BBRF Workshop - RDA Introduction

Presented by:

Glenys Schuntner

Chief Executive Officer
RDA Townsville and North West Queensland

RDA Introduction

- Australian Government funded

- 55 RDAs in Australia

- 12 in Queensland

- Not-for-profit incorporations

- RDA Townsville and North West Queensland incorporated December 2009

- Ministerial appointments of Chairs and Deputy Chairs; approval of Committee members

- Currently 9 Committee members

- Operate on $350,000 p.a. with 2 staff

- Cover 15 local government areas across ¼ of Queensland

Regional Development Australia Queensland Regions

Our vision is to achieve a prosperous, sustainable, cohesive and liveable region.

Our mission is to facilitate and advocate for regional economic development

Key deliverables:

1. Regional Roadmap – based on COAG's agreed framework
2. Provide advice to the Australian Government on critical issues
3. Priority Activities that RDA takes a lead or support role in
4. Project proposals
5. Promote Australian Government Programs

RDA New Charter

1. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to identify economic opportunities and leverage private and public sector investment to the regions;
2. Connect regional businesses, councils and industry sectors with international trade partners, financial markets and potential investors;
3. Promote and disseminate information on Australian Government policies and grant programs to state and local governments and industry, business and community sectors;
4. Support community stakeholders to develop project proposals to access funding;
5. Develop and maintain positive working relationships with the local government bodies in their regions;
6. Facilitate public and private sector decentralisation;
7. Assist in the delivery of Australian Government programs, where relevant and where requested by the Minister;
8. Engage with regional entrepreneurs and emerging business leaders to explore new opportunities to grow local jobs in their regions;
9. Provide information on their region's activities and competitive advantages to all levels of government, industry, business and community sectors; and
10. Provide evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on critical regional development issues positively and negatively affecting their regions

Building Better Regions Fund Successes Round 1

11 projects in Round 1 of BBRF secured a total of $14,667,381 in funding through both the Infrastructure Projects Stream and the Community Investments Stream. This enabled $16,893,799 of projects.

Successful applicants include:

- **Flinders Shire Council $4,109,075**
  - Hughenden Recreational Lake
- **Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council $9,994 432**
  - Bwgcolman Retail and Business Precinct Stage 2
- **Richmond Early Education Centre Inc $139,000**
  - New safe and functional children's playground and outdoor facilities
- **Burdekin Tourism Strategy $15,000**
  - Development of a tourism strategy
- **North West Queensland Quarry Management Strategy** $50,400
  - Coordinated management strategy for quarry and gravel pits
- **Burke Shire Economic Development Strategy $20,000**
  - Community-consulted economic development strategy
- **Strategic Business Plan for the Mutton Hole Conservation Park $24,474**
  - Consultation and develop a Strategic Management Plan to identify culturally and environmentally sensitive tourism opportunities
- **BeefUp Karumba $30,000**
  - Beef industry forum, trade show and networking activities
- **Gulf Savannah Regional Waste Strategy $20,000**
  - Develop a regional waste strategy for Carpentaria, Burke and Doomadgee
- **Mount Isa Rodeo Hall of Fame $130,000**
  - Collect, preserve and share Mount Isa's Rodeo's unique history through a multimedia gallery
- **Palm Island Didge Fest $135,000**
  - A music and cultural festival

National Stronger Regions Fund Successes

RDA has supported more than 150 regional projects with workshops on developing applications, 1-on-1 advice and letters of support for various grants

RDA has supported the National Stronger Regions Fund and helped regional stakeholders secure more than $19 million

- **Burke Shire Council $0.16 million**
  - Construction of a Pontoon Wharf in Burketown
- **Burke Shire Council $2.2 million**
  - Doomadgee to Burketown Fibre Optic Link
- **Burke Shire Council $0.994 million**
  - Upgrade to Burketown Wharf Precinct Project
- **Charters Towers Regional Council $8.69 million**
  - Upgrade to Water Infrastructure for Charter Towers
- **Mount Isa City Council $2.5 million**
  - Upgrade of Stage 2A Sewer Augmentation at Mount Isa
- **Palm Island AS Council $0.967 million**
  - Water and Sewerage Upgrades
- **The Corporation of the Diocesan Synod of North Queensland $2.9 million**
  - Redevelopment of St Mark's, Townsville
- **The Good Shepherd Limited Redevelopment $0.942 million**
  - The Good Shepherd Home Townsville

