

# **Community Networks and Capacity Building Guidelines under the Australia's Farming Future Initiative**

## **Introduction**

This document provides the policy guidelines for the Community Networks and Capacity Building (CNCB) component of the Australian Government's Australia's Farming Future initiative. It outlines the policy aims, outcomes sought and key strategies to support these outcomes for the CNCB policy. The CNCB structure is shown in Figure One.

## **Aim**

The CNCB component will focus primarily on increasing the leadership and representative capacity of specific target groups to strengthen primary industry productivity and build rural, regional and remote community resilience to a changing climate. The target groups will include women, youth, Indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

## **Outcomes for Target Groups**

1. Increased awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries due to a changing climate.
2. Development of leadership and management skills among individuals and groups living in rural, regional and remote Australia to strengthen industry productivity and community resilience.
3. Improved engagement with target groups and increase participation in government and industry policy development (including industry boards and organisations).
4. Improved networks among individuals and groups in rural, regional and remote Australia using a range of mediums.

## **Strategies for Target Groups to Support Outcomes**

- Build knowledge and experience
- Increase access to tools and resources for strategic planning
- Develop leadership and management skills
- Develop pathways to increase participation in industry
- Develop skills to contribute more effectively to government and industry decision making
- Share knowledge and experience
- Build networks between rural, regional and remote Australians

## **Strategies for Government and Industry to Support Outcomes**

- Increase knowledge of how to effectively engage with and build the capacity of target groups

The CNCB outcomes will be supported through partnering with primary industry bodies, organisations and other government programs. Funds may be provided for a broad range of activities, including, but not limited to workshops, information sessions, leadership forums, training, mentoring activities and sponsorships.

### **The CNCB target groups**

The target groups may come from the variety of backgrounds, characteristics, beliefs, attitudes, languages, social circumstances, sexual orientation, gender history and age of those engaged in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

More specifically women, youth, Indigenous Australians, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds will be the key focus of the CNCB policy. Other target groups may be supported at the minister's discretion.

Individuals and organisations that participate in CNCB activities will be asked to:

- take-back their learning to the community—plan how they will communicate their learning to industry and community members.
- contribute to industry decision making—plan how they can take opportunities to engage in industry decision making.
- contribute to government decision making and the policy process—may be called upon on a needs basis to provide advice to government.

### **Funding Arrangements**

Up to \$2 million each year over four years will be allocated to projects aimed at meeting the CNCB outcomes and will be based on need, merit and in response to emerging issues.

Proposals for projects and sponsorships may be called for throughout the year, or awarded by the minister in response to emerging issues.

Funding will be distributed at the minister's discretion among individuals and/or organisations that focus on achieving outcomes related to the target groups. Consideration will be given to proposals that develop partnerships with industry bodies and key organisations. Proposals that show a pathway to self sufficiency, and long term benefits for the target groups and the policy intent will be given favourable consideration.

### **Communications Strategy**

The Australian Government has allocated funds for the four year duration of the Australia's Farming Future initiative to communicate the challenges and opportunities from a changing climate that face the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industry. The CNCB component will work with this communications element to reduce the potential for duplication and to ensure that education campaigns appropriately reach target groups. The CNCB communications component will be undertaken through a range of media so that the department can effectively engage with the target groups.

A communications strategy will outline the approaches for promoting the CNCB, advertising the availability of funding, engaging with target groups and showcasing achievements of CNCB outcomes.

### **Policy Review**

The monitoring and evaluation strategy for the CNCB component will be consistent with the Australia's Farming Future strategy. The CNCB component will be reviewed in conjunction with the overarching policy review of Australia's Farming Future. The review will consider the effectiveness of the CNCB component in achieving its outcomes.

### **Seeking CNCB Support**

The CNCB may support individuals or organisations from the target groups who are involved in agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Funding will not be provided to political parties, lobbyists or religious groups.

Organisations that are not incorporated under Commonwealth or state legislation may submit an application sponsored by an incorporated organisation. Under this circumstance, the sponsoring organisation becomes the applicant.

Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to:

- workshops to provide information, tools and build skills to support target groups within primary industries to adapt and adjust to a changing climate
- leadership training and mentoring programs to support target groups to gain greater representation on boards, and industry and government bodies
- workshops, seminars and skills training of target groups
- creation of networks to improve communications within and between target groups
- sponsorship for industry events, conferences or publications focusing on target groups

Ineligible activities will include, but are not limited to:

- retrospective activities (i.e. anything commenced before a Funding Agreement has been signed by the department)
- working capital for existing or ongoing operations
- remuneration and costs of personnel not directly engaged in project activity
- government funded agencies' salaries, overheads or other costs - except where a fee for service is normally charged
- ongoing training, mentoring programs, workshops, and forums which can be supported by other programs
- activities not related to portfolio responsibilities
- lobbying of government
- hospitality, which is defined as the provision of entertainment, food and beverages for existing and potential clients in expectation of commercial return (though this may form part of the benefits of a sponsorship arrangement)
- any other activities which are assessed as inappropriate upon application

Applications and proposed activities will be assessed by taking into account:

- the outcomes that will be achieved
- the level of in-kind contribution by applicants and partners
- demonstrated industry and community support for the project
- project viability and the applicants' viability and capacity
- ability to partner with other programs within and outside the department
- appropriateness of funding under the CNCB component (whether the activities are more appropriately funded under another program or in conjunction with another program)
- broader links to Australia's Farming Future
- consistency with Australian Government agriculture, fisheries and forestry policy objectives

The minister may form or draw on another program's advisory panel to provide advice on activities. The department will undertake an initial assessment of projects that may inform a panel's advice to the minister. The minister's decision about which projects are approved is final.

Where an application or applicant is based within the minister's electorate he will refer the matter to a relevant ministerial colleague for their final decision, in accordance with Australian Government policy.

Figure One

