



# Land and Primary Industries (LPI) Network

## Collaborative Projects Funding Program Grant Guidelines

### Round 1 - 2023

#### **Purpose**

The **LPI Network Collaborative Projects Funding Program (Program)** has been established to provide an impetus for innovation enabled by collaboration between LPI Network Partner organisations and other, NSW-based industry, government or community organisations. The **Program** supports collaborative activities to advance the development and adoption of technologies, services or practices relevant to the decarbonisation of the land sector and dependent industries, with co-benefits for the environment, people and economy of NSW.

#### **About the Grant**

The **Program** is administered by Western Sydney University (WSU) on behalf of the Land and Primary Industries (LPI) Network, a component network of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub (Hub). Funded by the NSW Environmental Trust and partner universities, the Hub aims to bring together the research sector, industry and government to support the NSW Government's goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, a 50% reduction on 2005 levels by 2030, and a 70% reduction by 2035.

The **Program** is intended to promote the development of innovative, collaborative research activities that advance the translation of technologies, services and practices relevant to the scaled deployment of solutions for decarbonisation of the land sector and dependent industries in NSW.

Up to \$1,000,000 in funding will be allocated to **Grants** through the Call for Proposals 2023.

**Grants** are made available through two funding streams, with the maximum funding amounts specified below:

Stream 1 - Projects up to \$200,000 per project

Stream 2 - Scoping studies \$10,000-\$30,000 per project

The quantum of funding requested is expected to be proportionate to the achievable abatement and co-benefits, with medium-term benefits weighted highest. Stream 2 grants (\$10,000-\$30,000) will be primarily supported for activities with lower, indirect or longer-term prospective translation outcomes.



## Application Timeline

Round 1 Applications open	10 November 2023
Round 1 Applications close	5 PM, 15 December 2023
Eligibility review	December 2023
Application Assessment	February 2024
Notification of outcome	February 2024
Contracting and allocation of funding	March 2024
Project commencement	May-July 2024
Projects must end by	30 June 2026

## Applicant eligibility

Proposals for **Grants** funded through the **Program** must meet all of the following criteria:

- The **Lead applicant organisation** must:
  - be an Australian corporate, registered non-profit or state government entity having an ABN and an operational footprint in NSW, *or* a university that is a Partner of the LPI Network or other Network of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub (see list in Appendix 1).
  - hold and comply with all necessary authorisations that are material to the conduct of the business of the applicant(s).

The lead applicant organisation will administer the grant and lead collaboration on the project.

- **Partnership** for proposed projects must:
  - involve at least one LPI Network Partner Organisation (Appendix 1).

The project may include other Australian and/or international universities but no **Grant** funds can be spent for research activity outside of NSW or by a non-Partner university.

## Project eligibility

- Proposed projects must:
  - involve participation by at least one industry, community or government organisation having an operational footprint in NSW.
- Project activities must:
  - align with one or more of the six Priority Focus Areas identified in the 2023-2026 LPI Network Strategy (Attachment 1).

Topics for activities suitable for funding through the **Grant** will align with one or more of the six Priority Focus Areas identified in the 2023-2026 LPI Network Strategy (Attachment 1). Projects on other topics aligned with the wider scope of the LPI Network as described in the LPI Network Workplan 2023-26 (Attachment 2) may be considered if a strong case for significant long-term potential emissions abatement and co-benefits can be made.



Applications must be developed using the prescribed **application form**, must include required attachments as specified on the form, adhere to formatting and length parameters specified on the application form, and be submitted by the advertised deadline. Required attachments are:

1. Technical project description, max 2 A4 pages.
2. Project budget using the budget spreadsheet provided with the application form.
3. Justification of requested funding, max 1 A4 page.
4. Details of cash or in-kind co-contributions by the participating organisations, where applicable, max 1 A4 page.
5. CV – max 2 pages for lead applicant and each named project participant.
6. Support letters from organisations providing cash or in-kind co-contributions and/or participating in the project (optional for LPI Network Partners – see Appendix 1).

**Assessments will not be undertaken on proposals which do not meet the aforementioned eligibility requirements. Late proposals will not be considered except where the Hub is satisfied that the integrity and competitiveness of the Program has not been compromised.**

### **Eligible activities**

The Grant Funds **can** be used for the following:

- Direct salary costs for staff specifically employed for the proposed project (including part-time work on the proposed project by staff also involved in other tasks).
- Salary on-costs consistent with the applicant organisations' general policies, to a maximum of 26.5%.
- Equipment, software, materials and consumables related specifically to the project.
- Domestic travel costs related specifically to the project.
- Stipends and top-ups for Higher Degree Research students and undergraduate thesis students working on the project.