RDA Fund Successes

RDA supported the Regional Development Australia Fund Rounds 1 to 4 from 2011 to 2013 with more than $11 million secured by project proponents in our region

Regional Development Australia Fund

- **Hinchinbrook Shire Council $0.5 Million**
    - Acquisition and Refurbishment of Expanded Flood Free Premises
- **Palm Island AS Council $0.5 Million**
    - Development of a Floating Pontoon on Palm Island
- **Tec-NQ Limited $2 Million**
    - Regional Training Accommodation Facility
- **Townsville City Council $4.79 Million**
    - Magnetic Island Walkway Project – Nelly Bay to Arcadia
- **Act for Kids $3.4 Million**
    - ACT for Kids Child and Family Centre of Excellence

BBRF Workshop - Guidelines

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Building Better Regions Fund
Round 2

What is the Building Better Regions Fund?

- The $481.6 million Fund supports the Australian Government's commitment to create jobs, drive economic growth and build strong regional communities into the future.

BBRF | What does it offer?

There are two streams of funding available under the Program

- **Infrastructure Projects Stream** will support projects which involve the construction of new infrastructure, or the upgrade or extension of existing infrastructure that provide economic and social benefit to regional and remote areas.

- **Community Investments Stream** will fund the following community activities, new or expanded local events, strategic regional plans, and leadership and capability strengthening activities. These projects will deliver economic and social benefits to regional and remote communities. Infrastructure projects are not eligible for the Community Investments Stream.

BBRF | Infrastructure Projects Stream

Key Stream details

- The grant amount must be between $20,000 and $10 million.

- All projects must be ready to commence within 12 weeks of executing a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

- Projects must be completed 31 December 2020.

BBRF | Eligible Infrastructure Projects

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities may include:

- purchase of materials, **this can include fit out of the infrastructure such as ICT cabling, window dressings, fixed furniture**

- external labour hire

- plant and equipment hire

- external consulting costs directly related to the delivery of the construction.

Applicants can only spend grant and co-funding on eligible activities directly related to the project.

Ineligible Activities

Ineligible activities may include:

- purchase of land or existing infrastructure
- repair or replacement of existing infrastructure
- purchase and installation of manufacturing equipment and furniture
- ongoing operating costs including utilities and staffing
- **ICT equipment, including software or hardware that is not an integral part of the funded infrastructure project**
- payment of salaries for the applicant's employees
- project overhead items including office equipment, vehicles or mobile capital equipment. Examples include trucks and earthmoving equipment and the applicant's internal plant operating costs
- business case development and feasibility studies.

BBRF | Community Investments Stream

Key Stream details

- The Community Investments Stream will fund the following community activities, new or expanded local events, strategic regional plans, and leadership and capability strengthening activities. These projects will deliver economic and social benefits to regional and remote communities. Infrastructure activities are not eligible for the Community Investments Stream.

- The Community Investments Stream eligibility is the same as the Infrastructure Project Stream with the following exceptions:

  - the minimum grant amount is $5,000

  - projects must be completed within 12 months of executing a grant agreement

  - applications with a total eligible project cost of less than $20,000 do not have to provide any co-funding.

BBRF | Eligible Community Investments Projects

Eligible Activities

- Local events and activities
  - arts and culture events
  - community and public events
  - **attracting new businesses or economic opportunities**
  - community sporting events
  - events or activities which attract tourists and visitors to a region
  - **hire of equipment or infrastructure to support the event or activity**
- Strategic planning
  - regional skills audits
  - research projects to support regional development strategic plans
  - collecting socio-economic information
  - plan development costs
- Regional leadership and capability
  - leadership courses
  - participation and community building measures for young people
  - participation in activities to improve local business and industry leadership capability

Ineligible Activities

- Local events and activities
  - activities where the main benefit is intended to go to only one sector or group within the wider community
  - fundraising events
  - events for political/lobby groups
  - private events
  - **existing events or activities**
  - **possible or future unidentified events**
  - **purchase, refurbishment or extension of permanent infrastructure or assets that have benefits wider that the specified event or activity**

Ineligible Activities cont.

