



**Australian Government**

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development and Communications**

# **BRIDGES RENEWAL PROGRAM ROUND FIVE PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview

Under Round Five of the Bridges Renewal Program (BRP), the Australian Government will provide up to 50 percent of the total cost of eligible projects that meet the program objectives. Proposals will be assessed against the Program criteria, with a total of \$150 million in funding available.

The Department will use the information provided in the Proposal Form to check eligibility and assess proposals for funding recommendation. Where appropriate, priority may be given to councils classified as Category C under Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements (DRFA) relating to natural disasters during the round. Proposals which have been lodged with the National Bushfire Recovery Agency (NBRA) or Emergency Management Australia (EMA) are not eligible for supplementary or additional funding under Round Five of the BRP.

These Program Guidelines (the Guidelines) apply to all proposals seeking funding under Round Five of the BRP. The Guidelines outline the objectives and desired outcomes of the BRP, eligibility and assessment requirements, the submission of proposals process, the assessment process, funding arrangements, and roles and responsibilities of the proponent and the Department.

Round Five of the BRP is being conducted concurrently with Round Seven of the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP). Separate guidelines for the HVSPP are available at [www.infrastructure.gov.au/hvspp](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/hvspp).

### 1.2 Program objectives and outcomes

The objectives of the Program are to upgrade and replace bridges to enhance access for local communities and facilitate higher productivity vehicle access. All proposals, including those from councils identified as Category C under DRFA, are expected to meet program objectives to enhance local communities by improving access and facilitating higher productivity, as well as addressing the challenges of enduring changes in climate.

Round Five is open to all state and territory governments, and local government entities eligible to receive [Roads to Recovery](#) funding. Proponents are encouraged to discuss priorities with local communities, relevant industry stakeholders, Regional Development Australia committees and state road agencies early in the process.

Round Five of BRP is being conducted concurrently with Round Seven of HVSPP. Under BRP Round Five and HVSPP Round Seven, local governments and state and territory governments can apply for funding for up to five proposals across either or both BRP and HVSPP. The amount of funding that can be sought by each proponent is set out in Section 3.2. Where proposals seek to improve access for heavy vehicles, proponents must provide assurances that all efforts will be made to ensure regulatory access (through the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator) is also gained.

## 2. KEY DATES

Event	Schedule
Round opens	17 March 2020 AEDT
Round Closes – (approximately 8 weeks).	29 May 2020 at 11.59
Expected Announcement of successful projects	July 2020
Expected Announcement of successful proposals from LGAs affected by natural disaster	Ongoing
Last date for Commencement of construction (scheduled)	12 months after signing of a Project Approval Instrument (instrument will be sent to proponents once signed by the Australian Government).
Last date for completion of construction (scheduled)	24 months after signing of a Project Approval Instrument (instrument will be sent to proponents once signed by the Australian Government).



### 3. HOW TO APPLY

#### 3.1 Proposal period

Proposals submitted under the BRP Round Five must be received by 11:59 pm AEST 29 May 2020.

**Late proposals will not be accepted. The Department's decision regarding acceptance of a proposal for assessment will be final.**

#### 3.2 Limits on requested funding

Available Australian Government funding is limited to a maximum of \$2 million per proposal for LGAs and \$2.5 million per proposal for states and territories. Proponents are limited to 5 proposals across either or both programs.

#### 3.3 Proposal requirements

Proponents must provide all information relating to the funding request in the Proposal Form. Incomplete proposals may be deemed ineligible.

Only completed proposals submitted by an authorised state, territory or council officer (e.g. Chief Executive Officer, Director of Engineering) of the organisation will be accepted and assessed.

Proposals may be withdrawn at any time by advising the Department at [bridgesrenewal@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:bridgesrenewal@infrastructure.gov.au).

Proposals must be accompanied by:

- a copy of an engineer's report no more than three years old;
- for natural disaster related proposals the engineer's report should detail the type of infrastructure damage and proposed remediation;
- a letter from the council confirming agreement to match Australian Government funding as evidence that they are ready to proceed.

Only those proposals identified as natural disaster related may be prioritised according to DCP and/or DRFA status.

#### 3.4 How to submit a proposal

**Proponents must use the Department's Infrastructure Management System to access and submit the Proposal Form. Proposals submitted by email will not be accepted.**

No information technology or program support will be available after 4.30 pm AEST on the closing date, so please ensure that you submit your proposal early to receive support if required.

