



Australian Government

National Emergency Management Agency

Disaster Ready Fund

Round Two Guidelines 2024-25

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation NEMA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and the community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) Round Two Guidelines

Funding Round	Round Two (2), 2024-25
Australian Government policy entity and DRF administering entity	National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
Type of opportunity	Closed-competitive
Dates for proposals to be submitted to state and territory government Lead Agencies:	Lead Agencies open: 9.00am (local time in their jurisdiction) on Monday 22 January 2024 Lead Agencies close: 5.00pm (local time in their jurisdiction) on Wednesday 20 March 2024
Date for applications to be submitted by Lead Agencies to NEMA	NEMA opens for applications from Lead Agencies: 9.00am AEDT on Monday 5 February 2024 NEMA closes for applications : 5.00pm AEST on Monday 29 April 2024
Enquiries:	Applicants should submit questions to the Lead Agency in their state or territory – details are available at: www.nema.gov.au/programs/disaster-ready-fund/round-two Lead Agencies should submit questions to NEMA at: Disaster.ready@nema.gov.au
Date Guidelines released:	15 December 2023

Please note: The Round Two Guidelines contain process and policy changes which may not apply to Round One (2023-24). For information about Round One refer to the [Disaster Ready Fund Guidelines – Round One 2023-24](#).

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1. Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) Process Overview

1. Applicants develop project proposals (Guidelines sections 2-7)	<i>Applicants develop Round Two project proposals</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicants should review these DRF Guidelines and develop project proposals in consultation with local government and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. First Nations peoples, local communities, delivery partners, academia). Proposals should address all requirements outlined in the Guidelines, including but not limited to aligning with eligibility requirements, the DRF objectives, selection criteria, be fully costed and supported by evidence.• Applicants must provide a 50 per cent co-contribution (cash or in-kind), or consider their eligibility to request a waiver or partial-waiver.• Applicants developing multi-jurisdictional or national project proposals must consult with all relevant Lead Agencies and identify one Lead Agency to coordinate the proposal.	
2. Submit to Lead Agencies (Guidelines section 3.2)	<i>Applicants submit their project proposal to a Lead Agency</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicants must submit their project proposal(s) to a Lead Agency (or multiple Lead Agencies where projects have been tailored for delivery in different states and territories). The submission process and requirements may vary by state and territory, with some requiring participation in an Expression of Interest process – please check the relevant Lead Agency website (Lead Agencies are listed on NEMA's website).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Applicants who have developed one proposal that involves collaboration or delivery across multiple states and territories must submit through one Lead Agency which has agreed to coordinate the proposal and obtain endorsement from the relevant minister in its jurisdiction.○ Applicants who have developed proposals for delivery in the Indian Ocean Territories must apply to the Lead Agency for Western Australia.	
3. Review and endorse (Guidelines section 3.2)	<i>Lead Agencies review and categorise projects, and seek minister endorsement</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead Agencies must review project proposals and categorise each as 'Highly Suitable', 'Suitable' or 'Not Suitable'. Lead Agencies must ensure any proposals with a place-based focus have been consulted through relevant local governments and First Nations peoples and/or land councils.• The Lead Agencies seek ministerial endorsement of suitable proposals (i.e. written agreement for the projects to be submitted to the NEMA for assessment).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Multi-jurisdictional projects only require formal endorsement from one minister (facilitated by the Lead Agency coordinating the proposal).○ Project proposals for the Indian Ocean Territories must be endorsed by the Australian Government Minister responsible for Territories.	
4. Apply to NEMA (Guidelines section 8)	<i>Lead Agencies submit projects to NEMA for assessment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead Agencies must submit the 'Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable' to NEMA through the online application portal by the NEMA closing date for applications.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lead Agencies will also need to provide an application cover sheet which summarises the number, titles and categories ('Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable') of all projects submitted, as well as	

funding amounts, confirmation of ministerial endorsement as well as information about the application and categorisation approach. NEMA will provide further instruction to Lead Agencies on the process for submitting the Application Cover Sheet. The Lead Agency for Western Australia will submit proposals on behalf of the Indian Ocean Territories.

5. Pre-assessment checks (Guidelines section 9)	<i>NEMA reviews eligibility of submissions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEMA Program Delegate (Assistant Coordinator-General) will conduct an initial review of projects against the DRF eligibility criteria. Eligible projects will be referred to the DRF Assessment Panel/s (the Panel or Panel/s). 	
6. Panel assessment (Guidelines section 9)	<i>DRF Assessment Panel/s assesses applications</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel/s will assess each eligible proposal in accordance with the Round Two DRF Guidelines, as well as consider applications for waivers of the 50 per cent co-contribution requirement. The Panel/s may seek advice from other Commonwealth Government departments or agencies about the suitability of any proposal. 	
7. Funding decisions (Guidelines sections 9-10)	<i>The Minister for Emergency Management decides which projects will receive funding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel/s will make recommendations to the Minister for Emergency Management (the Minister) through NEMA's Coordinator-General. The Minister, as the final decision maker, will decide which projects will be funded. The Minister will publicly announce the projects to receive funding under the DRF. NEMA will publish successful projects on its website. 	
8. Schedules established (Guidelines sections 10)	<i>NEMA negotiates Schedules (funding agreements) with each Lead Agency</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once Lead Agencies are notified of the Minister's decision, NEMA will commence negotiating Schedules (funding agreements) with successful Lead Agencies, including audit and reporting requirements. The Minister and the relevant minister(s) for each successful state or territory will co-sign the Schedule. Concurrently, Lead Agencies will develop Implementation Plans with project proponents. 	
9. Delivery of funds (Guidelines section 10.2)	<i>Australian Government funds paid for successful projects</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Australian Government Department of Treasury will transfer funding, including any administration support funding to each successful Lead Agency as a single, upfront payment in accordance with the requirements of the DRF Act. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Australia will receive funds for any successful projects in the Indian Ocean Territories and transfer these funds to the Applicant. 	
10. Endorsement of Implementation Plans (Guidelines section 10.3)	<i>NEMA reviews and endorses Implementation Plans developed by Lead Agencies</i>

- NEMA must receive completed Implementation Plans from Lead Agencies for their projects, within three months of the Schedule being co-signed.
- Once NEMA Executive have reviewed and endorsed the Implementation Plan, projects covered by that Implementation Plan may formally commence.
- **While every effort will be made to ensure prompt payment and project commencement, Applicants should discuss payment timeframes with their Lead Agency.**

11. Project commencement
(Guidelines section 10.3)

Work commences on successful DRF projects

12. Monitoring and reporting
(Guidelines section 11)

Lead Agencies report on progress

- NEMA will monitor project delivery through agreed reporting mechanisms.
 - The Lead Agency for Western Australia will report on any successful Indian Ocean Territory projects.

13. Publication
(Guidelines section 12)

NEMA publishes an annual report on any funding arrangements made in the previous financial year.

14. Evaluation
(Guidelines section 11.5 - 12)

NEMA evaluates the effectiveness of projects and the DRF

- NEMA will evaluate the effectiveness of DRF funded projects based on information provided through agreed reporting mechanisms. NEMA may undertake additional data collection activities such as interviews with Lead Agencies and Applicants as part of this evaluation process.

2. About

2.1 About the National Emergency Management Agency

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established on [1 September 2022](#) to drive a more coordinated approach to preparing for and responding to disasters. NEMA's strategic objectives include leading and coordinating national action and assistance across the emergency management continuum and contributing to saving lives, reducing harm, and maintaining public trust to mitigate the consequences of disasters and build back better through investment in people, capabilities and communities.

2.2 About the DRF

Australia's disaster risk continues to increase, and new risks are emerging at an accelerated pace. Extreme heat, flooding and bushfires, along with other natural hazards, will increasingly impact the wellbeing and functioning of our communities, our environment and our economy.

The Australian Government is committed to reducing the physical, social and economic impacts of disasters and ensuring that communities are in the best possible position to recover when disasters occur. To achieve this, the Australian Government is investing up to \$200 million per financial year through the DRF over five years, from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2028 (up to \$1 billion total) to deliver projects that build Australia's resilience, improve preparedness and reduce disaster risk. The DRF is intended to be an enduring fund, to provide all levels of government, affected communities and other relevant stakeholders the certainty and support they need to plan for disaster events.

The DRF was established under the *Disaster Ready Fund Act 2019* (DRF Act), following passage of the Emergency Response Fund Amendment (Disaster Ready Fund) Bill 2022 on 23 November 2022.

NEMA's website is the authoritative source for information on the DRF, and Lead Agencies' websites will provide information about state and territory specific DRF grant application processes. Any amendments to the DRF program or guidelines will be published on NEMA's website. Applicants are encouraged to check the website for updates, as well as the Lead Agency's website in their state or territory.

Previous DRF Rounds

Round One (2023-24) of the DRF opened in January 2023, and closed in March 2023. The Australian Government Minister for Emergency Management (the Minister), announced 187 successful projects with \$200 million of Australian Government investment on 7 June 2023. All projects funded under Round One in 2023-24 are outlined on the [DRF Round One page](#) of NEMA's website.