- Strategic planning
  - land use planning
  - service delivery planning
  - capital funding for research centres
  - feasibility studies or benefit-cost analysis for specific projects, including infrastructure development
  - **activities that the organisation undertakes as part of its usual business practices and responsibilities**
- Regional leadership and capability
  - vocational education and training (VET)
  - apprenticeships
  - higher education qualifications
  - funding education and training providers
  - funding for staff wages or leadership positions within an organisation.

BBRF | Who can apply?

Applicant eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be a local governing body or a not-for-profit organisation and have an ABN
- be undertaking a project in Australia in an included area.
  - If a project is in an excluded area, applicants must demonstrate in their application that project benefits flow directly to an included area.
- provide evidence confirming ALL co-funding is in place
- declare that they can comply with special regulatory requirements
- project activities that commence before execution of a grant agreement are not eligible for funding.

BBRF | Eligibility explained further…

Project Location

- Project location is an important concept under BBRF.
- The Mapping Tool is used to determine project location information.

- The project location is defined as where the project is undertaken as determined by its longitude and latitude.

- Project location informs:
    - eligibility in terms of excluded areas

  In terms of remoteness:
    - level of co-funding required
    - the loading that will be applied to assessment scores.

- There are five different remoteness classifications: remote, very remote, inner regional, outer regional and major capital cities (included area).

Differences between Round 1 and Round 2

Eligible project locations

- Changes have been made to the boundaries
- Previously ineligible project locations may be eligible under Round 2
- Projects can be located in an excluded area but project benefits must flow directly into an eligible area
- Mapping tool has been updated with new boundaries for Round 2.

Joint applications

- There are no joint applications under Round 2
- Applicants are still encouraged to have multiple funding partners
- Funding partners are listed in the Contributions section of the application forms.

Differences between Round 1 and Round 2

No minimum establishment period for not-for-profits

- Round 1 Infrastructure Projects Stream required not-for-profits to be established for at least two years
- There is no minimum establishment period under Round 2 for either stream

Audited financial statements not required

- All not-for-profit applicants must provide an Accountants Declaration
- Applicants must use the template at business.gov.au
- Declarations must be completed by a suitably qualified person
- The declaration confirms the applicant can fund its share of the project

Differences between Round 1 and Round 2

Reduction in mandatory attachments

The following documents have been incorporated as questions in the application form:

- Project management plan
- Business case
- Asset management plan
- Risk management plan
- Procurement plan

Attachment size limits

- Round 1 had a 2MB limit on individual attachment to the application form
- This limit has been removed for Round 2
- The total file size of all attachments to the application form cannot exceed 20MB

Differences between Round 1 and Round 2

No Office365 attachment solution for Infrastructure Projects Stream

- Mandatory attachments for both streams are attached directly to the application form.
- It is up to applicants to determine the evidence they provide within the 20MB limit.

Both streams are running together

- Round 2 opening and closing dates will be the same for both streams
- You can help applicants confirm which stream they should be applying for

Differences between Round 1 and Round 2

Other differences

- No information sessions during the application period
- No "local time" close of application period
  - Closing time is Tuesday 19 December 2017, 5pm Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time

BBRF | Mapping Tool

Using the Mapping Tool

- A Mapping Tool is available on business.gov.au/bbrf to help applicants determine the remoteness of their project.

- Applicants located in an area where internet access is limited may call the Contact Centre seeking assistance with determining remoteness.

- It is very important that applicants specify the correct remoteness classification in their application. An error may cause their co-funding to be inadequate and their application to be considered ineligible.

- To ensure accurate advice is provided, applicants will be required to email their project's location to the Contact Centre who will access the tool and enter the location to provide the applicant with results from the tool in writing.

BBRF | Mapping Tool (cont)

Mapping Tool example

What is meant by co-funding?

- Co-funding is the cash contributions from the applicant or sources other than the Commonwealth.