#### 3.5 Confirmation of submission

A computer generated confirmation receipt for each proposal submitted will be sent via email. If you do not receive a receipt for your submission, please contact the Department at [bridgesrenewal@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:bridgesrenewal@infrastructure.gov.au).

**Please note that lodgment of the proposal signifies confirmation/acceptance that all information provided by the proponent is true and accurate.**

### 4. ELIGIBILITY

#### 4.1 Eligibility requirements

To be eligible under Round Five of BRP:

- Proponents must be a state/territory government, or local government entity eligible for [Roads to Recovery](#) funding. **(Private entities are not permitted to apply);**



- The bridge/s must be publicly accessible;
- Proponents must provide an engineer's report (not more than three years old) and a letter from the Council agreeing to match Australian Government funding, as evidence they are ready to proceed;
- In the case of proposals seeking funding for the repair/replacement of bridges affected by natural disasters, a current engineer's report detailing the level of damage and potential impact on the community must be provided;
- Proponents must contribute at least 50 percent of costs – which can comprise state/territory/council and/or private sector funding, including funding from other Australian Government funding programs including Roads to Recovery, and Financial Assistance Grants;
- Construction must not have commenced, or be due to commence, and tenders must not have been awarded. Construction means actual on ground works at the project site and/or the fabrication of major components off site. In the case of natural disasters, clearance of damaged infrastructure is not being considered commencement of construction where it directly relates to remediation proposals.
- Construction prior to Departmental advice that your project can commence may result in funding for the project being withdrawn by the Department;
- Construction must be scheduled to start within 12 months after the signing of a Project Approval Instrument and be completed no later than 24 months after the signing of the Project Approval Instrument;

An Eligibility Checklist is provided in the first part of the Proposal Form.

#### 4.2 What is eligible for funding?

- Bridge replacement proposals – proposals that seek to replace an old bridge with a new bridge;
- Bridge upgrade proposals – proposals that seek to strengthen, prolong the life of, widen and/or improve safety on the bridge;
- New bridges replacing an existing water crossing. including a new bridge to replace a culvert or causeway;
- Approach roads (reasonable length) associated with bridges.

#### 4.3 What is ineligible for funding?

- Bridges on the National Land Transport Network (NLTN). Please visit the Department website at [www.investment.infrastructure.gov.au/whatis/network/](http://www.investment.infrastructure.gov.au/whatis/network/) for more information about the NLTN;
- Proposals that are wholly or principally for maintenance;
- Any proposal which is being considered for funding, or is currently funded, by NBRA or EMA;
- Planning and design only proposals (can be included as a small portion in a capital expenditure proposal, but not as a stand-alone project);
- Rail bridges;
- Stand-alone cycle ways, foot bridges or stock bridges;
- Inspections and structural assessments;
- Causeways; and
- New bridges where no road or water crossing currently exists (i.e. Greenfield bridges).

### 5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The Department will assess proposals against the program criteria to develop an assessment score and make recommendations to the Minister who will make decisions on funding under the *National Land Transport Act 2014*. The value for money assessment and recommendations to the Minister may take account of the overall mix and funding source of proposals.

Proposals should be strategic and provide quality analysis and clear evidence about the needs and benefits of the proposal and how they relate to the program objectives of improving community access and productivity.



Evidence must be provided as part of the response to assessment criteria or in supporting documentation. Independent evidence is highly regarded. Examples of evidence include:

- Annual average daily traffic (AADT) readings;
- Executive summary page of Quantity Surveyor costing;
- Letters from local business providing data on current and future usage, or restrictions in increasing usage;
- Geo-spatial maps of agricultural usage surrounding the bridge;
- Executive summary or selected pages of regional strategic plans referencing the route/bridge; and
- Maps showing alternative routes if bridge is not available.

The size and content of substantiating documents, and the level of evidence to support responses to the assessment criteria, should be commensurate with the size, scope and the nature of the project. It would be expected that each criterion response would be one page or less, regardless of the size of the project.

Proposals will be appraised equally against each of the following assessment criteria:

- Assessment Criterion 1 – Structural Improvements Contributing to Access and Productivity;
- Assessment Criterion 2 – Evidence of Economic and Social Benefits;
- Assessment Criterion 3 – Construction Readiness and Risk; and
- Assessment Criterion 4 – State and Territory Input.

Note: Proponents are not required to address Criterion 4 as state and territory governments will be asked to provide input for ALL eligible proposals within their jurisdictions. Please note that state and territory agencies will use information provided in proposal forms to assist in providing input relating to proposals in their jurisdiction.