2.3 Strategic alignment

The National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience are the overarching frameworks guiding Australia's efforts to reduce disaster risk and improve Australia's disaster resilience. National Action Plans and the Australian Government's disaster risk reduction programs, including DRF, put these frameworks into practice.

The [Second National Action Plan](#) to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework was endorsed by National Emergency Management Ministers on 25 August 2023. The Plan drives coordinated action across Australian society so that individuals, communities, sectors and governments are working together towards common disaster risk reduction goals.

The Second National Action Plan identifies four key priorities underpinned by National Actions:

1. Understand disaster risk
2. Accountable decisions
3. Enhanced investment
4. Governance, ownership, and responsibility.

The DRF supports implementation of the Second National Action Plan by providing a funding stream for preparedness and risk reduction activities at the community level.

2.4 DRF Objectives and Investment Principles

The DRF's Objectives are to:

1. **increase the understanding of natural hazard disaster impacts**, as a first step towards reducing disaster impacts in the future;
2. **increase the resilience, adaptive capacity and/or preparedness** of governments, community service organisations and affected communities to minimise the potential impact of natural hazards and avert disasters; and
3. **reduce the exposure to risk, harm and/or severity of a natural hazard's impacts**, including reducing the recovery burden for governments, cohorts at disproportionate disaster risk, and/or affected communities.

The objectives are underpinned by the DRF Investment Principles which guide DRF investment decisions. The Investment Principles are incorporated into DRF activity types and selection criteria, to encourage projects that are:

1. **Risk informed:** Proposals draw on evidence of disaster risk (e.g. risk assessments) when outlining case for funding.
2. **Aligned with plans:** Proposals align with existing national, state and territory, and local hazard mitigation and resilience or adaptation plans, or provide evidence that the planning process is underway. Where plans do not exist or are in development, proposals could support the development of those plans.
3. **Priority targeted:** Proposals demonstrate alignment with the Second National Action Plan National Actions.
4. **Diverse and equitable:** Investment decisions support outcomes across a broad range of natural hazard and project types, geographic areas (including both urban and regional/remote locations), domains (including the social, built and natural environments), and consider the DRF's potential population impact (including a project's relative per-capita benefit).

3. Project Proposals

3.1 Who can apply

Anyone can develop a DRF proposal, however only Australian state and territory governments are eligible to submit projects to NEMA for potential funding in Round Two 2024-25. Each state and territory has nominated one government agency or department ([Lead Agency](#)) to coordinate DRF project proposals in its jurisdiction, including submitting applications to NEMA on behalf of that jurisdiction.

Individuals or entities who develop DRF proposals are referred to in these guidelines as '**Applicants**' and must apply through Lead Agencies rather than directly to NEMA. Lead Agencies can also develop DRF project proposals.

DRF funding is delivered under the [Federation Funding Agreement – Environment](#) between the Australian Government and state and territory governments. This approach recognises that states and territory governments have primary responsibility for disaster management in their jurisdictions, and are best placed to understand and coordinate priorities for disaster resilience.

Applicants wishing to deliver projects in the Indian Ocean Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands must apply through the Lead Agency for Western Australia.

The details of the Lead Agencies are published on [NEMA's website](#) to enable Applicants to contact the Lead Agency in their state or territory to support the preparation and development of proposals. Lead Agencies are expected to share information about the DRF and their process for receiving proposals as widely as possible with potential Applicants throughout their jurisdictions to encourage diverse projects.

3.2 Application Pathways

3.2.1 Standard application pathway

Applicants must submit project proposals to Lead Agencies and the process for doing so may vary in each state and territory. Applicants must read the DRF Guidelines and any other advice or instruction from the relevant Lead Agency to ensure they understand requirements. Applicants should refer to the relevant Lead Agency's website for more details.

Lead Agencies and/or Applicants must have meaningfully consulted with relevant local governments and First Nations communities before submitting any project with a place-based focus.

Applicants may submit similar proposals through more than one Lead Agency, tailored for delivery in different states and/or territories, however a separate and unique 50 per cent co-contribution must be provided for each project (see section 5).

Lead Agencies will consider and screen proposals to ensure submissions comply with the DRF's objectives, eligibility criteria, and selection criteria as outlined in these guidelines, and categorise each proposal as 'Highly Suitable', 'Suitable', or 'Not Suitable'. Lead Agencies may also consider projects against state or territory priorities as outlined in any publicly available disaster plans or strategies.

Only projects categorised as 'Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable' can be submitted to NEMA for assessment (see section 8). The Lead Agencies' processes for categorising proposals should include mechanisms to ensure impartiality.

The Lead Agency must seek the relevant Minister's¹ endorsement (written agreement) of the proposals prior to being submitted to NEMA. This should include endorsement of any co-contributions being provided by the Lead Agency, except where in-principle agreement will be provided (see section 5).

3.2.2 Indian Ocean Territories

Applicants wishing to deliver projects in the Indian Ocean Territories must submit project proposals to the Lead Agency for Western Australia. The Lead Agency will provide these proposals to the Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (Department of Infrastructure) which will categorise project proposals from the Indian Ocean Territories as 'Highly Suitable', 'Suitable', or 'Not Suitable'. The Department of Infrastructure will seek endorsement from the Australian Government Minister responsible for Territories.

The Department of Infrastructure will provide the endorsed list of 'Highly Suitable' and 'Suitable' projects to the Lead Agency for Western Australia to submit to NEMA.

3.2.3 Multi-jurisdictional and national projects

Multi-jurisdictional and national projects involve collaboration and delivery across multiple (or all) states and/or territories.

Applicants developing these projects are required to nominate one Lead Agency to coordinate the proposal. The coordinating Lead Agency (in partnership with the Applicant where applicable) must consult with other state and/or territory Lead Agencies to develop the proposal, including the budget, funding-split, and roles and responsibility for delivery. The nominated Lead Agency will submit the proposal to NEMA and coordinate implementation and reporting requirements if the project receives funding. Only the coordinating Lead Agency must obtain endorsement (i.e. written agreement) of the project from its relevant minister. The other states and territories involved in the project do not need to provide formal minister endorsement, but must provide the

¹ NEMA considers the relevant Minister to be the minister with portfolio responsibility for the agency charged with coordinating and submitting applications on behalf of that state or territory (the lead agency). For the Indian Ocean Territories this is the Australian Government Minister responsible for territories.

coordinating Lead Agency with written agreement for the project to be implemented in their jurisdiction and/or to any negotiated roles and responsibilities.

The nominated Lead Agency will receive funding for the successful project (including administrative funding – see section 6.2) and will be responsible for providing project funding to all relevant Applicants and/or delivery partners (including other Lead Agencies where applicable), as well as reporting arrangements.

One 50 per cent co-contribution (see section 5) of the total project value will be required from any eligible source (e.g. one or more jurisdictions could contribute). If a 50 per cent co-contribution (cash or in-kind) cannot be provided, the Applicant will need to apply for a full or partial waiver (see section 5.3).

These projects will not contribute to the baseline funding of any state or territory (see section 6.1).

3.3 Project eligibility criteria

A proposal will not be considered by NEMA's Assessment Panel/s (the Panel or Panel/s) for funding if the Program Delegate determines the proposal does not satisfy all eligibility criteria in this section.

3.3.1 Eligible Hazard Types

Project activities can target any, or multiple, Natural Hazards, including:

- Geological hazards, such as, but not limited to:
 - Earthquakes;
 - Landslides (including avalanches, mudslides, sinkholes); and
 - Tsunamis.
- Extreme weather and climate-driven hazards, such as but not limited to:
 - Bushfires (including wildfires);
 - Coastal hazards (including coastal erosion, and coastal inundation; sea level change;
 - Cyclones;
 - Floods (including flash flooding);
 - Heatwaves;
 - Pollen storms;
 - Storms (including severe thunderstorms, hailstorms and blizzards; East coast lows; geomagnetic solar storms (X or M Class)); and
 - Tornados (including damaging wind incidents and dust storms).

3.3.2 Ineligible Hazard Types

Drought, biological (including biosecurity) hazards, and cyber-attacks are ineligible, however projects which increase resilience in these areas are not excluded if they primarily target eligible natural hazards.

The Australian Government's [Future Drought Fund](#) provides \$100 million each year to support initiatives that build drought resilience.

3.3.3 Eligible DRF project activity types

Projects must fall into one or both of the activity type categories, outlined below.

Stream One: Systemic risk reduction projects that build the long term resilience of a community or communities in an area that is at risk of being affected (whether directly or indirectly) by a future natural hazard.

Stream One projects must fall into one or more of the following categories:

1. supporting a better understanding of risk, through a better evidence base to understand and raise awareness of risk – to improve understanding of natural hazards and their potential impacts over time (i.e. disaster risk assessments and frameworks);
2. projects that deliver risk reduction plans at the community, regional and state levels to mitigate identified risks and impacts;
3. strengthening representational and inclusive decision making by developing or improving governance networks and communities of practice, including the development and/or alignment of resilience and risk reduction strategies;
4. adaptation projects that improve land use planning and development practice projects, including but not limited to updating land use planning instruments and building codes;
5. projects, including social projects, that build the capacity and capability of businesses, community sector organisations and/or at-risk communities to improve their preparedness and resilience to the impacts of future natural hazards; and/or
6. projects that enable and incentivise private investment in disaster risk reduction.