- The remoteness classification of the project location determines the co-funding requirement.

- Projects classified as remote or very remote require a 3:1 ratio of co-funding.

- All other classifications require a 1:1 ratio of co-funding.

- Where there is other Commonwealth funding for your project the total Commonwealth funding cannot exceed the 1:1 or 3:1 ratio.

Exceptional Circumstances Co-funding Exemption?

- Applicants may qualify for co-funding exemption which means they can opt to submit an application with no co-funding or less than the co-funding requirement.

- Applicants will need to demonstrate that their exceptional circumstances prevent them from meeting the co-funding requirement.

- Exceptional circumstances may include:
  - drought and/or disaster declaration
  - limited financial capacity of the local council
  - impact of industry decline
  - significant recent change in population or community demographics
  - other exceptional circumstances

- The Ministerial Panel will consider requests for exemption, if the request is not approved then the applicable will be ineligible.

BBRF | How to Apply

Applications will only be accepted during a funding round.

To apply, applicants must:

- complete the online application form at **business.gov.au/bbrf**

- provide all information (including mandatory attachments) required to assess the application.
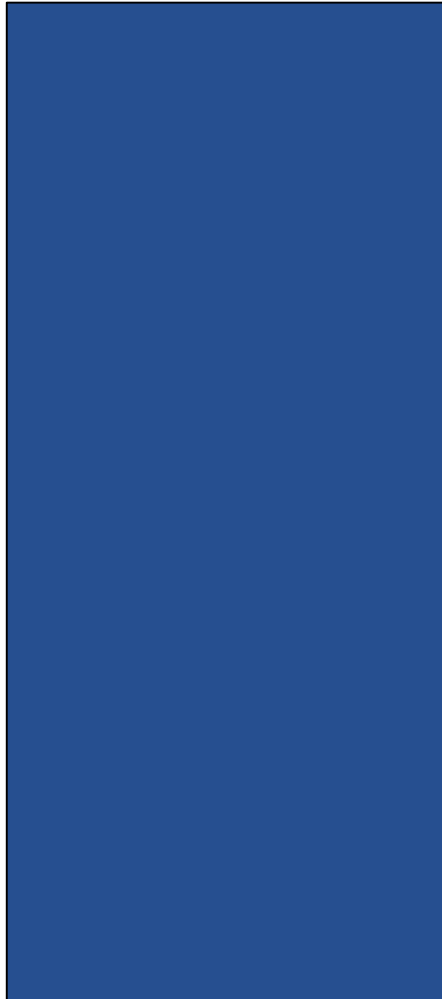
If applicants are experiencing difficulties submitting an application they may call the Contact Centre for assistance.

- Applications o
  close 5.00pm **A**
  both streams.

BBRF Workshop – Addressing the Criteria

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Chief Executive Officer
RDA Townsville and North West Queensland

Merit criterion 1 – Economic benefit

The economic benefit your project will deliver to the region during and beyond the construction phase (15 points)

Economic benefits for a region may cover increases in economic activity, improvements in productivity, wider access to markets or fairer and more equitable economic outcomes. For projects located in an excluded area, you must clearly demonstrate how economic benefits flow directly into an eligible area. Examples of how your project could demonstrate these economic benefits include:

 - increasing the number or value of jobs, new businesses or the production of goods and services in the region (this includes direct and indirect opportunities created through the project)

- providing opportunities for growth in existing sectors, e.g. tourism, agriculture, manufacturing
the use of local suppliers and goods

- increasing efficiency of the transport system or service delivery

- increasing Indigenous economic participation – including Indigenous employment and supplier-use outcomes

- the degree to which the project delivers benefits beyond the construction phase.

