



Request for Quote – September 2023

Capacity and Capability Review

Purpose

This RFQ seeks proposals from suitability qualified providers to undertake a research and development capacity and capability¹ review for the rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs).

Background

The rural Research and Development Corporations invest around \$800 million per annum in research, development and its adoption to advance the sustainability and productivity of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors. They are a key investment partner in Australia's innovation system and provide support for extension services.

RDC investment plays a key role in ensuring the maintenance of the capacity and capability of the agriculture, fisheries and forestry research institutions needed to support the innovation required by industry for current and future growth.

In some areas, RDCs are finding it increasingly challenging to access research and development capacity and capability. This includes some research partners either exiting agriculture, fisheries and forestry research, or changing the cost-structures around the provision of research and development.

RDCs are adapting and looking for new ways of investing and building partnerships which assist research institutions to maintain the capacity and capability the industry requires, while ensuring value for money for levy-payers.

This review will inform RDC consideration about the opportunities to invest individually and collaboratively to future-proof access to agriculture, fisheries and forestry research and development capacity and capability.

Objectives

1. Identify and prioritise the key areas of research need as identified by the RDCs to be evaluated.
2. Complete a review of agriculture, fisheries and forestry research and development capacity and capability against those priority areas which:
 - Map (and/ or a framework) of the current state of research capacity and capability (inc. short- and long-term investment)
 - Creates a shared language regarding research capability and capacity
 - Analyses the strengths and weaknesses (gaps) in research capacity and capability – not only to understand where there may be declines but also to understand where the effort is being placed – ie where there is an uptick in capacity and capability
 - Identifies the causes of gaps and/ or declining capacity and capability specific to Ag, fisheries and forestry (e.g. beyond universal considerations inc. aging population, competitive global/local workforce, skilled migration etc.)
 - Provides an understanding what research is being done internationally through partnerships / collaboration
 - Reviews the current strategies by RDCs to maintain (or build) research capacity and capability and assess their effectiveness
 - Determine the future state research capacity and capability (for 5 years, 10 years?)

¹ Definition of Research and Development Capacity and Capability

Research and development human resources and infrastructure located in government agencies, universities, CSIRO, and agreed commercial R&D providers available in Australia to provide services to RDCs. CRCs and non-traditional partners, such as accelerator programs, venture programs etc are included in this definition.

- Recommend individual and collective opportunities for RDCs to address research capacity and capability needs.

Opportunities – recommendations for action

1. Prioritised map (or framework) of RDC research needs assessed against current research capacity and capability
2. Future state research requirements identified with utilising scenarios and a gap analysis against current capacity and capability
3. Conceptualise future of work (roles, types of work) to inform job design based on anticipated capability and capacity needs
4. Opportunities (including novel approaches) for RDCs to individually or collectively address capacity and capability needs in ways which meet current needs and build to meet future requirements. This includes how RDCs and research partners might engage to collectively address the challenge.
5. Case studies of researcher partners working across RDC to showcase transferability, development and career pathways
6. Method / approach for RDCs to track and measure impact of capability and capacity prioritization and investment (long term)

Timeline

RFQ Closes 13 October 2023

Project commences late October concludes March 2024:

- Findings presentation Council meeting 7 March
- Final report 30 March 2024

Selection Criteria

1. Demonstrated understanding of the task – ability to identify the innovation landscape relevant to the RDCs including the key players and key challenges. Utilises existing capability work – eg Agrifutures and CSIRO Data61 scenarios
2. Track-record of delivery of similar projects
3. Project team bring appropriate skills and expertise against the Objectives
4. Capacity to deliver the project within the required timeframe
5. Value for money

Contact

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