

SW WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub Transformational Projects Program Guidelines

Call for Expressions of Interest from Hub Partners

The South-West WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub (SW WA Hub) seeks Expressions of Interest (EOI) from Hub Consortium Partners for projects that will result in transformational change within an agricultural system or of agricultural systems resulting in improved resilience to drought and climate change.

Background

The Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan (2020 – 2024) recognises that building drought resilience may require farmers and communities to make incremental, transitional, and transformational changes. The Plan describes:

Incremental change as the ability to preserve or restore a system by preventing, preparing for, or mitigating the impacts of an event or risk. For agricultural systems, incremental change could mean taking actions that maintain the current methods of production by farm businesses in a region to maintain the system in its current state, eg. changing sowing times or seed varieties for a similar or improved production outcome.

Transitional change as an intermediary form of adaptation and is the ability to maintain the essential functions and structures of a system by modifying or changing some of its characteristics in response to future adverse events or risks. Unlike incremental change, transitional change alters aspects of a system to maintain its core functions. For agricultural systems, transitional change could mean changing aspects of a production system, eg. climate-sensitive precision agriculture or diversification of crop types to continue the production of certain commodities in a region.

Transformational change is the ability to undertake wholesale change of a system when adverse events or risks make the current system untenable. Transformational change seeks new systems or significant modifications to current systems more appropriate to the changed risk landscape. For agricultural systems, transformation could involve farms in a region shifting out of certain production systems such as for particular commodities or adopting new production systems such as grazing or carbon farming, or a change within an existing system that is transformational.

In seeking out transformational projects, the SW WA Hub acknowledges that incremental changes (extensions of what is already done) and transformational changes, which involve the reorientation of agricultural activities, are neither opposed to nor independent from each other, and that incremental and transformative adaptations are in a unique cycle to adapt to global change.

Expressions of Interest

The barriers that farmers and communities face to undergo transformational change are significantly larger and more complex than those faced when making incremental changes. The size and complexity of the task to transform practices could mean individuals and communities are unlikely to act without support.

This program seeks projects that will investigate new and emerging systems or the significant modifications of current systems leading to transformational change of agricultural practices.

The SW WA Hub is seeking transformational project EOs from Hub Consortium Partners that ultimately lead to improved drought and climate resilience within Western Australia's agricultural systems.

Potential Activities and Outcomes

True transformational change can take years to develop and implement.

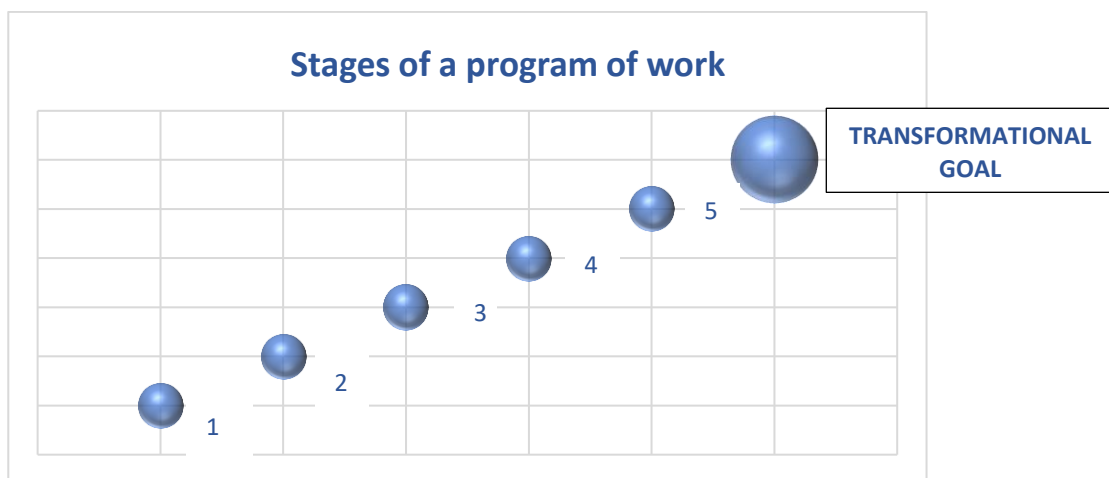
It generally involves developing a range of capabilities and new knowledge utilising many stages.

