NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION RESEARCH FACILITY

OUTLINE AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR
ADAPTATION RESEARCH NETWORKS

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MORE INFORMATION
GO TO: http://www.griffith.edu.au/research/nccarf/

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of this document

This document outlines the requirements and application process for Adaptation Research Networks (Networks) being established by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (the Facility). The document is divided into two sections:

- This first section provides background and contextual information; and
- The second section outlines the requirements and application process.

1.2 Context

Our climate is changing as a result of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and some degree of further change is inevitable regardless of efforts to reduce global emissions. Projected climate changes, such as sea level rise and more severe and frequent droughts and storms, will affect natural systems and human settlements. To adequately prepare for and manage this risk, decision makers need robust research on likely impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptation options.

Climate change impacts will be widespread in the economy, society and natural systems. Also, different regions will experience different kinds of climate change impacts. Australia will need scientific knowledge that is assembled in ways that can best inform decision-making that is relevant to the local conditions of sectors and regions.

Australia has substantial scientific, research and technical expertise that can help generate this information, but much of it is fragmented and dispersed. It will be important to fully harness this expertise nationwide and develop further expertise in areas where it is lacking.

Adaptation science is complex - spanning climate change science, sectoral and regional science, and research into management responses - and there is a need to facilitate multi-disciplinary approaches to support effective decision-making. Communication of science findings also needs to be strengthened. Decision-makers need clear guidance on what the science, taken as whole, is saying about the risks they face and the options for managing these.

To position Australia to manage the risks of climate change, the Australian Government is investing $126 million in climate change adaptation policies, programs and research through the Department of Climate Change (the Department). This investment will support implementation of key parts of the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in April 2007.

To underpin the development of adaptation strategies based upon sound scientific knowledge, the Department of Climate Change will be investing up to $50 million over the next 5 years to foster research efforts and to produce syntheses of knowledge about the state of adaptation science knowledge. An associated objective is to stimulate larger investments into these research efforts with contributions from research funding bodies, State governments, the private sector and other bodies and programs.

The research investment by the Department of Climate Change will focus upon strengthening adaptation research institutional capacity and upon investment in priority research tasks. The $50 million investment is being structured with 3 prime components:

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1 The Framework can be downloaded from www.coag.gov.au
1. up to $10 million to establish and manage a new Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (hosted by Griffith University);

2. up to $30 million for specific research projects to support implementation of the National Adaptation Research Plans (see Section 1.3 below); and

3. up to $10 million to support the activities of Adaptation Research Networks (as outlined in these guidelines).

The adaptation research networks will assist in the delivery of the information that policy and decision-makers need to determine climate change adaptation strategies and actions. The networks will be part of the newly established Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and will complement and enhance what is already happening in the research community in relation to climate change adaptation by encouraging and supporting collaboration. The networks will ensure that the research outputs of the Facility are formulated in terms that decision-makers can understand, are utilised in a practical way and delivered in an accessible format.

The research elements will be delivered through a partnership between the Department and the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility.

### 1.3 National Adaptation Research Plans

National Adaptation Research Plans will be the primary tool for coordinating adaptation research across the Australian research community. The Department will progressively develop research plans for priority vulnerable sectors in conjunction with the Facility and the networks. The Plans will identify critical gaps in the information needed by sectoral decision-makers, set research priorities based on these gaps, and identify science capacity that could be harnessed to conduct priority research. Plans will be developed in consultation with stakeholders, researchers and states and territories.

### 2. REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCESS

#### 2.1 Purpose

Submissions are invited from eligible organisations to host a network.

The hosts of the networks will use the Australian Government funding to build a collaborative, inclusive environment supporting creative, inter-disciplinary research that aims to: bridge gaps between fundamental and applied science and advance priority sectoral research; and to facilitate interactions between researchers to advance climate adaptation knowledge. The host institutions will work closely with the Facility to contribute to the synthesis of research relevant to a sector or region, and to ensure that all relevant expertise is harnessed to identify targeted research needs and facilitate the sharing of information.
2.2  Relationship to Australian Government and governance

The governance arrangements are illustrated in the following diagram:

The Networks will be hosted by a single research institution and will be part of the Facility. This means that:

- The funding agreement for each network host will be with the Facility.
- The work of the networks will be coordinated by the Facility, in consultation with the Department of Climate Change.
- Each Network will be required to develop an annual work program.