Economic benefit

1. **Provide the details of the problem or opportunity you are addressing, eg**
   - Long term unemployment
   - Youth unemployment
   - Closure of an industry or large employer
   - Growth of an industry with opportunity in your area – eg tourism, agriculture…

2. **Back it up with statistics, other data, surveys or reports, for example:**
   - www.qgso.qld.gov.au   Queensland Government Statistician's Office
   - www.abs.gov.au   Australian Bureau of Statistics
   - www.lmip.gov.au   Australian Government Labour Market Information Portal
   - http://www.tourism.australia.com/statistics.aspx Tourism Australia (TA) Statistics
   - http://www.tourism.australia.com/statistics/consumer-demand-research.aspx TA Research
   - http://teq.queensland.com/?redirect=www.tq.com.au Tourism and Events Queensland
   - http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares - Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Science
   - https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/ Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
   - Reports done by governments, industry associations, regional economic development organisations
   - Try doing a local survey – eg on surveymonkey if you cannot draw upon existing data from your community

Economic benefit

3. What are you going to do that will make an impact on this issue or capture this opportunity to create economic benefits? What is the output – the thing you build or do?

- In the case of Infrastructure projects, write about what is involved in the construction stage and the operational stage

- In the case of Community Investment projects, write about what is involved in the activity stage and the period beyond the activity

Tips
- Paint the picture of the stages of work, types of skills and people involved. What will be the final product/ output?

- Keep linking your story back to the problem or opportunity you are addressing

Economic Benefit

4. What are going to be the outcomes of your project? What are the benefits to your local economy, jobs, productivity in relation to the problem or opportunity you are addressing?
This must include not only qualitative statements but also numeric estimations based on economic impact assessments, or use of previous case studies that can provide an indication of the type and quantity of benefits that will be delivered.

- How many full-time equivalent (FTE) positions will work on the construction stage or in the delivery of the activity?
- How many FTE positions will be created directly in the operational stage?
- What further employment will be created as a result of benefits flowing on in the community?
- How many local apprentices will be employed? And how will that assist the growth of local businesses? How many volunteers will get on-the-job work experience to upskill for future employment?
- What type of new work and business opportunities and how many will be provided for Indigenous people?
- How will the project enable the attraction of new investment, new businesses, other new opportunities and quantify the expected investments?
- If you are delivering an event, how many people will attend? How much local expenditure/ economic contribution will it make?
- Will a road bottleneck be improved and what would be the increases in productivity for road users? Time savings? Cost savings?
- What will be the on-going benefits? Over what period? What future benefits can be catalysed?

Merit criterion 2 – Social benefit

The social benefit your project will deliver to the region during and beyond the construction phase (10 points)

Social benefits for a region may cover increases in regional amenity, improving community connections and inclusion and providing opportunities for learning and knowledge creation. For projects located in an excluded area (as outlined in section 6.1), you must clearly demonstrate how the social benefits flow directly into an eligible area. Examples of how your project could demonstrate these social benefits include:

- making a region a more attractive place to live

- improving community connections and social inclusion

- supporting or protecting local heritage and culture

- increasing community volunteering

- the degree to which the project delivers benefits beyond the construction phase/ project period

- addresses disadvantage within the community.

Social benefit

1. **Provide the details of the problem or opportunity you are addressing, eg**
   - Declining population – infrastructure and activities to attract and retain residents
   - Saving a heritage building and creating new opportunities for its use e.g. tourism, culture, community events
   - Disharmony, petty crime - creating greater community cohesion through community facilities and activities
   - Understanding disadvantage in the community and how facilities and activities can address that

2. **Back it up with statistics, other data, surveys or reports, for example:**
   - www.qgso.qld.gov.au   Queensland Government Statistician's Office - Socio-economic indicators
   - www.abs.gov.au   Australian Bureau of Statistics
   - http://www.tourism.australia.com/statistics.aspx Tourism Australia (TA) Statistics
   - http://www.tourism.australia.com/statistics/consumer-demand-research.aspx TA Research
   - http://teq.queensland.com/?redirect=www.tq.com.au Tourism and Events Queensland
   - Reports done by governments, community organisations
   - http://sistercitypartners.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Culture-Matters_Succinct_small.pdf - a report by Townsville City Council on the value of the culture sector with various case studies
   - Try doing a local survey – eg on surveymonkey if you cannot draw upon existing data from your community

Social benefit

3. What aspect of your project will make an impact on an identified social problem or capture the opportunity to create social benefits?

- In the case of Infrastructure projects, write about social benefits during the construction and/or operational stage.

- In the case of Community Investment projects, write about the social benefits in the activity stage and/or the period beyond the activity.

