Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Future Drought Fund

FRRR
Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal

Australian Rural Leadership Foundation

Strengthening Rural Communities (SRC) Future Drought Fund's Communities Capacity Building Grants

Program Guidelines

Key Dates

Opens
21 Oct 2026

Closes
3 Dec 2026

Grants Announced
mid March 2027

Projects must be undertaken between April 2027 and December 2028.

Applications close 5pm Victorian time (AEDT).

About FRRR

FRRR (Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal) supports remote, rural and regional communities across Australia to be vibrant, resilient, empowered and sustainable. We work alongside communities to catalyse locally led solutions, especially in areas facing systemic challenges.
FRRR recognises that small and remote areas are vulnerable to drought, climate change and disasters, and experience capacity challenges in responding to and preparing for climate-related impacts where often existing disadvantage is exacerbated.
That is why our grant programs focus on building resilience and strengthening communities and actively seek to support a more **prepared and climate-resilient** remote, rural, and regional Australia.
Capacity Building Grants are available thanks to the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund's Communities (FDFC) Program, which is delivered by FRRR in partnership with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation (ARLF).

About the Future Drought Fund's Communities Program

The Australian Government's Future Drought Fund (the FDF) is a secure, continuous investment to help farmers and communities to prepare for drought.
The FDF is investing $36 million over the next three years to implement the Future Drought Fund's Communities Program, which extends and integrates both the Networks to Build Drought Resilience Program and the Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Initiative (delivered by the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal, or FRRR), and the Drought Resilience Leaders Program (delivered by the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, or ARLF.)

Program Information

Program Purpose

The Strengthening Rural Communities (SRC) Program supports small rural, remote and very remote communities across Australia. It funds practical, community-led projects that benefit and strengthen local people and places.

Capacity Building Grants will support not-for-profit organisations to deliver

local projects or initiatives that will broadly result in strengthened social capital, wellbeing and connectedness to prepare for and build social resilience to drought.

The aim of the Capacity Building Grants is to strengthen not-for-profit organisations in agriculture-dependent communities that are essential to building social resilience in rural and regional Australia. It intends to support not-for-profit organisations to upskill or access specialist expertise.

Grants up to $15,000 are available.

Priority focus areas

FRRR will prioritise projects in communities that are outside of the Future Drought Fund's Community Impact Program and align with our strategic focus areas:

- Outback, remote and very remote communities;
- Next generation transitions;
- Disaster resilience;
- Climate solutions; and
- First Nations self-determination.

It provides opportunities for organisations to upskill or access support from experts and invest in their;

- people,
- infrastructure,
- internal systems and structures,
- strategy development,
- financial sustainability or
- sector effectiveness.

This may be through delivering workshops, webinars, mentoring or skills audits.

What can be funded:

- Facilitator/presenter fees, including transportation and accommodation
- Venue hire
- Event catering
- Promotion and marketing
- Workshop materials
- Group travel expenses, e.g. bus hire
- The creation of templates
- Wages that directly relate to the delivery of the project

We cannot fund anything that is not related to the delivery of the project, such as:

- Infrastructure, e.g. shelving
- Equipment, e.g. computers
- The creation of webpages or apps
- Software, apps or related ongoing subscriptions
- Project participation or volunteer time
- Accommodation for participants
- Individual travel expenses for participants
- Costs associated with any networking opportunities after the project's completion.

If you are unsure, please contact FRRR.