Stream One examples might include, but are not limited to: the establishment of jurisdiction-wide risk mitigation frameworks or plans, hazard based information systems, updating state and/or creating local government natural hazard resilience and response plans and strategies, natural hazard research to assist states and territory governments and developers to eliminate inappropriate land sources ahead of construction, and supporting community sector organisations to develop systems, train staff or have materials in place prior to the impact of a natural hazard, including initiatives to support the most at-risk communities and/or cohorts at disproportionate disaster risk.

Stream Two: Infrastructure projects which are directed at achieving any or all of the following:

- resilience to a future natural hazard that could affect an area (whether directly or indirectly);
- preparedness for a future natural hazard that could affect an area (whether directly or indirectly); and
- reduction of the risk of a future natural hazard that could affect an area (whether directly or indirectly).

'Area' may include but is not limited to built/urban, agricultural, and natural environments or ecosystems.

Stream Two projects must fall into one or more of the following categories:

1. investment in grey infrastructure;
2. investment in green-blue infrastructure (including nature based solutions);
3. investment in social infrastructure;
4. investment in natural hazard monitoring infrastructure; and/or
5. development of business cases and/or feasibility studies for future infrastructure (including investigation, modelling, concept and detailed design activities).

Stream Two examples might include, but are not limited to: the construction of flood levees, fire breaks or cyclone shelters, business cases to develop accessible infrastructure and investigation, planning and design of infrastructure to resolve emerging risks, the construction of artificial reefs or sand nourishment on vulnerable coastlines, tsunami warning systems, bushfire warning systems, construction of places for community support or to address community needs in time of disaster.

3.3.4 Eligible locations

Projects **must** be delivered:

- within the Lead Agency's respective jurisdiction/s or area of operation, except where agreement to delivery in another jurisdiction has been provided (i.e. for multi-jurisdictional projects); or
- within the Indian Ocean Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

3.4 Accessibility considerations

The [Australian Government's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy](#) obliges Australian Government agencies to ensure their policies, programs and services - including those provided by contractors and service delivery partners - are accessible to, and deliver equitable outcomes for, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Lead Agencies should consider how they will ensure the coordination of the DRF in their jurisdiction will be accessible to people from CALD backgrounds, and Applicants should consider this in project development. For example, communications, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with clients who have limited English proficiency. Applicants should ensure any costs for translating and interpreting services are factored into project budgets.

[Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#) (ADS) is Australia's overarching policy framework that provides national leadership towards an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential, as equal members of the community. An ADS policy priority is *'disaster preparedness, risk management plans and public emergency responses are inclusive of people with disability, and support their physical and mental health, and wellbeing.'* Lead Agencies and Applicants should consider the ADS and accessibility in development of DRF projects.

4. Use of Australian Government Funding

Lead Agencies and Applicants can only spend Australian Government funding on eligible expenditure.

To be classified as eligible expenditure, the expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of a project or of DRF administration (see section 4.1); and
- be incurred by the Applicant between the project start date and end date, as nominated in the Schedule (required for audit purposes).

4.1 Eligible expenditure

Eligible expenditure refers to costs directly associated with delivering either an eligible activity which the Australian Government has agreed to provide funding for under the DRF or a matter that is incidental or ancillary to the agreed activity. This could include, for example:

- construction and/or procurement of materials, including supply costs, to deliver the project;
- staff (incl. contractor and consultancy) salaries and on-costs, including administration costs such as training, utilities and travel that are directly attributed to the provision of the project;
- writing, reporting, consultation and engagement costs insofar as they are directly relevant to the delivery of the project;
- upgrading of existing materials and assets so long as the upgrades meet the intent of the DRF Objectives (see section 2.4);
- community engagement and communications initiatives directly related to the delivery of the project;
- planning costs;
- reasonable project administration costs incurred by the Applicant, and/or administration costs incurred by Lead Agencies to administer the DRF in their region (see section 6.2).

Escalation costs including expected increases in labour and supply costs should be factored into budgets for each project. Contingency costs to account for unforeseen financial circumstances should also be factored into budgets for each project and be commensurate with the size and complexity of the proposed project. The \$200 million available in 2024-25 is expected to be fully allocated - the Australian Government will not provide further top-up funding or fund project cost overruns.

4.2 Ineligible project expenditure

Applicants cannot spend the Australian Government's funding on ineligible expenditure, including:

- projects that have already received full funding or a commitment of full funding, including projects that have received funding from another source for the same purpose, as articulated in the application (i.e. 'double-dipping');
- wages that are not related to the direct delivery of the funded activities;
- maintenance or development of machinery or infrastructure, including roads, that does not have the primary purpose of reducing community exposure to risk, harm and/or severity of a natural hazard's impacts;
- costs incurred by Applicants in the preparation of a DRF project proposal;
- activities conducted outside of Australia;
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation;
- overseas travel;
- interstate travel, where that interstate travel is not undertaken as part of a multi-jurisdictional project (see section 3.2.3);
- the introduction of plants, animals or other biological agents known to be, or that could become, environmental or agricultural weeds and pests; and
- activities intended to directly generate profit.

The Program Delegate will make the final decision on what constitutes ineligible expenditure. If the Lead Agency is in doubt they should email disaster.ready@nema.gov.au.

NEMA will **not** support proposals which include activities with the potential to adversely impact on a matter of national environmental significance, including but not limited to activities which fail to be approved under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

5. Co-contribution Requirement

Applicants must provide a co-contribution of at least 50 per cent of eligible project expenditure (either cash or in-kind). Lead Agencies are also required to provide at least a 50 per cent co-contribution for administrative funding support from the Australian Government.

With the exception of financial assistance provided to local government under the Australian Government's [Financial Assistance Grants program](#), Australian Government funding from any other source (including historical) cannot be used by an Applicant to cover a co-contribution, either fully or in-part'. Co-contributions can be provided from any other source (e.g. the Applicant, Lead Agencies, other stakeholders).

Each proposal must include a separate and unique 50 per cent co-contribution.

Co-contributions can include, but are not limited to:

- a direct (cash) funding contribution provided at the time of project commencement;
- funds the Lead Agency or Applicant has already invested in a program or project on or any time after 1 July 2020, only where the Australian Government's contribution from the DRF is expected to extend or enhance that program or project subject to alignment with the DRF Objectives. The Australian Government will not fund project cost overruns;
- any costs associated with the Applicant's delivery of the project, for example construction or project delivery; and
- other in-kind costs, such as wages directly attributable to the delivery of the project, and/or supplies, materials, and specific equipment required to execute the project.

5.1 In-kind co-contributions

If it is not possible for a Lead Agency or Applicant to provide a financial co-contribution, they can instead provide an in-kind contribution of equal (50 per cent) or more. This may include but is not limited to wages directly attributable to the delivery of the project, and/or supplies, materials, and specific equipment required to execute the project. In-kind contributions can be based on existing resources, but cannot include historic work or staff time spent on a project prior to 1 July 2020. The Applicant will need to appropriately value and provide details of any proposed in-kind contribution and outline these in the project budget template.

5.2 In-principle co-contributions

With the consent of the Lead Agency, an Applicant may provide an in-principle co-contribution (i.e. a co-contribution pending formal approval) when submitting the application, while the Applicant goes through formal internal approval processes to secure the formal (actual) co-contribution. The Applicant must be able to commit to the formal co-contribution prior to the signing of the Schedules (funding agreements (see section 10.1)). If an in-principle co-contribution does not result in the actual co-contribution prior to the signing of the Schedule, the Minister may withdraw the Australian Government's offer of funding for the project/s.

5.3 Request for co-contribution waivers or partial waivers

Where possible, Applicants are expected to provide co-contributions. However, requests for waivers or partial-waivers (co-contribution reductions) will be considered in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Panel/s. Partial waivers can be requested for any proportion of the 50 per cent co-contribution.

Requests for waivers and partial waivers are more likely to be successful where exceptional circumstances are a result of several factors contributing to the inability to raise a co-contribution, and/or where the public benefit associated with the project is clearly demonstrated and evidence is provided to support this claim.

Factors may include but are not limited to:

- where there is evidence the Applicant has limited to no capacity to provide or raise funds, including justification as to why existing funds have not been allocated to the proposal if it is a priority; and
- where there is evidence the project will deliver high impact for a disproportionately at-risk community and/or cohort, or otherwise contribute to public benefit where there is a strong demonstrated need; and
- there are circumstances contributing to high project costs (e.g. remoteness of a project).

Recent natural disasters or high disaster expenditure also may be a factor contributing to exceptional circumstances. Evidence could include information regarding the financial situation of an Applicant, or details of ongoing challenges in the delivery of infrastructure projects in the regions (e.g. logistical or supplier challenges).

Formal requests for waivers must be made before the closing time for applications. Requests received after the closing time will not be accepted.