## 6. COMPLETING THE PROPOSAL FORM

Please ensure you read all the questions first before commencing your response. The proposal form reflects the natural disaster elements of these guidelines. Character limits apply to some sections of the form; these cells are locked to prevent additional information being added.

Some sections only require a number – where we have asked for a number, this must be provided (the form will not allow text to be added to these sections). You can cover off any additional details in your responses to each criterion.

Please note some tabs on the form require you to scroll down – please ensure that you have responded to all sections of the form prior to submission.

Proposals are assessed on the basis of the answers to questions in the Proposal Form, with attachments providing supporting evidence. Please do NOT respond to questions with “See Attached” or “data can be provided on request”.

Google Maps, photos and other relevant material can be attached to the proposal and should be provided within the criterion, or as attachments to the submission. Such material can be used to provide context and/or to demonstrate key points (e.g. location of services, poor standard of bridge, detours).

### 6.1 Project details

Project Name	The Project Name should be no more than 50 characters, including spaces. It should be concise and include the name of the bridge, the name of the road and the town.
Project Details	Provide a description of the project including bridge length, number of lanes and whether remediation following a natural disaster event forms part of the project.
Scheduled construction start date	Estimated scheduled Construction Start Date.
Scheduled construction completion date	Scheduled Construction Completion Date <b>MUST</b> be no later than 24 months from the signing of the Project Approval Instrument.
Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)	A BCR is optional under Round Five. However, where a BCR is available, it should be included as substantiation for your claims.



## 6.2 Proponent details

These details will be used for any correspondence with proponents. Please provide contact officer details, or a generic email that can be accessed by relevant staff.

If applicable the proponent's Category C classification under DRFA must be included.

If contact details change, proponents must notify the Department immediately. Please provide a generic email address for your project if you have access to one as this can assist in any follow up enquiries or correspondence.

## 6.3 Project budget

Proponents are required to complete the 'Project Budget' to provide a breakdown of total costs.

Note the Australian Government funding limits outlined at Section 3.2.

Please ensure you use whole figures, for example for \$17,500 use 17,500 and not 17.5 as the system will round this number.

## 6.4 Criteria

### Criterion 1 – Structural Improvements Contributing to Productivity and Access

The degree to which the upgraded bridge will be physically improved. Structural improvements can be demonstrated by, but not limited to:

- Increasing load limit;
- Increasing the number of lanes, flood resistance, safety or capacity;
- Extending the operational life of the bridge: and
- Reducing the vulnerability of the bridge to enduring changes in climate.

Claims against this criterion should be specific and measurable.

### Criterion 2 – Evidence of Economic and Social Benefits

The economic and social benefits to the community of the project including evidence to support these claims. The data provided for general and commercial/heavy duty vehicle counts (AADT) will be weighted to reflect the level of usage and, therefore, the significance of the infrastructure to community access and productivity.

Benefits could include (but are not limited to):

- Increased traffic capacity;
- Increased safety;
- Improved access; or
- Shorter trips, including time and distance.

Evidence could include (but is not limited to):

- General and heavy vehicle counts;
- Costs incurred by alternative routes;
- Potential to address issues of enduring changes in climate;
- BCR's (where available); or
- Letters of support that provide statements as to how the community, organisation or individual will benefit.

### Criterion 3 – Construction Readiness and Risk

The ability of the proponent and partners to undertake the project, including potential risks and proposed mitigating actions should the project proceed.



This may include:

- Past experience in delivering similar proposals within the required timeframes;
- Confirmation of other funding sources;
- Community consultation undertaken by the proponent with the community; or
- Risks have been adequately considered and mitigating actions identified.

Evidence could include but is not limited to:

- Planning or design work that has been undertaken, including if final designs have been completed;
- The progress of approvals and when all approvals are expected to be completed;
- Engineering assessments recently undertaken that provide a report on the current status of the bridge, particularly where proposals involve repair/replacement of natural disaster impacted infrastructure; or
- Project costings and how these costings were obtained.

#### **Criterion 4 – State and Territory Input**

No response is required under this criterion. State and territory governments will be asked to provide expert advice on the proposals and their suitability and appropriateness including consideration of how well the proposals meet the overall needs within their jurisdictions, independently of any proposal/s the State or territory government may be lodging under this Round. This advice will form part of the assessment process of eligible proposals and the Department will score this criterion to reflect the responses received from State and territory governments.

Please note that state and territory agencies will use information provided in proposal forms to inform their assessments under this criterion.

