, email [fisheriesgrants@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:fisheriesgrants@daf.qld.gov.au) and an officer will contact you to discuss your application.

## 9 Successful applicants

Successful applicants will enter into an agreement to enable grant funds to be dispersed and projects to commence. All successful applicants will need to work with Fisheries Queensland to:

- enter into a formal Queensland Indigenous Fishing Grant Deed
- submit written reports on completed milestones and submit invoices as a condition of receiving funding under the agreement
- submit a final report on the project within 60 days of completing the project; and
- acknowledge the Queensland Government grant programs in any project publications, signage and online marketing materials.

## 10 Annual report

Fisheries Queensland will prepare an annual report outlining how the Queensland Indigenous grants funding was spent.