What can't be Funded

There are a range of areas that we cannot fund through this program, including:

- Projects that are not located in remote, rural and regional Australia;
- Projects that support core business and areas of responsibility of Federal, State and Local Governments;
- Activities that primarily result in economic or environmental outcomes relating to drought preparedness, not social outcomes;
- Utilising funds to re-grant to other organisations;
- Applications from sporting organisations need to clearly demonstrate charitable outcomes and benefit to the wider community that are beyond the sporting activities of the club, and clear linkage to drought resilience. This is because the encouragement or advancement of sport, recreation and social activities are not considered charitable activities under Australian law;
- Prizes, gifts, trophies or awards;
- Projects solely focused on animal welfare;
- Activities that do not directly support agriculture-dependent communities;
- Activities that do not directly strengthen community networking, wellbeing, drought preparedness, or reduce the risk of social isolation associated with drought;
- Activities that duplicate existing projects or services in a particular community;
- Activities where costs have already been incurred because the activity has already been undertaken or will have been undertaken before the start of the activity;
- Activities outside of Australia or involving overseas travel;
- Activities that provide private and/or commercial benefit rather than not-for-profit or social enterprise activities that enhance the public good in agriculture-dependent communities;
- Business activities where the primary purpose is for profit;
- Activities already funded through another Australian, state or territory, or local government program;

- Provision of funding to any person or organisation who have outstanding final reports from a prior Australian Government grant of financial assistance;

Any costs that are not related to conducting the activity such as:

- Preparation of grant application materials;
- Protecting or patenting intellectual property;
- Activities of a distinctly commercial or proprietary nature that are aimed at selling or attracting investment;
- Developing, building or producing commercial prototypes to commercialise a research project outcome;
- Creation of new institutions;
- Establishing new commercial ventures;
- Core business expenses not related to conducting the activity, including administrative, overhead (and infrastructure not specified in a project budget) costs, staff salaries (unless directly engaged in delivering the Funding Program) and relocation costs, travel and living allowances;
- Financial support for feasibility studies, or master plans;
- Alcohol;
- Hospitality and catering beyond reasonable costs for providing refreshments at activity-related events such as workshops or field days;
- Purchasing of infrastructure not specified in a project budget;
- The conduct of activities that could be considered part of normal business or ongoing operations, unless integral to the delivery of the activity;
- Purchase or acquisition of land or buildings;
- Capital expenditure;
- Activities involving political advocacy;
- Production of clothing, equipment, or merchandise for distribution;
- Subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent; and
- Major construction or large capital works.

If unsure, please contact us to discuss your eligibility prior to lodging your application. Please note: Staffing and reasonable program delivery costs to support the coordination and delivery of planned activity or project are considered an eligible expense.

Eligibility

To apply, your organisation must meet the following criteria:

- You must be an Australian not-for-profit organisation with an ABN or Incorporation Eligibility Certificate.
- You can only submit one application to one SRC stream in each grant round.
- Your project must be for a charitable purpose and provide a clear benefit to the public.

- You do not need DGR status to apply. Organisations with or without DGR-1 endorsement are eligible.
- Your project must benefit a remote, rural or regional community in Australia.

You will be considered ineligible if:

- You are applying as an individual, sole trader, private business or commercial business;
- Your group does not have legal status and does not have written support from the legal organisation that will auspice the grant;
- You do not include the required financial information.
- Project Report/s from any FRRR grants awarded in the previous seven years have not been acquitted (delivery organisations should check with the legal organisation to see if there are any outstanding Project Reports).
- Application is for a project or activity that has already occurred / is occurring prior to the announcement of funding.
- Application is incomplete.

NOTE: Due to the volume of applications received, applications are assessed based on the documentation received at the time of application. FRRR is unlikely to follow up on missing documentation after applications have been submitted.

For more information on eligibility, refer to FRRR Grantseeker resources.

How to Apply

Before beginning your application, please read the information on the following pages. It sets out critical, additional information that we require and explains why it is important.

FRRR accepts applications online via the Blackbaud Grants Portal.

We recommend you download this sample copy of the application form.

CLICK HERE TO APPLY.

FRRR Contact

If at any time you need help with your application, don't hesitate to contact the FRRR office; call 1800 170 020 or email granting@frrr.org.au.

IMPORTANT NOTES: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please read the information below to support the planning and preparation of your project. It also sets out what you MUST include for your project to be considered. The FRRR website also includes a list of Frequently Asked Questions that provide valuable information. Contact FRRR if you have any questions about this information or any aspect of the application form.