The Panel/s will consider waiver requests as part of the assessment process, taking into account value with relevant money (per Selection Criterion 3). Following this assessment (including review of the waiver request and supporting documentation), the Panel/s reserves the right to request additional information from the Lead Agency in considering any requests.

The Panel/s will then make a recommendation to the Minister for Emergency Management (through NEMA's Coordinator General). The Minister will be the final decision-maker on the request for waivers or reductions.

If the request for a waiver or partial waiver is unsuccessful the Lead Agency will be notified and there will be no opportunity to resubmit the project in the same funding round.

6. Arrangements for Funding Round Two (2024-25)

Lead Agencies can only apply for funding allocated in 2024-25. Up to \$200 million is available in 2024-25, with up to \$3 million of this allocated for administrative support for Lead Agencies.

The Minister reserves the right to open subsequent funding rounds in any financial year. The decision to open subsequent funding rounds is a matter for the Australian Government.

6.1 Funding per project, per application

There is no minimum or maximum amounts of Australian Government funding per project, within the total allocated amount of up to \$197 million (quarantining up to \$3 million for administration support – see section 6.2 below). There is no limit to the number of projects a Lead Agency may submit.

Each state and territory will be allocated baseline funding of \$7.5 million under Round Two, to support equitable distribution². Projects will need to meet all eligibility requirements and achieve a minimum rating of 'Suitable' through the Panel/s assessment to achieve baseline funding allocations.

There is no baseline funding allocation for the Indian Ocean Territories. Successful projects from the Indian Ocean Territories will not count towards Western Australia's baseline funding.

Multi-jurisdictional or national projects will not count towards the baseline funding of the coordinating Lead Agency or any Lead Agency involved in the project.

If Lead Agencies submit applications with a cumulative total project value of less than \$7.5 million (including where the projects found suitable carry a total project value of less than \$7.5 million), any residual funding will be reallocated. The Panel/s will have discretion not to recommend the baseline funding allocation, if it would undermine value with relevant money considerations or DRF objectives.

6.2 Administrative funding for Lead Agencies

NEMA has allocated up to \$3 million of the \$200 million funding for Round Two to support Lead Agencies with DRF administration. This is vital to ensuring DRF projects are successfully implemented, delivered and reported on appropriately.

As part of their application cover sheet, Lead Agencies must indicate their intention to apply for up to 1.5 per cent of the total Australian Government funding awarded to their jurisdiction under Round Two to support their role in delivering the DRF. There will be a baseline of \$112,500 per jurisdiction for administrative funding (1.5 per cent of the \$7.5 million baseline funding). The administration funding for Round Two will be a one-off payment (i.e. not per year) made after the Schedules are co-signed. The amounts awarded to each Lead Agency will be published on the NEMA website.

For Western Australia, the 1.5 per cent will only be calculated from and provided for successful Western Australian projects and will not apply to any successful Indian Ocean Territories projects. Financial support for Western Australia's role in administration and reporting of Indian Ocean Territory projects will be provided by the Department of Infrastructure under existing service arrangements.

Lead Agencies will be required to match the administrative funding provided by the Australian Government (either cash or in-kind). When submitting their Application Cover Sheet, Lead Agencies will need to provide in-principle agreement to meet the co-contribution requirement. When the total amount being awarded for successful projects is determined, the co-contribution for administrative funding will be confirmed through Schedule negotiations. Administrative funding can be used for any cost that directly relates to administering the DRF. Appropriate uses of administration funding may include but are not limited to: staff to coordinate development and endorsement of Implementation Plans and fulfil audit and reporting requirements, engaging an external auditor, IT costs (e.g. grants administration software, data storage) over the delivery timeframe. Administration funding cannot be used to contract project delivery partners, which should be factored into project costs.

Lead Agencies will be required to report at least annually on the use of administrative funding provided by the Australian Government.

² The baseline amount is not per project. The baseline funding allocation is only the Australian Government's component of funding, and does not include a state and territory's co-contribution.

6.3 Project period

The maximum project period is three (3) years from NEMA's written endorsement of the relevant Implementation Plan.

6.4 Application timelines

Lead Agencies will be given from **9.00am (AEDT) on Monday 5 February 2024 until 5.00pm (AEST) on Monday 29 April 2024** to submit applications to NEMA for Round Two of the DRF.

NEMA will only accept a late application where a Lead Agency can demonstrate exceptional circumstances will prevent them from submitting the application by the closing date. Only the **Program Delegate** may approve the receipt and consideration of a late application, and will only do so when it would be fair to allow the application to be received late. Requests to submit a late application should be provided to NEMA before the closing date.

Table 1 – Key Dates

Item	Date
Applications open in states and territories	9.00am local time in each jurisdiction, Monday 22 January 2024
Applications close in states and territories	5.00pm local time in each jurisdiction, Wednesday 20 March 2024
Submissions from Lead Agencies due to NEMA (this process is available to Lead Agencies only).	From 9.00am AEDT on Monday 5 February until 5.00pm AEST on Monday 29 April 2024
Relevant Ministerial Endorsement Due	5.00pm AEST on Monday 13 May 2024
Assessment	May – June 2024
Announcements Made	From July 2024
Funding Delivered ³	Later in 2024

The above timeline is provided as a guide only and subject to change. While every care will be taken to expedite the time from announcement to payment, Applicants should be aware that they may not receive funding for several months or more after announcement.

7. Selection Criteria

Applicants **must** address all three of the following selection criteria for each proposal they are submitting.

It is essential that evidence and/or strong justification is provided to support each criterion.

³ Subject to the joint-signing of Schedules and endorsed Implementation Plans

7.1 Criterion One – Project alignment with disaster risk

Weighted 40 per cent

The project proposal must demonstrate how the project reduces disaster risk, increases resilience, adaptive capacity and/or preparedness to disaster risk, and/or contributes to understanding of disaster risk.

This must include, at a minimum, statements addressing the following:

- the risk the project is addressing, how this has been assessed, and the anticipated impact of the project, including the estimated level(s) of disaster risk, resilience, preparedness and/or understanding prior to and upon conclusion of the proposed project. If there is no existing risk assessment tool or limited understanding of risk to inform this, the application must explain whether the project funding will contribute to assessment of risk and increase the understanding of natural hazard and disaster impacts; and
- how the project will deliver its intended benefits over the short, medium and long term (e.g. increase the resilience, adaptive capacity and /or preparedness and/or reduce the exposure to risk, harm and/or severity of a natural hazard's impacts); and
- how the project will avoid and manage the potential for maladaptation (including any unintentionally negative social, environmental or economic outcomes); and
- where appropriate, how climate change may impact infrastructure investments, including the use of the infrastructure, over its intended life span and how these risks may be mitigated.

7.2 Criterion Two – Alignment with existing plans or development of plans

Weighted 30 per cent

The project proposal must at a minimum include:

- detail on how the project meets the DRF objectives and aligns with one or more DRF investment principles, including if the project aligns to activities of the Second National Action Plan (see section 2.4); and
- detail on how the project aligns with and/or supports delivery of any existing state, territory, local government or community disaster risk reduction or adaptation plans, policies or frameworks, or how the project will develop or contribute to development of these policies, plans or frameworks where they do not currently exist.

7.3 Criterion Three – Likelihood of project success

Weighted 30 per cent

The project proposal must at a minimum include evidence of:

- the Applicant and/or delivery partner's capacity to complete the project in compliance with relevant industry and legislative standards;
- the Applicant and/or delivery partner's capability (including previous experience in undertaking similar scale projects), including confirmation of the ability to commence promptly and deliver the project within the agreed maximum three (3) year timeframes;
- other logistical considerations where relevant (e.g. the ability to procure or develop required technology or expertise);
- robust consultation occurring as the project proposal was developed, and support from local government(s) and/or relevant communities, including First Nations stakeholders where relevant;

- value with relevant money, which could include:
 - the percentage of costs to be spent on project administration (excluding the program administration funding provided to Lead Agencies),
 - the extent to which the project attracts new (i.e. previously uncommitted) investment from state and territory governments and other delivery partners,
 - the total applicant co-contribution being offered relative to the value of the grant sought, and detail regarding why this project is not able to be funded through other potentially more appropriate sources.

8. Submission Requirements

8.1 Submitting projects to NEMA

NEMA will provide Lead Agencies with instructions and guidance on how to apply through the application portal prior to the application opening date.

A project application form will also be made available to Lead Agencies prior to the opening date for applications. Before applying to NEMA, Lead Agencies **must** read and understand these DRF Guidelines and review the project application form. The application process consists of two parts:

- the overarching Application Cover Sheet (see 8.2); and
- the individual project proposal/s and supporting documentation (project logic and indicative budget – see 8.3).

Lead Agencies and Applicants are responsible for ensuring their applications are complete and accurate, and supported by evidence. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the schedule to the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) and NEMA will investigate any false or misleading information (including in consultation with other Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies) and may exclude the application from further consideration.

If Lead Agencies find an error in their application after submitting it, they should contact NEMA immediately at disaster.ready@nema.gov.au. NEMA is not required to accept any additional information, nor requests from Lead Agencies to correct their application after the closing date.

If NEMA or the Panel/s finds an error, inconsistency or omission, NEMA may ask for clarification or additional information from Lead Agencies that will not materially change the nature of their application in fairness to other Lead Agencies.

