



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Local Economic Recovery and Complementary Projects funding

#### FAQs

##### What is the national approach to supporting local economic recovery projects?

- Bushfire affected communities will share in **\$448.5 million** of Local Economic Recovery and Complementary Projects funding from the Australian Government.
- This national investment is supported by extra co-funding from state governments for local economic recovery projects, making more money available for community-led recovery.
- This funding will help towns and regions hit by the fires get back on their feet.
- As you would expect, priority will be given to the most severely impacted regions.

##### What kind of proposals will be chosen for funding?

- Funding is supporting key recovery projects identified in bushfire affected regions.
- Projects can range from initiatives that promote economic activity and support community wellbeing, to projects that focus on the landscape and water, or building future resilience.
- Each region's needs vary, and the proposals taken forward will reflect community need.

##### How are projects agreed?

- State governments are responsible for identifying and delivering projects.
- Each state government is identifying projects through a different process.
- In South Australia, the state government is working through a range of proposed Local Economic Recovery projects, following consultation with local councils, recovery committees, communities and other stakeholders in bushfire affected areas. Projects already announced include [Kangaroo Island's desalination project](#) and the [Lobethal Bushland Park restoration](#).
- In Queensland, local councils and state agencies were asked to submit an expression of interest by 7 September 2020. Projects will be assessed, announced and funded as soon as they are ready. [Six recovery projects](#) were announced in October 2020 and a further [12 projects](#) were announced in December 2020. To learn more about the process and eligibility visit the [Queensland Reconstruction Authority website](#)
- In Victoria, the Local Economic Recovery has two streams, with 40 per cent of the funding dedicated to the local community stream and 60 per cent to the regional economic stream. Communities have been consulted on the design of the program, to ensure it helps support their recovery priorities and gives them enough time to get

their project proposals right. [Five Victorian projects](#) were announced in October 2020, a number of [regional economic stream programs](#) were announced in December 2020, and [15 local community stream round one grants](#) were announced in January 2021. Round Two applications for LER local community grants will open on Monday 15 March 2021. For more information visit the Victoria Local Economic Recovery Program page at [www.vic.gov.au/local-economic-recovery-program-bushfire-affected-communities](http://www.vic.gov.au/local-economic-recovery-program-bushfire-affected-communities)

- In New South Wales [71 projects have already been announced](#). Applications opened for the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery program grants on 27 October and will close on Thursday 28 January 2021. Projects will be assessed and announced in due course. For more information about the process and eligibility visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/blerfund>.

#### **Who makes final decisions on the projects funding, is it the Australian Government or states?**

- States are responsible for selecting, delivering and managing approved projects.
- The National Bushfire Recovery Agency works with states to confirm that any projects proposed for LER co-funding meet agreed criteria.

#### **Who should I talk to about my project?**

- In Victoria, more information about the Local Economic Recovery program is available at [www.vic.gov.au/local-economic-recovery-program-bushfire-affected-communities](http://www.vic.gov.au/local-economic-recovery-program-bushfire-affected-communities)
- In Queensland, an expression of interest process has closed. Details are available on the Queensland Recovery Agency website. Visit [www.qra.qld.gov.au/LER](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au/LER)
- In South Australia, the process is being run by Department of Premier and Cabinet. The state government is consulting directly with relevant councils and communities to identify projects.
- In New South Wales applications opened for the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery program grants on 27 October. For more information about the process and eligibility visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/blerfund>.

#### **Can I submit my idea directly to the National Bushfire Recovery Agency?**

- No, projects submitted directly to the National Bushfire Recovery Agency will be referred to project proposal processes in the relevant state.

## **Criteria**

### **States will ensure proposed projects align to the following LER criteria**

#### **Balance and need**

Diverse local and regional recovery needs are balanced, effort and funding duplication is avoided, vulnerable groups/diverse populations are supported, and unintended consequences are minimised (for example, adverse impacts on another region's economy)

or for a particular business, or adverse impacts on vulnerable groups). It is expected that each agreed priority region will receive some LER funding, and that projects where possible include those that cover each of the four recovery domains – economic, social, built and natural environments.

### **Alignment**

Projects align to and support medium-long term economic recovery needs identified in state local and regional recovery plans and are consistent with relevant national policy frameworks, including the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, and the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.

### **Enduring benefit**

Local and regional recovery is tangible, sustainable (i.e. delivers ongoing benefits and employment opportunities), builds future resilience, and reduces future disaster risk.

### **Funding stream suitability**

Funding stream is suitable and preferable to other possible funding streams.

### **Local participation, support and delivery**

Communities participate in planning and development processes, and support proposed projects. Projects optimise local and Indigenous employment and procurement opportunities, including opportunities for local trades, services and other input-supplying businesses.

### **Evidence base**

There is an evidence base for project need and benefit. Evidence may be quantitative or qualitative, such as local and regional advice.

### **Feasibility**

Projects are feasible, risks and consequences are acceptable, and appropriate mitigation strategies are identified. Project proponents can demonstrate delivery capacity and experience and project readiness supports commencement within LER timeframes. Cost is an effective, efficient and ethical use of resources.