Eligible legal entities

Every application needs to include an organisation that holds either an **ABN or Incorporation Certificate**. If your organisation does not have that, FRRR may still fund the project, but you need another organisation's support, which we refer to as the **'legal organisation'** (with your organisation being the **delivery organisation**). This situation often occurs when the organisation **delivering** the activity or project is a branch of an overarching organisation - such as a local CWA or YMCA branch. In this case, the CWA or YMCA would be the legal organisation.

Even though your organisation may complete the application (and will be doing the work), **it is the 'legal organisation's' legal and financial information that needs to be provided**. They also need to provide a letter of support, confirming they are willing to play this role, with a template available here.

FRRR conducts a broad range of due diligence queries when reviewing applications, such as reviewing current and past incorporation, DGR and ACNC status. If your organisation has had its incorporation status, DGR status or ACNC status changed or ACNC registration revoked or voluntarily withdrawn, please let us know the reasons for this.

Applications from ACNC and/or unincorporated associations are required to submit their organisation's Constitution.

Why is this important?

The Future Drought Fund's Communities Program will only distribute funds to not-for-profit organisations with an ABN or Incorporation Certificate and FRRR needs to know that the organisation with that ABN / Incorporation Certificate understands and agrees to fulfill their responsibilities in relation to your project, if successful.

Financial information

Applications without the required financial information cannot be considered.
You must provide your organisation's:

- Annual income (total income in your financial year);
- Annual expenditure (total expenses in your financial year); and
- Current assets (from your audited financials, or bank balance minus any debts).

Please note:

- Provide a brief explanation of any large financial surplus or current assets and reasons why FRRR funds are still required.
- If financial information is more than 18 months old, please provide an explanation as to why the organisation does not have more recent documents.
- Please explain any deficits and steps to sustain the organisation financially.

Please contact us if you cannot provide the required financial information or are unsure about what to provide.

Why is this important?

FRRR uses this information to understand your organisation's financial viability and ability to manage grant funds.

Project Budget

You must include a project budget that clearly shows the items that FRRR grant funding will be used for and shows

all income and expenses related to your project.

Budgets should be realistic and must add up – i.e., total expenditure must match total income.

Applicant contributions in cash or in-kind are highly regarded. Quotes or detailed rationale for items over $1,000 are required, where possible. Note: FRRR suggests costing unskilled volunteer labour at $45 per hour.

For more info on costing volunteer labour, visit: https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/valuing-volunteer-labour.

Why is this important?

A clear budget helps FRRR to understand the size of your project, exactly how FRRR funds will be spent and helps demonstrate community support for your project through in-kind contributions either from your organisation or partners / community members.

Supporting Materials

FRRR strongly recommends that you provide supporting materials such as letters of support, evidence of permission from the property owner, community plans, survey results, photographs, media clips and research reports that can show broad-community support and partnerships involved in the project. For more information on supporting documentation, watch this recording.

Large documents should be referenced and explained in the application.

Why is this important?

FRRR seeks to fund projects that are well-supported by the broader local community, are locally led and delivered, show good partnerships and benefit multiple parts of the community. As FRRR is not always familiar with your community, our staff consider support material as evidence toward understanding level of community need, benefit, and support.

Clear Project Information

A clear description is required of exactly **what** the grant funds will be used for, **when** and **where** the project will happen, **who** will benefit and **who** will be involved in delivering the project, **why** the project and grant funds are needed, **how** funds will be spent and **how** the activities and success of the project will be recorded, evaluated and shared.

Where possible, we encourage you to make it clear that your community is ready and able to deliver the project and if required, can provide ongoing support for the initiative.

Why is this important?

FRRR needs to clearly understand your project to assess its merits. Applicants should focus on addressing what, when, where, who, why and how of the project, as this is the best way to clearly communicate the details of the project.

A ready community is best placed to achieve the aims of your project, so during assessment, our staff look for information that tells us that good leadership, skills and awareness exist in your community to support the project now and in the future.