Lead Agencies or Applicants should keep a copy of their application and any supporting documents.

NEMA will acknowledge it has received applications within three (3) working days.

If Lead Agencies need further guidance around the application process or if they are unable to submit an application online they should contact NEMA at disaster.ready@nema.gov.au in advance of the closing time.

8.2 Application Cover Sheet

NEMA can only accept one overarching Application Cover Sheet per Lead Agency (except where the Lead Agency for Western Australia is applying on behalf of the Indian Ocean Territories) encompassing all project proposals. In preparing the Application Cover Sheet, Lead Agencies:

- **may** propose to engage third parties to deliver services (delivery partners) on their behalf for any projects awarded DRF funding;

- **confirm** the projects are a priority for their jurisdiction, and categorise the projects as ‘Highly Suitable’ or ‘Suitable’;
- **describe** the method or process for categorising the projects;
- **provide** endorsement of the project list (i.e. agreement in writing) from the relevant minister(s), or intention to provide endorsement (endorsement to be provided no later than 13 May 2024);
- **provide** details of the total amount of Australian Government funding sought and the proposed co-contribution (including in-kind); and
- **indicate** their intention to apply for administrative funding of up to 1.5 per cent of total project amount awarded.

8.3 Required attachments

As well as the application cover sheet, Lead Agencies are **required** to provide the following **two (2)** attachments for each project, at the time of submission to NEMA. Failure to provide this information may result in the application not being recommended for funding:

1. A Project Logic, which includes reference to or evidence of the risk assessment and/or disaster risk reduction or adaptation plan that underpins the response to selection criteria one and two, unless the project will deliver these tools where they do not already exist. The Assessment Panel/s may request copies of the referenced risk assessment or plan.
2. An Indicative Budget, including all project delivery costs and details of how Australia Government funding and the co-contribution (including in-kind) will be used.

Templates will be provided for the Project Logic and the Indicative Budget. The Lead Agency and Applicants will also be required to disclose any financial assistance previously or currently sought or provided through Australian Government, state/territory or other initiatives to support proposed projects.

Lead Agencies may provide up to five (5) additional attachments per project they believe support their applications. This may include further information about the proposed project, evidence of consultation, capacity to deliver, and any plans, strategies or policies the proposed project may relate to. The amount of supporting evidence provided should be commensurate with the amount of funding sought for a project.

Lead Agencies will be required to submit additional information for successful projects as part of an Implementation Plan after the signing of Schedules occurs (see section 10).

8.4 Ministerial endorsement

The Lead Agency **must** provide written endorsement (i.e. agreement in writing) from the relevant minister(s) in that state or territory (ministerial endorsement) of the projects submitted to NEMA, including any multi-jurisdictional projects it is submitting.

Ministerial endorsement **should** include the titles and amounts of each of the projects submitted, for ease of reference. Relevant ministerial endorsements can be submitted at the time of application, but must be submitted by email to disaster.ready@nema.gov.au by no later than **5.00pm AEST Monday 13 May 2024** (i.e. two weeks after the close of applications). Any additional extensions to must be sought in writing and the decision to grant additional extensions is at the complete discretion of the Program Delegate.

8.5 Questions during the application process

Applicants developing project proposals should direct their enquiries to the Lead Agency in their state or territory.

Lead Agencies should direct questions to NEMA through: disaster.ready@nema.gov.au. NEMA will provide responses to questions within five (5) working days. If applicable, answers to questions will be posted in the Frequently Asked Questions on NEMA's website: www.nema.gov.au.

Please note that questions related to Round Two applications should be submitted early in the application process to ensure they can be appropriately actioned prior to the application deadline.

9. Review and Assessment Process

9.1 Review of eligibility

Once submitted by a Lead Agency, NEMA will undertake an initial eligibility check against the eligibility criteria. Any applications that do not meet all the eligibility criteria will be excluded from further consideration in accordance with section 3.3. The Program Delegate will be the final decision maker on determining eligibility.

9.2 Who will assess applications?

NEMA will establish and chair a DRF Assessment Panel or Panels (the Panel or Panel/s), comprising members agreed by the Program Delegate.

Panel members may be drawn from relevant Australian Government agencies, and advisory bodies (i.e. collaborative research organisations), with expertise in disaster risk reduction and resilience (where real or perceived conflicts of interest can be managed). The Panel/s may include a First Nations representative. The Panel/s will be supported by a Probity Advisor.

NEMA may seek advice from Australian Government agencies and other entities where that advice would support the Panel/s in their deliberations.

Based on advice from the Panel/s, NEMA's Coordinator-General will recommend projects to the Minister for funding approval. The Coordinator-General may delegate to an Australian Government official the responsibility to make recommendations to the Minister regarding any funding allocations to projects under the DRF, in accordance with the DRF Act. This includes delegating decisions to the Program Delegate.

The Minister may take into account other advice or considerations in making a final determination on successful projects.

The Minister is the final decision maker in accordance with Division Two of the DRF Act.

9.3 Assessment of applications

The Panel/s will consider eligible responses (refer section 3) in two stages, as outlined below.

1. The Panel/s will assess each project proposal individually against the three selection criteria (section 7), culminating with each proposal receiving an overall rating in accordance with Table 2 below.
 - As part of this process, the Panel/s will also consider requests for waivers or partial waivers of the co-contribution requirement in the context of value with relevant money as part of Criterion 3;
2. Proposals will then be ranked. The Panel/s may apply Investment Principle 4 ('diverse and equitable', section 2.4) by giving consideration to equity with respect to the types of projects, the appropriateness of the geographic and thematic split of projects, and relative benefit per capita (population impact), in acknowledgement that the DRF is national in scope with a variety of project activity types. 'Equity' does not mean an equal split of funding.

- the Panel/s may give specific consideration to any national interest, financial, legal, regulatory, governance or other issue or risk that is identified during any due diligence processes conducted in respect of each project;
- the Panel/s may also take into account (but is not bound by) the project categorisation ('Highly Suitable' or 'Suitable') assigned by Lead Agencies.

Table 2 – Application rating matrix

Rating Title	Description
Highly Suitable	<p>An excellent application that demonstrates strong alignment with the DRF selection criteria.</p> <p>The project has clearly articulated with well-defined objectives and scope, and is supported by strong evidence (qualitative and/or quantitative) to demonstrate the project will achieve its aims. Risks to project success may be present, but the Applicant has identified mitigation strategies and controls to manage the risk.</p>
Suitable	<p>A good application that demonstrates alignment with the DRF selection criteria.</p> <p>The project has sound objectives and is supported by evidence (qualitative and/or quantitative) to demonstrate its positive impact. Risks to project success may be present, but the Applicant has identified mitigation strategies and controls to manage the risk.</p>
Not Suitable/ Not Recommended	<p>An unsatisfactory response with uncertainty as to the project's relevance, feasibility and/or likely impact, including inadequate links to the DRF's Objectives and value with relevant money considerations. May contain significant risks that prevent the project from succeeding.</p>

Noting the annual funding allocation, the Panel/s may recommend partial funding for projects following discussion with the Lead Agency to determine whether the project is capable of proceeding without full funding. In this case, NEMA will negotiate project and funding details with the Lead Agency through the Schedule negotiation process.

The Panel/s reserves the right to group the assessment of applications, including by activity type, hazard type or by Lead Agency.

9.4 Who will approve DRF funding?

In accordance with the DRF Act, the Minister for Emergency Management is responsible for deciding which projects to fund. In making these decisions, the Minister may take into account the findings of the Panel/s, in conjunction with any other advice or recommendations provided by NEMA.

In making decisions the Minister will exercise their responsibilities under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) to confirm the expenditure would be a proper use of relevant money.

The Minister's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of the funding;
- the funding amount to be awarded; and
- the terms and conditions of the Schedule.

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Projects may be approved for full or partial funding from the DRF. Any funding shortfall either due to the funding approved or by the budget being exceeded during the life of the project is the responsibility of the Lead Agency. Successful Lead Agencies may request in writing a reduction in scope for a project in the event only partial funding is approved.

9.5 Announcement and notification of application outcomes

NEMA will advise Lead Agencies of the outcomes of their applications in writing under embargo, pending the Minister's official announcement. Lead Agencies will be permitted to share this information with Applicants on an embargoed basis.

If successful, the project and approved funding amount will be listed on NEMA website (www.nema.gov.au). The Minister for Emergency Management will make the first announcement about successful projects. A Lead Agency may request to be involved in a joint announcement with the Australian Government.

The Minister may undertake announcements in a staged approach across states and territories, recognising that certain applications may be more technical in nature and require more comprehensive validation as part of the assessment process.

Written feedback on applications will be provided to the Lead Agency following announcement and upon request. Lead Agencies are responsible for providing feedback to Applicants.

10. Successful applications

10.1 Schedules (funding agreements)

Following the Minister's decision, and after Lead Agencies have been notified of the Minister's decision on projects to be funded and the quantum of funding allocated, Schedules will be developed under the [Federation Funding Agreement - Environment](#) between the Australian Government and each relevant state or territory government (the **Schedule**).