The **Grant** funds **cannot** be used for the following:

- Indirect and other costs incurred that are not related strictly, explicitly and demonstrably to the delivery of the project.
- Overseas travel expenses.
- Any expense incurred outside NSW.

Industry contributed funds included in proposal budgets as a cash co-contribution **must be**:

- Cash funds, transferrable to the lead applicant organisation for exclusive use on the project. Other funding will be considered in-kind.
- New funding, specific to the project in the proposal (not re-allocation from other grant funding).



## Project duration

### Stream 1 (Projects):

- 12-26 months
- Project end-date must be 30 June 2026 or earlier.

### Stream 2 (scoping studies):

- 12 months

## Assessment Criteria

During the assessment process, the following criteria will be considered by the assessment panel:

1. **Alignment with LPI Network strategy and scope**, particularly one or more of the six Priority Focus Areas (PFA) outlined in the LPI Network Strategy (Attachment 1). Other topics aligned with the overall scope of the LPI Network as defined in the LPI Network Workplan 2023-26 (Attachment 2) may be considered on an equivalent basis, if a particularly strong and credible case for significant decarbonisation and co-benefits is made under Assessment Criterion 4 (below).
2. **Project quality and innovation:** The proposal is unique and novel and does not in substance replicate all or part of an existing project or proposal.
3. **Partnership and collaboration:** The proposal demonstrates genuine and meaningful collaboration between Partner universities and industry, government or community organisations, that adds value to past individual or collaborative efforts of the involved organisations.
4. **Translation opportunity:** The proposal demonstrates a credible pathway to impact through commercialisation, adoption or deployment of a technology, service or other output of the project, yielding quantifiable emissions abatement (including land carbon offsets) and co-benefits. In the assessment of this criterion, a higher score will be assigned for definitive and realistic, direct and low-risk medium term (2030-35) outcomes, relative to uncertain, indirect and longer-term (2050 or later) potential outcomes. All proposals must reflect the mission of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub in supporting the NSW Government's goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, a 50% reduction in emissions relative to a 2005 baseline by 2030, and a 70% reduction by 2035.
5. **Future potential:** The potential of the project to enable further work (including facilitating funding to support such work) beyond the extent of the present project, and building further on its results, with ultimate prospects to achieve translational outcomes consistent with the scope of the LPI Network and the goal of the Hub to accelerate decarbonisation and generate co-benefits for the economy, environment and people of NSW and its regions.
6. **Value for money:** The expected benefits of the project, as informed by Assessment Criteria 1-5, relative to its cost. Assessment of the proposed project against this criterion will be guided by the quantum of co-contribution funding relative to funding sought through the **Grant**, with cash co-contributions weighted higher than in-kind. In-kind and cash co-contributions are strongly encouraged, and contribute to the assessed score under this Criterion, but are not an obligatory requirement for proposal eligibility. In-kind and cash co-



contributions should be specified using the **budget template** which accompanies the prescribed **application form**. A 1-page text document explaining how cash and in-kind co-contributions will support the proposed project should be attached to the proposal, in accordance with the instructions on the application form.

In addition to Criteria 1-6, a Portfolio Criterion will guide the final selection of proposals chosen for funding. Given the availability of proposals of a sufficient quality aligned with each Priority Focus Area, the Selection Panel will seek to assure a reasonable degree of spread across the Priority Focus Areas, even where this means that one or more proposals with a higher overall score is deemed unsuccessful due to insufficient available funding.

Weights and minimum thresholds for each Assessment Criterion differ for the two Funding Streams, as specified in the table below. To be considered for funding, a project proposal must meet the minimum threshold (if any) for *all* Assessment Criteria.

Assessment Criterion	Stream 1 - projects		Stream 2 – scoping studies	
	Weight (%)	Threshold (%)	Weight (%)	Threshold (%)
1	24	8	10	-
2	16	8	10	-
3	10	-	20	-
4	20	10	20	-
5	10	-	20	-
6	20	-	20	-

### Assessment and Selection process

The assessment and selection of proposals for funding will be undertaken by a Selection Panel (**Panel**) constituted by a cross-section of LPI Network Stream Leads, and members of the Hub Advisory Board. The Panel is empowered by the LPI Network Committee to review and assess proposals and recommend funding in accordance with the Assessment Criteria. The Panel will provide its recommendations to the LPI Network Committee Chair (Network Lead), who will make the final decision on which proposals to fund, on behalf of the Network Committee.