2.3  Roles

The Networks will work with the Facility to advance regional and sectoral knowledge about climate change impacts and vulnerability and adaptation options, and to foster an inclusive collaborative research environment, through:

1. Open exchange of information and sharing of resources.
2. Contributing to the work of the Facility in synthesising existing and emerging research and in developing National Adaptation Research Plans.
3. Contributing to the implementation of National Adaptation Research Plans, by assisting the Facility in the establishment of research teams.
4. Nurturing the careers of young investigators and research students by promoting a sense of community, collaboration and strong, effective mentoring, and encouraging them to shape the future direction of the research fields.
2.4 **Themes**

Priority will be given to establishing adaptation research networks with the following themes:

1. **Terrestrial biodiversity**: encompassing species- and ecosystem-level impacts of climate change and system adaptive capacities; and implications for biodiversity management strategies

2. **Primary industries**: encompassing systemic and industrial-scale impacts of climate change on horticulture, viticulture, livestock, cropping, intensive and extensive farming practices, forestry; the associated social and economic impacts; and sector- and region-specific adaptation strategies

3. **Water resources and freshwater biodiversity**: encompassing the impacts of climate change on surface and groundwater inland aquatic and semi-aquatic ecosystems; the associated social and economic impacts of changed water regimes; and potential adaptation strategies

4. **Marine biodiversity and resources**: encompassing the biophysical impacts of climate change and climate variability on coastal, estuarine and marine ecosystems, including fisheries, and their associated social and economic impacts and implications for management strategies

5. **Human health**: including changes to the entry, range and persistence of vector- and food-borne diseases; the physical and mental health impacts of heat waves and other extreme events; and the social economic and management implications of these impacts for the Australian health care system and health services

6. **Settlements and infrastructure**: covering the impacts of climate change on coastal settlements; public and private infrastructure including building and facility design and construction; urban water security; flooding and stormwater overflow; the social, economic and institutional implications of these impacts and implications for planning, design, and management and design of settlements and infrastructure

7. **Disaster management and emergency services**: implications of changes in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events for disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

8. **Social, economic and institutional dimensions**: Cross-cutting analysis of issues such as methods for understanding whole-of-economy impacts; affect of social and economic trends on vulnerability to climate change; understanding and developing adaptation strategies for vulnerable communities, especially indigenous and remote communities; and institutional challenges in adapting to climate change.

The Facility reserves the right to provide funding for outstanding proposals that do not cover one of the above themes. Similarly, if no applications of a sufficiently high standard are received for a nominated priority theme, no adaptation network will be funded in that area.

2.5 **Who can apply**

Applications for funding will be accepted from public or private research institutions. Each adaptation research network will be hosted by a single institution and funding will be provided directly to the host institution.

Applications may indicate that collaborations or partnerships have been established with private and public entities including industry bodies, government organisations, and non-government organisations. Proposals building on existing research networks will be viewed favourably.
2.6 Selection Criteria

The successful proponents will be selected based on the following criteria:

1. Capacity to coordinate a research network of national importance, and to fulfil the roles of the Network. The capacity of both the institution and the individual researcher nominated as the network convenor will be considered.

2. Ability to engage key researchers and organisations in the network, preferably through a formal mechanism such as membership of a consortium or partnership. This focus on collaboration is intended to encourage approaches that integrate different disciplines, researchers and institutions in generation of research outputs.

3. The proposed level of co-funding (both cash and in-kind contributions). The co-funding should be in addition to the normal activities of the organisation applying.