Tips
- Paint the picture of the way in which the project will deliver in regard to social benefits.

- Keep linking your story back to the problem or opportunity you are addressing.

Social Benefit

4. What are going to be the social outcomes and benefits of your project? What are the benefits to your local community in relation to the problem or opportunity you are addressing?

This must include not only qualitative statements but also numeric estimations based on economic impact assessments, or use of previous case studies that can provide an indication of the type and quantity of benefits that will be delivered.

- How will the project help create more equitable access to facilities and events and opportunities?
- How many people will directly and indirectly benefit?
- How will volunteerism be encouraged and how many volunteers will be involved?
- How will people of different backgrounds be involved and benefit and how many?
- How many Indigenous people will be included, involved and have access to the opportunities?
- How will the project enable the development of other new opportunities?
- If you are delivering a community focussed event, how many people will attend? How will they benefit? How will the community benefit?
- What impact with the project have on local crime?
- What impact will the project have on community cohesion?
- What impact will the project have on community planning and engagement in decision making?
- What will be the on-going benefits? Over what period? What future benefits can be catalysed?

Merit criterion 3 – Value for money

The value for money offered by your project (5 points)

You may demonstrate the value for money through identifying:

- the extent to which the project leverages additional funding (this includes cash contributions above the co-funding requirement and in-kind contributions)

- the extent to which the project leverages additional partnerships

- the likelihood of the project going ahead without the grant funding. Explain how the grant will impact the project in terms of size, timing and reach.

Tips
- Leveraging is king – the more the better
- Partnerships are powerful – increases complexity but can reduce risk; emphasises that a project is serious
- Demonstrating that a grant will get a project over the line to get started, or bring a project forward to more urgently address a critical need will add weight.

Merit criterion 4 – Project delivery

Your capacity, capability and resources to carry out the project (5 points)

You may demonstrate this through identifying:

- your readiness to commence the project with appropriate approvals planned for or in place

- your track record with similar projects including managing similar grant funding

- your access to people with the right skills and experience

- your access to infrastructure, capital equipment, technology, intellectual property

Other tips for success with BBRF - Planning

- Have your project well developed and as close as possible to "shovel ready"
  - If not well developed, consider applying for the next round

- Have a project and application development team with tasks and deadline dates set – use a gantt chart or other project management tools

- Understand the contract and reporting requirements should you be successful

- Understand the method for submission and register in advance

More tips for success in BBRF – Writing

- Put yourself in the shoes of the reader
    - Do they know where you are?
    - Do they understand distances?
    - Do they understand the scale of impact even if numbers are smaller in rural areas
    - Use percentages as well as numbers to make the case for the scale of impact
- Mirror language – eg key words in selection criteria
- Use clear and concise language, preferably third party
- Explain acronyms and use sparingly
- Focus on the positives
- Prepare and present accurate and realistic budgets – explain higher costs in remote areas
- Use appropriate supporting materials as prescribed
- Adhere to word limits

More tips for success in BBRF– Review and Submit

- Review
  - Independent
  - Every word – grammar, spelling, acronym creep, jargon
  - Double check the budget
  - Double check you have all required documents

- Submit
  - Comfortably before the deadline
  - Record and file all docs

RDA will help project proponents with:

1. Workshops on guidelines and addressing criteria in Mount Isa and Townsville linked by webinar to all across the region (29 November and 1 December)

2. 1-on-1 advice to individual project proponents about their project's alignment with the BBRF criteria – throughout the application period

3. Letters of support – requests can be made to RDA, at info@rdanwq.org.au, as long as the project aligns with RDA's vision and the draft application including answers to the 4 criteria are forwarded by the deadline

   1. Deadline for requests to RDA - 8 December

   2. RDA will provide a letter of support by 15 December

TOWNSVILLE AND NORTH WEST QLD

For more information on BBRF guidelines and rules
https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/building-better-regions-fund
Call 13 28 46 (AusIndustry)

To discuss projects, please contact
Glenys Schuntner, Chief Executive Officer
Ellie Edmonds, Executive Assistant
07 4410 3655; info@rdanwq.org.au