Given the project timeline the SW WA Hub does not expect the final development of transformational products or solutions.

Successful projects will be defined as the development of new or additional knowledge, processes or capabilities that ultimately enable a body of work to contribute to transformational change for an agricultural system or systems.

Projects must describe the development stage for this program of work. For example, projects may include desk top analysis, proof-of-concept feasibility, prototype, applied research and case studies.

Hub Partners are encouraged to partner with industry (growers, grower groups or commercial organisations) to investigate drought and climate resilience challenges, and to co-design projects.



Scope

Transformational projects should:

- Address a significant drought or climate challenge for the Hub region, as a guide please review the SW WA Hub [list of regional themes and priorities](#)
- Be designed to address a constraint to production and/or an opportunity to overcome such a constraint to transform agricultural systems
- Consider environmental, social, and economic impacts in the context of climate resilience
- Be associated with high-impact outcomes and part of a larger program of work



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- Where appropriate, bring knowledge or technical capability from other industries (health, energy, mining or defence).

Some Potential Questions to Consider when Developing an Application

Please refer to the application process, but some initial questions to consider are:

- What outcome are you wanting to achieve?
- Which problem are you trying to solve and for whom?
- How do you know your potential solution is genuinely transformational, as opposed to incremental or transitional?
- How will your potential solution improve climate resilience for farmers in Western Australia?

Protection of Ideas

The SW WA Hub will treat all submissions as confidential and owned by you, and will not, without the prior written consent from you, disclose or permit the information to any third party.

All information will be kept confidential for a period of five years commencing on the date you submit your application.

Intellectual property developed prior to or during the project will be retained by you and not by the SW WA Hub.

Other Requirements

SW WA Hub Consortium Partners are invited to apply to lead project applications through an EOI call.

Submissions that meet the EOI criteria will be invited to a full submission.

Collaboration is strongly encouraged, and end-user involvement will be required in the design and management of projects.

Matching in-kind contributions are essential and cash contributions will be highly regarded.

This is a targeted competitive grant available to SW WA Hub partners only. Hub partners can form a consortium with non-Hub partners.

Budget Guidelines

Up to 1 million dollars is available for this grant round.

Projects up to the value of \$250,000 (GST excluded) will be considered.

Ineligible Expenditure

The following activities or costs are ineligible for funding:

- any costs incurred prior to the project start date, or after the project has been completed



- general ongoing operational and administration expenses such as electricity, phone and rent
- work that duplicates other research activities
- purchase or acquisition of land or buildings
- major construction and capital expenditure
- purchase of vehicles
- payments to persons outside of Australia or for activities outside of Australia or involving overseas travel
- activities funded by other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies
- fundamental research
- activities involving policy advocacy
- litigation
- any other activities or costs that are not directly related to achieving the outcomes of this project.

Criteria

The following weighted criteria will be used to assess applications:

Criteria	Weighting (%)
Significance of the challenge and clarity of the project's objectives	15
Expected outcomes and impact	30
Project methodology	25
Capability of the team and co-design	20
Value for money	10

Project Duration

Project duration is 18 months and must be completed by 30 June 2025.

Timelines

Activity	Timeframe
Expressions of Interest (EOI) open	8 September 2023
Information session with Hub Partners	14 September 2023
EOIs close at 5pm AWST. Late submissions will not be accepted	13 October 2023
Assessment of EOIs by an independent panel	Three weeks
Successful EOIs notified and invited to submit full project proposal	3 November 2023



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Unsuccessful EOIs notified with feedback provided on their submission	3 November 2023
Full project proposals submitted with evidence of co-design with project partners and end-users, and co-investment	1 December 2023
Notification to successful applicants and contracting	15 December 2023
Earliest start date of project	2 January 2024
End date of project	30 June 2025

Further Information

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