4. Degree of alignment with priority themes identified in section 2.4.

5. Value for money.

2.7 Available funding

Funding is available for up to eight adaptation research networks and may be awarded for up to five years from 2008. Each grant will be between $100,000 and $500,000 per annum.

Funding can be used for:

a) Personnel salaries and on-costs, including
   • A Network Convenor;
   • Research Associates and other support staff; and
   • Specialist professional staff located within major facilities and other appropriate settings.

b) Development or purchase of shared research resources, including:
   • Social surveys;
   • Software tools; and
   • Databases.

c) Activities bringing people together, including:
   • Workshops and similar meetings;
   • Planning, co-ordination and outreach activities; and
   • Travel and accommodation.

Funding may not be used to fund the following budget items
   • Capital works and general infrastructure;
   • Salaries of Researchers other than salaries for Research Associates and Research Assistants;
   • Special Studies Programs;
   • Student fees or HECS liabilities;
   • Computers and other information and communication facilities that duplicate existing capacity. Proposals requesting funds for computer and other information and
communications facilities must demonstrate how these facilities will complement or enhance existing infrastructure.

2.8 **Preparing an application**

The successful applicants will be chosen based directly on applications – there will be no expression of interest phase preceding selection. Proponents are required to submit the relevant completed application form.

Potential applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposal with the Facility before committing significant resources to developing an application.

Application forms and supporting information are available on request by contacting Marie Waschka on 07 37357786 or emailing m.waschka@griffith.edu.au.

2.9 **Role of Minister**

The Australian Government Minister for Climate Change and Water has sole responsibility for the final funding decisions. In making a decision, the Minister can draw upon any source of advice, including that of the Department of Climate Change and the Facility.

2.10 **Timing and submission**

Significant dates for applications are:

- Closing date for applications – Friday 6 June, 2008
- Announcement of successful candidates – July 2008
- Submission of detailed work plan for the first 12 months – September 2008

[Note: The Facility reserves the right to consider proposals for adaptation research networks after the official closing date.]

Applications may be submitted electronically via e-mail or by post to:

Marie Waschka  
Executive Officer  
National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility  
Nathan campus, Griffith University  
170 Kessels Road, Nathan  
Brisbane, Queensland 4111  
m.waschka@griffith.edu.au

2.11 **Assessing applications**

An application should:

- respond to the selection criteria; and,
- address anticipated activities, research outcomes and products, and the proposed collaborative arrangements.

Applications will be assessed by a panel comprising members of the Department and the Facility, with applications of high quality being recommended to the Minister for Climate Change and Water for her final decision.

2.12 **Communication of offers**

The Facility will write to successful applicants advising them of the Minister’s decision, and outlining any conditions associated with the Minister’s approval.
The Facility will then finalise a funding agreement with successful application, including incorporating any additional conditions required by the Minister as part of her approval. Unsuccessful applicants will also be contacted in writing by the Facility.

2.13 Confidentiality
The information provided by applicants in support of their applications will be treated as confidential by the Facility and the Department unless that information is already known to be in the public domain. Applicants should note, however, that information they provide may be provided to the Minister and that the Facility or Department may also be required or authorised by law to disclose certain information provided by applicants.

2.14 Budget, reporting and acquittals
Successful applicants will be required to sign a funding agreement with the Facility before funding commences. This agreement will cover the project budget, financial and performance reporting and acquittal, intellectual property, assets and data requirements.

A copy of the draft funding agreement can be accessed by contacting Marie Waschka, m.waschka@griffith.edu.au. Further information may be required from the applicant during the preparation of funding agreements.

2.15 Intellectual property
Prior to signing the funding agreement, the proponents will be required to describe any existing material for which intellectual property rights are either owned by the organisation or owned by a third party but which the organisation has a licence to use.

It is expected that intellectual property generated by this grant programme will be freely accessible and available to the government, end-users and the general public. Successful applicants will also be required to grant to the Commonwealth a permanent, irrevocable, free, world-wide, non-exclusive licence to use, reproduce, adapt and exploit the intellectual property derived from the funded research.