The Schedule and associated Audit and Reporting Framework will detail the project delivery, reporting and milestone requirements, and other relevant considerations. States and territories that are successful will be consulted on the detail in the Audit and Reporting Framework ahead of the signing of the Schedule.

The Schedule between Western Australia and the Australian Government will cover any successful projects that are to be delivered in the Indian Ocean Territories (Successful Applicants of projects to be delivered in the Indian Ocean Territories will be required to enter into a separate funding agreement with the Lead Agency for Western Australia).

The Schedule will include any funds being provided for administration of DRF projects in a state or territory (up to 1.5 per cent of the total amount awarded (excluding for Indian Ocean Territories)).

The Schedule will state:

- the total funding amount to be paid, exclusive of GST;
- any financial contributions jurisdictions or Applicants or any other third party will make per project;
- any in-kind contributions jurisdictions or Applicants or any other third party will make will make per project.
- any administration funding being provided to Lead Agencies

The Schedule must be finalised before any payments are made. NEMA is not responsible for any expenditure incurred until the Schedule is finalised and executed and the Implementation Plan is endorsed. If Lead National Emergency Management Agency

Agencies choose to start projects, or give Applicants permission to start projects, before they have an executed Schedule and endorsed Implementation Plan, they do so at their own cost and risk.

Once Schedules are finalised (co-signed), The Minister has the authority to agree amendments to Schedules, project scope and project timeframes, where requested in writing by the responsible state or territory minister. Lead Agencies should discuss any required amendments with NEMA in the first instance.

This may include agreement to extending project timeframes beyond three years where the Minister considers that there are reasonable grounds, or costs unexpectedly exceed the indicative budget at the time of application. The Minister may choose to delegate authority to amend project scope and project timeframes (including to the Program Delegate) where the matter/s have no financial impacts. The Minister will have complete discretion to accept or refuse amendments to the Schedule.

10.2 How we pay the funding

Once the Schedule has been finalised, the Australian Government Treasury will transfer the funding allocation to each successful Lead Agency as a single payment through the legislated and normal monthly payment mechanisms.

Lead Agencies will be responsible for making payments to successful Applicants in accordance with endorsed Implementation Plans.

Successful Lead Agencies and Applicants will be required to report how the funding has been spent in accordance with the reporting milestones outlined in the Schedule.

The Government of Western Australia will receive funding for any successful projects that are to be delivered in the Indian Ocean Territories, and will be required to transfer these funds to the Applicant.

10.3 Implementation Plans and commencing projects

Implementation Plans must be provided to NEMA as soon as possible in a template provided by NEMA, but no later than three months after the commencement of the Schedule. A Lead Agency should discuss with NEMA as soon as possible if it is likely to require additional time to complete the Implementation Plan. Templates will be provided as soon as possible so Implementation Plans can be developed immediately after successful projects are announced and concurrently with the Schedule negotiation process.

The Implementation Plan must encompass all projects under the Schedule and outline how each project will be managed (for Western Australia this includes any successful projects that are to be delivered in the Indian Ocean Territories).

A project cannot formally commence until NEMA has endorsed the Implementation Plan in writing. An Applicant, with consent of their coordinating Lead Agency, may elect to commence a project from the date NEMA notifies the Lead Agency that its application for that project is successful however the Australian Government is not responsible for any expenditure Applicants incur, until such time as the Implementation Plan is endorsed. The Australian Government will not be liable, and should not be held as being liable, for any activities undertaken before an Implementation Plan covering that project is endorsed. This includes the use of Australian Government funds (when provided) to cover retrospective costs, or costs incurred by the Lead Agency, Applicant and/or implementation partners prior to NEMA's endorsement of the Implementation Plan. If in doubt, please discuss with NEMA before incurring expenditure.

11. Monitoring and evaluation of projects

11.1 Identifying issues and keeping NEMA informed

Lead Agencies **must** let NEMA know if anything is likely to affect their funded projects as soon as possible.

NEMA needs to know of any key changes to organisations or business activities, particularly if they affect the successful Lead Agency's ability to fulfil the terms of the Schedule, carry on business and pay debts due.

If Lead Agencies become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the Schedule, they **must** contact NEMA immediately.

Lead Agencies **must** notify NEMA in a timely manner of any public or notable events relating to their projects and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

11.2 Reporting

NEMA has established an Audit and Reporting Framework for DRF projects.

The objectives of the Audit and Reporting Framework are to:

- support Lead Agencies in monitoring the progress and impact of DRF funded projects in their jurisdictions, and in meeting their reporting obligations under the DRF,
- direct Lead Agencies to engage the services of an appointed auditor to undertake the assurance activities, and
- inform NEMA's monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities, including providing the Australian Government with reasonable assurance regarding the implementation and expenditure of DRF funded projects and budgets, and the performance of the program overall.

Reporting responsibilities of state and territory Governments

State and territory governments must have systems such as monitoring and evaluation frameworks in place to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in schedules developed under the *Federation Funding Agreement – Environment (Agreement)* between the Australian Government and each relevant state or territory government (Schedule), as summarised below.

Lead Agencies and Applicants must keep detailed and accurate records related to DRF funded projects in accordance with any applicable regulatory or statutory requirements, and in any event for a period of at least five (5) years after the end of the funding period consistent with financial and other record keeping obligations under Australian Government legislation including the *Archives Act 1983 (Cth)*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*. State and territory governments are encouraged to give consideration to fraud risk, detection and mitigation.

Lead Agencies are expected to submit reports in the manner, within the timeframes, in the format, and containing the information, outlined in the Schedule and the Audit and Reporting Framework, or as otherwise specified by NEMA. Indicative information to be provided in these reports is summarised in this document.

The Australian Government reserves the right to amend or adjust reporting requirements from time to time, as necessary.

If there are any changes proposed to projects or other significant events related to projects during the project period (including but not limited to changes in scope, budget and timeframe), Lead Agencies must notify NEMA noting that Australian Government approval is required for project variations.

State and territory governments receiving funding for projects under Round Two of the DRF 2024-25 are required to provide the below plans and reports. With the exception of Ad Hoc Reports and Financial Declarations, timeframes for each deliverable will be stated in each state and territory's Schedule.

Performance Reports – quarterly reports provided following the commencement of projects and encompassing all projects under the Schedule that set out progress against agreed milestones, outcomes and budgets as outlined in the Implementation Plan. Indicative content requirements are included in the Audit and Reporting Framework and a template will be provided by NEMA.

1. **Final Reports** – reports provided following the completion of projects under the Schedule that set out what outcomes have been achieved and total expenditure incurred for each completed project. A template will be provided by NEMA.
2. **Audit Report** – independent audit report encompassing all Material Projects under the Schedule, submitted following the completion of all projects.
3. **Ad Hoc Reports and meetings** – the use of regular reporting is intended to minimise the need for and burden of, ad hoc reporting on Lead Agencies and Applicants. However, NEMA may need to ask for updates that are not addressed through regular reporting. These may include detail on how any administration funding provided is being used, interim status reports, details of media events, and information requests from the Australian Government Minister. NEMA may also need to organise meetings to discuss aspects of project implementation – for example any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project; events and announcements related to the project; or assumptions and objectives of the project(s).

Important Notes regarding Audit Report

- The Audit Report comprises an important element of our assurance framework designed to ensure that funding has been spent in accordance with the Implementation Plan.
- The Australian Government requires Lead Agencies to appoint an independent registered auditor for this purpose (the auditor may be a state or territory government employee providing they have not been involved in delivery of the DRF).
- The scope of the audit is to cover a subset of projects (Material Projects) under Round Two of the DRF – i.e. those that meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - Actual start and/or end dates deviate by more than 12 months from the start and end dates originally approved in the Implementation Plan
 - Project risk rating as set out in the Implementation Plan is 'high'
 - Total actual expenditure at the conclusion of the project exceeds the originally approved project budget as set out in the Implementation Plan.
 - Where the total funding amount allocated to the state or territory:
 - is less than \$10 million, only projects that exceed 5 per cent of the state allocation are included
 - is equal to or greater than \$10 million, only projects that exceed 2 per cent of the state allocation are included
 - Any other project that the Australian Government determines should be included in the audit (note: Lead Agencies should check this with the NEMA before commencing an audit).

- The auditor’s opinion is to be based on the total actual expenditure that the state or territory government has set out in the Final Report/s, including any additional costs incurred against each project above the estimated project cost.

11.3 Financial declaration

Lead Agencies may be asked to provide a declaration that the funding was spent in accordance with the Schedule and to report on any underspends of the funding.

In the event where efficiencies or underspends are identified, successful Lead Agencies will need to outline the jurisdiction’s approach for determining how to reallocate funds. Section 20 of the *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009* (Cth) and subsection 21(4) of the DRF Act provides NEMA’s agreement with a successful Lead Agency must include provisions for DRF Funding to be repaid to NEMA where the Lead Agency does not meet a condition of the relevant agreement (see section 4 and 10.1)

NEMA will determine whether an amount should be repaid, and if so, how much should be repaid, with regard to the circumstances of each individual matter. The Schedule will set out the circumstances in which the successful Lead Agency must repay amounts to NEMA (see section 10.1).