The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may seek clarification from any applicant in relation to their application, including seeking further information on the eligibility and assessment criteria, prior to a recommendation for funding being made.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome promptly upon the final funding decision being made. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a summary statement outlining the reason(s) their proposal was not chosen for funding, and any suggestions for improvement for possible resubmission in a future Funding Call arising from the panel deliberations.

### Intellectual Property

The Hub will not hold any rights to Intellectual Property (IP), royalties or financial returns resulting from the project. IP relating to the project will be owned, as negotiated, by the universit(ies) and industry collaborator(s) named in the proposal.



The IP relating to each project will be negotiated on a project-by-project basis at the time of contract negotiation. The Hub encourages discussion of IP expectations between participants as soon as practicable in the project planning process.

Access to background IP necessary to implement project IP will be negotiated between the owner of the project IP and the owner of the background IP on a project-by-project basis. Generally, it is agreed that owners of background IP will provide access to such background IP, subject only to the terms of access negotiated in good faith.

## **Project Contracting and Funding**

### **Commencement and Funding**

Successful applicants who accept the offer of a grant will be required to enter into a formal Project Agreement with Western Sydney University as host of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub Land and Primary Industries Network. The Project Agreement will specify obligations that relate primarily to the recipient's accountability for the grant, including using the grant for eligible activities, the return of unspent grant funds and reporting on the use of the grant for the duration of the term.

Funding will be paid to the lead applicant's organisation in two or three tranches depending on total project value and project duration, with 20% reserved for payment at the completion of project, following submission and approval of a final report and knowledge sharing presentation. The lead applicant organisation is responsible for distributing funds to collaborating partner universities.

Projects are expected to commence by 1 July 2024, or within 3 months of contract execution by both parties. Final date for completion is 30 June 2026, or earlier in the case of projects of shorter duration, as specified at the time of application. Scoping studies should normally be completed within 12 months.

### **Contracts and Reporting**

The LPI Network will support successful applicants over the life of the project through access to expert technical advice, matchmaking with potential participants, development of commercial expertise, and promotion of outputs.

Contracts will specify obligations that relate primarily to the recipient's accountability for the grant, including using the grant for activities occurring in NSW, the return of unspent grant funds and reporting on the use of the grant for the duration of the term.

A presentation of progress to LPI Network members will be required at the 6-month mark.

A final report will be required no later than 2 months after project completion. A final presentation on the project will be required no later than 3 months after project completion.



## Summary of milestones, deliverables and payments

Milestone or deliverable	Timing (latest)	Payment x funding stream
Execution of agreement	Start	50% - stream 1 projects 80% - stream 2 scoping studies
Interim report and presentation	Start plus 6 months	30% - stream 1 projects
Project completion	Start plus applied project length in months (maximum 27 months)	
Final report	Completion plus 2 months	20% - all grants
Final presentation	Completion plus 3 months	
Financial report and acquittal	Completion plus 3 months	

## Acknowledgement

The LPI Network will remain actively engaged in the projects, supporting their development, identifying additional funding and participants, and providing advice.

The Hub and LPI Network reserve the right to publicise funded projects for marketing and communication purposes. All proprietary information will remain confidential.

The Hub and LPI must be acknowledged as a funder in any publications or reports resulting from the project.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

We treat applicants' personal information according to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).

This includes letting applicants know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to

An applicant's personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it was collected unless an exemption applies

## Contact details

Any enquiry about the assessment process or the outcome of an application, contact us through: [info@decarbhub.au](mailto:info@decarbhub.au).



## **Appendix 1 – Partner Organisations of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub and its Land and Primary Industries Network**

Current October 2023

### **LPI Network Partners**

- Western Sydney University (WSU)
- Charles Sturt University (CSU)
- NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)
- Southern Cross University (SCU)
- University of New England (UNE)
- University of New South Wales (UNSW)
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- University of Wollongong (UoW)

### **Hub Partners**

- Climate-KIC Australia
- Charles Sturt University (CSU)
- NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)
- Southern Cross University (SCU)
- The University of Newcastle (UoN)
- University of New England (UNE)
- University of New South Wales (UNSW)
- The University of Sydney (USyd)
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- University of Wollongong (UoW)
- Western Sydney University (WSU)