#### **6.5 Key Data**

This section seeks details about how the bridge will be altered by the project. It requests information on pre- and post-construction data including:

- Bridge dimensions;
- Number of lanes;
- Load limit;
- Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT);
- Heavy vehicle traffic; and/or
- Flooding – number of days per year, on average, that the bridge/road is subject to flooding.

For load limit, a number is required e.g. current load limit is 12 tonnes, post construction capacity will be 62 tonnes. SM1600 or similar descriptors will not be accepted. 'Unlimited' load limit can be entered as 166.

Location details are to be provided in this section also. Location Latitude and Longitude must be decimal degrees and a useful link is: [www.gps-coordinates.net](http://www.gps-coordinates.net).

An example of 'other location information' could be 15kms north of (town name) on (road/street name), or on (road/street name) between town x and town y.

Not all fields will be applicable to your project, however, information should be provided where it is available.

#### **6.6 Declaration**

The person making this declaration must be authorised to commit the proponent to undertaking this project if this funding proposal is successful in securing funding and to confirm that all information supplied within the form is true and accurate.





## 6.7 Conflict of Interest

This is a drop down box that requires a 'yes' or 'no' answer. Please see the information below to assess what your answer should be. If it is 'yes' please provide some details in the cell provided.

A conflict of interest may exist, for example, if the proponent or any of its personnel:

- Has a relationship (whether professional, commercial or personal) with a party who is able to influence the project appraisal process, such as a Department staff member;
- Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the proponent in carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or
- Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain as a result of the provision of funding under the BRP.

As part of their proposal, each proponent will be required to declare any existing conflicts of interest, or declare that to the best of their knowledge there is no conflict of interest that would impact on or prevent the proponent from proceeding with the project or any agreement it may enter into with the Australian Government as represented by the Department, if funding were to be approved under the BRP. Where a proponent subsequently identifies that an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest exists or might arise in relation to this proposal for funding, the proponent must inform the Department in writing immediately.

## 7. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

As proposals are received, they will be checked for eligibility. Once the eligibility checks are completed, each proposal will be individually assessed against the criteria. Eligible proposals will be scored against each criterion and totaled to give an overall score. Proposals will be subject to a Quality Assurance (QA) process to ensure that all proposals have been assessed correctly according to the information received. Following QA, eligible proposals, including scores and assessments, will be forwarded to the Minister for consideration and funding.

The Department may request further information to assist with the assessment or management of a proposal at any time. In recognition of the impact of changing climatic conditions in Australia, including the 2019-20 bushfires as well as ongoing drought and flood events, applications may be prioritised where appropriate, subject to councils' status under the DRFA and individual proposals are identified as natural disaster remediation specific.

## 8. DECISIONS

### 8.1 Value for money

Value for money is achieved when the processes, actions and behaviours employed by the Australian Government and proponents result in public resources being used in an efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner. Public resources are defined in the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* as "relevant money, relevant property, or appropriations."

The BRP seeks to promote value for money by selecting for funding those proposals that:

- have met all of the eligibility requirements;
- have clearly demonstrated value for money;
- have demonstrated the greatest relative merit in terms of the assessment criteria;
- involve a reasonable (rather than excessive) cost having regard to the quality and quantity of deliverables that are proposed; and
- have a risk profile that is acceptable to the Australian Government, with any identified risks able to be efficiently and effectively managed.



Value for money will also be considered on an ongoing basis during delivery of the project. This includes ensuring that Australian Government funding is accounted for in accordance with relevant Financial Regulations.

## **8.2 Decisions on proposals to be funded**

Proposals recommended to receive funding are presented to the Minister for funding considerations.

Following the Minister's agreement, the Department will contact all proponents to inform them of the outcome of their proposals. Unsuccessful proponents will be advised by email and will be able to seek feedback from the Department. Successful proponents will receive an email with information of the process to be undertaken to secure their funding. This will include a request to proponents to confirm the status of the project(s), confirm funding and costings and agreement to a progress reporting timetable.

Throughout the duration of the Proposal period, the Department will conduct eligibility checks and assessments of proposals as they are received. If the Department requires any further information, it may contact proponents in relation to details provided in the proposal form, to seek further information or clarification. The Department may impose conditions on funding.

Upon completion of proposal assessments, the Department will make recommendations to the Minister on proposals that are eligible for funding. A list of successful proposals will be available from the Department's BRP website at [www.infrastructure.gov.au/bridges](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/bridges).

Funding and reporting of successful proposals and payments to councils will be administered through state and territory governments under the National Partnership Agreement on Land Transport Infrastructure Proposals and the related Notes on Administration, available at <http://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/funding/proposals>.