11.4 Project visits

NEMA may visit Applicants during, or at the completion of, their project(s). NEMA will provide successful Lead Agencies with reasonable notice of any visit.

11.5 Evaluation

NEMA has established a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to evaluate the DRF to measure how well the outcomes and objectives of the projects have been achieved to ensure iterative and adaptive learning, informing future Australian Government actions. NEMA will also evaluate the design of the program to ensure experiences and outcomes from earlier rounds inform the development of future rounds and that the program remains fit-for-purpose.

As part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, NEMA will periodically evaluate past rounds. As part of the internal evaluation, NEMA may:

- use information from applications and reporting (see section 11.2); and
- interview successful Lead Agencies, including downstream partners and local governments.

The Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (**ANZEMC**), as the peak government committee responsible for emergency management will be given the opportunity to participate in the internal evaluation process.

11.6 Acknowledgement

The NEMA logo should be used on all public materials related to all projects funded under the DRF. If successful Lead Agencies and/or Applicants make a public statement about a project funded under the DRF, NEMA requires them to acknowledge the funding by using the following:

‘This [name of project] received funding from the Australian Government.’

Successful Lead Agencies should nominate a point of contact to liaise with the Australian Government on any media or announcements relating to the DRF. Successful Lead Agencies should notify NEMA and the Minister of Emergency Management’s Office regarding any planned announcements relating to the DRF and each project.

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The Minister for Emergency Management will make the first announcement about successful projects. A Lead Agency may request to be involved in a joint announcement with the Australian Government.

12. Probity and Privacy

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that application assessment and selection processes under the DRF are fair, performed according to these DRF Guidelines, incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and are otherwise consistent with relevant legislation.

These DRF Guidelines may be updated from time-to-time by NEMA. When this happens the revised guidelines will be published on NEMA's website at www.nema.gov.au. Lead Agencies will be advised in writing of changes to the Guidelines within 10 business days of the changes having been approved by the Minister.

In accordance with section s26A of the DRF Act, which details the exercise of the Minister's decisions regarding arrangements and grants made in the previous financial year, NEMA will publish an annual report that details financial decisions made in the previous financial year. The annual report will include, but not be limited to, amounts paid and payable under grants and/or other arrangements as well as the details of successful and unsuccessful projects (where written agreement to the latter is provided by Lead Agencies).

12.1 Enquiries and feedback

NEMA's complaints procedures are published on the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) website: www.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-and-support/departmental-forms/online-forms/complaints-compliments-and-suggestions. These procedures apply to complaints about the DRF. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

Any questions Lead Agencies have about decisions under the DRF should be sent to NEMA at disaster.ready@nema.gov.au.

If Lead Agencies or Applicants do not agree with the way their complaint is handled, they may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with NEMA.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

12.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance or integrity of the DRF. There may be an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest if, for example, a person:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government official or member of an external committee (including the Panel/s);
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict a Lead Agency from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives some form of benefit (for example, funding) under the DRF.

Lead Agencies will be asked to declare, as part of their application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If Lead Agencies later identify an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, they must inform NEMA in writing immediately at disaster.ready@nema.gov.au.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government officials will be handled as set out in the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct](#) (Section 13(7)) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#) (Cth). Panel members and other officials including the decision maker (the Minister) must also declare any conflicts of interest.

12.3 Fraud

Lead Agencies and successful Applicants must have appropriate frameworks in place to manage the risk of Fraud in relation to DRF funded projects. These safeguards must contain appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation and reporting processes and procedures.

If Lead Agencies or Applicants become aware of:

- (a) any Fraud in relation to the performance of DRF funded projects; or
- (b) any other Fraud that has had or may have an effect on the performance of DRF funded projects,

they must report the matter to NEMA and all appropriate law enforcement and regulatory agencies.

NEMA may, at its discretion, investigate any Fraud or claims of Fraud in relation to any project. By entering into funding agreements Lead Agencies agree to co-operate and provide all reasonable assistance at their own cost with any such investigation.

12.4 Privacy

NEMA treats personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting Lead Agencies know:

- what personal information we collect;
- why we collect personal information;
- how we use personal information; and
- who we give personal information to and why.

Personal information can only be used or disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about funding Lead Agencies and Applicants under the DRF as part of any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on NEMA website as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

NEMA will also identify Applicants and/or project delivery partners on the NEMA website when successful projects are published (except where requested not to).

NEMA may share the information Lead Agencies give NEMA with other Australian Government entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of the application, Lead Agencies must declare their ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles, as if they were an agency for the purposes of that Act and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that they engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information collected, used, stored, or disclosed in connection with the

activity. Accordingly, Lead Agencies must not do anything, which if done by NEMA would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

12.5 Confidential information

Other than any information available in the public domain, Lead Agencies agree not to disclose to any person, other than NEMA, any confidential information relating to the DRF, without NEMA's prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where Lead Agencies are required by law or Parliament to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

NEMA may, at any time, require a Lead Agency to arrange for a Lead Agency's employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to non-disclosure of our confidential information in a form considered acceptable by NEMA.

NEMA will keep any information in connection with the Schedule confidential to the extent that NEMA is satisfied it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. the Lead Agency has clearly identified the information as confidential in the application and explain why NEMA should treat it as confidential;
2. the information is commercially sensitive; and
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to the Lead Agency or someone else (including an Applicant).

NEMA will not be in breach of any confidentiality obligation if the information is disclosed to:

- the Panel/s and other Australian Government employees and contractors to help NEMA administer or manage the DRF effectively;
- employees and contractors of NEMA so NEMA can research, assess, monitor and analyse programs and activities;
- employees and contractors of other Australian Government agencies for any purpose, including government administration, research or service delivery;
- other Australian Government, state, territory or local government agencies in DRF reports and consultations;
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman, Privacy Commissioner, or National Anti-Corruption Commission;
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary; or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

12.6 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the DRF, may be subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (Cth) (**FOI Act**).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail:

Freedom of Information Coordinator
National Emergency Management Agency
PO Box 6500
Canberra ACT 2602

email: FOI@nema.gov.au

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Administration costs	The administration costs associated with implementing or managing a successful project under the DRF
Administration funding	Administration funding provided by the Australian Government to Lead Agencies to support the costs incurred by a Lead Agency associated with delivering the DRF program, including but not limited to coordinating and submitting the monitoring, reporting and auditing of projects. This funding cannot be used for project administration costs.
Adaptation	The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate change and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects. Includes adaptation for natural hazards, vulnerability, exposure risk and capacity to respond to natural hazards.
Applicant	A DRF project proponent that develops and submits a project proposal to a Lead Agency for consideration and possible submission to NEMA. A Lead Agency may also be an applicant.
Application	The application prepared and submitted by a Lead Agency to NEMA, encompassing project proposals for its jurisdiction.
Application Cover Sheet	The coversheet which is submitted by each Lead Agency and which encompasses all project proposals for which the Lead Agency is applying for funding. NEMA may only accept one overarching cover sheet per Lead Agency, except where a Lead Agency is applying on behalf of the Indian Ocean Territories.
Assessment Panel or Panel/s	The expert panel/s established to ensure the success of the DRF through impartial assessment of applications against the selection criteria and development of evidence-based recommendations for the Minister.
At-risk community	A community which is or could be disproportionately affected by the impacts of a disaster. This could be, but is not limited to, communities in an area at high-risk of a future disaster, have greater exposure to disasters due to climate change, and may include certain cohorts at disproportionate disaster risk (see definition).

Audit report	The audit report required to be undertaken by Lead Agencies upon completion of all projects in each round in accordance with the <i>DRF Audit and Reporting Framework</i> .
Co-contributions	The project funding provided (usually from, but not limited to the Lead Agency or Applicant) to match the funding sought from the Australian Government under the DRF. Co-contributions can be in-kind.
Cohorts at disproportionate disaster risk	Includes but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children and young people; • culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities; • First Nations communities; • LGBTQIA+ community; • migrant and refugee communities; • people over the age of 65; • people with a disability; • those experiencing homelessness, unemployment or poverty; • women.
Coordinator-General	The accountable authority of the National Emergency Management Agency.
Decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award Australian Government funding. The <i>Disaster Ready Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth) mandates the decision maker for funding as the Australian Government Minister responsible for emergency management.
Department of Infrastructure	The Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts which facilitates the delivery of state-type services to Australia's non-self-government territories (including the Indian Ocean Territories).
Delivery partner	A third-party organisation or entity that will collaborate with a DRF Project Applicant and/or Lead Agency to deliver, or deliver aspects of, successful DRF projects.
Disaster Ready Fund	<p>The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is provided for under the <i>Disaster Ready Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth), with operational guidance provided in the Disaster Ready Fund Program Guidelines (DRF Guidelines).</p> <p>The DRF provides up to \$200 million annually from 1 July 2023 to build resilience to, prepare for, or reduce the risk of future disasters, or build the long-term sustainability of communities that are at risk of being affected by a future disaster.</p>
<i>Disaster Ready Fund Act 2019</i> (Cth) (the DRF Act)	The legislation that established the Disaster Ready Fund.
Disaster	A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts.
Disaster risk	The potential loss of life, injury, or destroyed or damaged assets caused by a disaster, which could occur to a system, society or a community.

Disaster Risk Reduction	Disaster risk reduction is aimed at preventing new disasters, reducing existing disaster risk and managing residual disaster risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore work toward the achievement of sustainable development.
Eligibility criteria	The mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for funding under the DRF. Selection criteria applies in addition to eligibility criteria.
End date	The expected date that the project must be completed, within the three year project delivery timeframe (from date Implementation Plan is endorsed) and when all performance reporting and final milestone payments for all projects funded within a state or territory have been satisfied.
Endorsement	Written agreement from the relevant minister in a state or territory to the projects to be submitted by a Lead Agency to NEMA, including any multi-jurisdictional projects the Lead Agency is coordinating. This should include agreement to any co-contributions being provided by the state or territory government.
Exceptional circumstances	A circumstance which is such as to form an exception, which is out of the ordinary course, or unusual, or special, or uncommon. To be exceptional, a circumstance need not be unique, or unprecedented, or very rare; but it cannot be one that is regularly, or routinely, or normally encountered.
Federation Funding Agreement – Environment	<p>An agreement between the Australian Government and the states and territory governments under the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework.</p> <p>The FFA Framework can be conceived as comprising five elements: the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA FFR); the Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR) and its role as gatekeeper; the FFA architecture; the FFA Principles; and the administrative arrangements.</p>
Fraud	Fraud means dishonestly obtaining a benefit, or causing a loss, by deception or other means, and includes alleged, attempted, suspected or detected fraud.
Funding Shortfall	Project funding required that exceeds the funding allocated to a project under the Program. A funding shortfall will not be met by the Australian Government and is the responsibility of the Lead Agency
Green-Blue Infrastructure	For the purposes of this Program, Green-Blue Infrastructure is infrastructure that reduces risk of hazards for a particular community or communities, by delivering a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. It incorporates green spaces (or blue if aquatic ecosystems are concerned) and other physical features in terrestrial (including coastal) and marine areas. This includes, for example but not limited to, mangrove reforestation, greenways along floodplains or nature planning for heat management.

Grey Infrastructure	For the purposes of this Program, Grey Infrastructure involves engineered assets that reduce the risk of natural hazards for a particular community or communities. This includes for example but not limited to levies or cyclone shelters.
Implementation Plan	<p>Each Lead Agency must develop Implementation Plans in discussion with successful Applicants or delivery partners which encompass all projects under the Schedule and outline how each project will be managed (for Western Australia this includes any successful projects that are to be delivered in the Indian Ocean Territories).</p> <p>NEMA will provide a template and the Implementation Plan must be completed and provided to NEMA no later than three months after the commencement of the Schedule. A project cannot formally commence until NEMA has endorsed the Implementation Plan in writing.</p>
Indian Ocean Territories	The external territories of <u>Christmas Island</u> and the <u>Cocos (Keeling) Islands</u> , collectively known as the Indian Ocean Territories. The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, facilitates the delivery of state-type services to Australia’s non-self-government territories.
In-kind co-contribution	A non-financial co-contribution that provides equal value to 50 per cent of project costs (unless a partial waiver requested or co-contribution is part in-kind, part financial).
In-principle co-contributions	Co-contributions which are pending formal approval from the internal governmental or organisation approval process for securing funding. Where an in-principle co-contribution does not result in the actual co-contribution prior to the signing of FFA Schedules, the Minister may withdraw the Australian Government’s offer of support for the relevant project/s.
Jurisdictions	The six states and two mainland territories of Australia.
Lead Agency	One government agency in each state and territory (jurisdiction) that may apply to NEMA for funding. The Lead Agency has responsibility for coordinating proposals throughout a jurisdiction, and submitting the applications to NEMA on behalf of a jurisdiction. The Lead Agency may also develop DRF projects, and for these projects is also considered the Applicant.
Maladaptation	An adaptation that does not succeed in reducing vulnerability but increases it instead, including where intervention in one location or sector could increase the vulnerability of another location or sector.
The Minister	The Australian Government Minister for Emergency Management.
The Minister responsible for Territories.	The Australian Government Minister whose portfolio responsibility includes Australia’s non-self-governing territories.
Mitigation	The lessening or minimising of the adverse impacts of a hazardous event.

Multi-jurisdictional project (or national project)	A project that involves collaboration and delivery across two or more Australian states and territories (including national projects)
National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework (NDRRF)	Developed by the Australian Government and endorsed at the Council of Australian Governments meeting held on 13 March 2020, the Framework outlines the strategic priorities, drivers for action and guiding principles for national disaster risk reduction activities. It sets out the foundational work required nationally across all sectors, to reduce disaster risk, minimise new disaster risk, and deliver better climate and disaster risk information.
National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)	Referred to in this Program Guidelines as 'NEMA'. NEMA is the Australian Government agency with responsibility for preparing for and coordinating the Australian Government's response to disasters, across all hazards.
Nature-based solutions	Actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits. In the context of this Program, nature-based solutions refers to actions to protect, sustainably manage, conserve and restore natural or modified ecosystems to reduce disaster risk, with the aim to achieve sustainable and resilient development.
Natural hazard	A natural process or phenomenon that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.
Per capita	By or for each person. The Panel/s may consider a project's relative benefit per-capita.
Place-based	Place-based approaches focus on addressing the needs of a particular location by leveraging existing programs and/or filling gaps in service delivery. Lead Agencies and/or Applicants must have meaningfully consulted with relevant local governments and First Nations communities before submitting any project with a place-based focus.
Preparedness	Measures to ensure that, should an emergency occur, communities, resources and services are capable of coping with the effects; the state of being prepared.
Prevention	Measures to eliminate or reduce the incidence or severity of emergencies (including disasters).
Project proposals	Proposals for potential DRF projects, submitted to Lead Agencies which will categorise and may submit to NEMA as part of a jurisdiction's application.
Program (or DRF)	The 'Program' is the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF), administered by NEMA.
Program Delegate	A manager within NEMA with the responsibility for the program. The Program Delegate for the Program is NEMA's Assistant Coordinator General, Resilience and Community Programs Branch.

Public benefit	The benefits of the project that are not captured by a particular business, individual or other entity. Public benefits can include but are not limited to contribution to economic and productivity and profitability growth, improvements to the environment that are valued by the community, and increased social connection and resilience in communities.
Relevant minister	A minister with portfolio responsibility for a Lead Agency charged with coordinating and submitting applications on behalf of that state or territory. The relevant minister must endorse projects in their jurisdiction that will be submitted to NEMA. For the Indian Ocean Territories the relevant minister is the Australian Government Minister responsible for territories.
Resilience	The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.
Scaling / Scope	Process to reconfigure a successful project that can no longer be delivered to the outcomes agreed in the relevant Schedule under the FFA – Environment. This requires a business case to be submitted to NEMA for review and agreement.
Second National Action Plan	The Second National Action Plan to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework was released by the National Emergency Management Agency in August 2023. The Second National Action Plan aims to reduce systemic disaster risk in order to create stronger, more secure and more resilient communities before, during and after disasters.
Schedules	A bilateral agreement or funding agreement between the Australian Government and state and territory governments under the Federation Funding Agreement – Environment.
Sector/s	All sectors of society including government, industries, business, not-for-profit, communities and individuals.
Selection criteria	The specified principles or standards that project proposals must address and against which applications will be judged. These criteria are used by the Assessment Panel/s to assess the merits of proposals and determine application rankings.
Selection process or Assessment process	The method used to select projects to fund under the DRF in accordance with these Guidelines.
Social infrastructure	Social infrastructure is comprised of the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support the quality of life and wellbeing of communities.
Start date	The expected start date for the project, once the Implementation Plan has been endorsed by NEMA.
Systemic disaster risk	Systemic risks emerge from the interactions of climate change and natural hazards, with the complex, interdependent and interconnected networks of social, technical, environmental, and economic systems. These risks are not necessarily obvious using traditional hazard-by-

hazard risk assessments and revealing them requires an understanding of the degree of magnitude of failure across these systems that could suddenly or gradually exceed society's capacity to cope.

Underspend	Funds remaining from the actual cost of a project under the Program, which, at project completion as per the relevant Schedule have not been transferred to a third party account.
Value with relevant money	<p>Value with relevant money is a judgement based on the application representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>Assessing value with relevant money involves consideration of the relevant financial and non- financial costs and benefits of each project proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the quality of the project proposal and activities;• fitness for purpose of the project proposal in contributing to and achieving Program objectives;• if the absence of funding is likely to prevent Program outcomes being achieved; and• any relevant risks to NEMA, for example, rising from the Lead Agency's relevant experience and performance history.
Waivers	<p>Waivers of the 50 per cent co-contribution requirement can be applied for in exceptional circumstances (section 5.3)</p> <p>This could include applications for partial waivers (e.g. 25 per cent of the co-contribution). Waiver applications will be assessed by the Panel/s with the Minister as the final decision maker.</p>