## **9. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Payments for proposals in excess of \$100,000 of Australian Government funding, will be based on two milestones, with the Department's preference being for a 70/30 split whereby the Department will pay 70 percent of funding upon commencement of physical construction or the execution of the construction contract (Milestone One). The remaining 30 percent will be paid on evidence of completion of construction through the submission of a Post Completion Report (Milestone Two). The initial funding payment for proponents classified as Category C under the DRFA may include monies for work that has already commenced, e.g. land clearances. Further details are as follows:

- Proposals are funded on a maximum Australian Government contribution; however, if the Project encounters unforeseen overrun in costs, the Australian Government will consider requests for additional funding (up to 50 percent of the new total project cost) on a case by case basis, up to the limit of funding for the relevant stream.
- Where proposals are for the repair or replacement of natural disaster affected infrastructure, and the proponent holds DRFA Category C, funding may be available even if planning and/or preliminary clearance, not construction, work has commenced.
- The Australian Government will consider requests to apply savings from a project to other approved proposals; however, the reallocation of savings will remain within the state or territory that realised the savings.
- Any reallocation of savings will remain within each respective program but will be available across the different rounds of that program.
- The Department will include evaluation reporting within the Post Completion Report, including value for money considerations.
- The Department may impose conditions on funding.



## 10. PROBITY

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that the process for providing funding from the BRP is transparent and in accordance with published Guidelines. The Guidelines may be varied from time-to-time by the Australian Government, as needed or to reflect its priorities. Amended Guidelines will be published on the Department's website [www.infrastructure.gov.au/bridges](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/bridges)

For probity reasons, the Department can only provide advice of a general nature and cannot provide guidance or comments on draft proposals that could be considered as giving a proponent an advantage.

### 10.1 Confidential information

Information submitted by the Proponent may be provided to other organisations for the purposes of project proposal appraisal. In addition, successful Proposals will be made publicly available on the Departmental website.

Proponents should identify any information submitted which they wish to be considered as confidential, supported by reasons for the request. The Australian Government reserves the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential. The *Privacy Act 1988* applies to the handling of personal information about individuals obtained in the course of the delivery of the BRP.

## 11. PROCESSES FOR SUCCESSFUL PROPONENTS

If your proposal is successful, the Department will contact you via email. The Minister will have signed a letter to your state Minister, and if you are a council a letter will have also been sent to your mayor. In your email you will receive a copy of the Mayor's letter (if applicable) and an Offer of Funding form for you to complete. The due date for the Offer of Funding to be returned to the Department will be approximately 60 calendar days following receipt of the Offer. You will be advised of the exact date in your email, please ensure that your contact details are up to date. A generic email address is often best if you have access to one to cover staff absences.

**PLEASE NOTE – PHYSICAL CONSTRUCTION MAY COMMENCE ONLY AFTER PROPONENTS HAVE RECEIVED THE PROJECT AGREEMENT AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NO CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY, INCLUDING ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS OR OFFSITE PRE-FABRICATION CAN OCCUR PRIOR TO THE PROJECT AGREEMENT BEING ISSUED, EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF NATURAL DISASTER REMEDIATION AS PREVIOUSLY STATED.**

**Failure to do so may render your project ineligible and the Australian Government may withdraw its funding.**

### 11.1 Offer of Funding Form

The Offer of Funding form is a negotiation tool. You will complete it and the Department will liaise with you until an agreement is reached. The Offer of Funding form will ask you to provide confirmation of each of the following:

**Project Details** – you must confirm all details of the project including:

- advice that the project has not commenced, with the exception of ground clearances in the case of natural disaster affected infrastructure remediation;
- construction tenders have not been accepted;
- planning and development of the project is sufficiently advanced to ensure commencement within 12 months of signing of the Project Approval Instrument;
- any new risks have been identified; and
- if the budget and matching funding has been confirmed.



**Payment** – you will be asked to agree a payment schedule for your project.

- Where the Australian Government funding is \$100,000 or less there will be one milestone payment upon completion and submission of a satisfactory Post Completion Report.
- Over \$100,000, the first payment will be on evidence of the execution of a contract to deliver the project, preferably seeking 70 percent of Australian Government funding, with the remaining 30 percent paid upon the provision of a Post-Completion Report.
- All payments will be paid to the state/territory road agency in the first instance in all cases. Councils will need to make arrangements with their relevant road agencies for the on-forwarding of those payments.

The Offer of Funding must be returned within 60 calendar days of the date you receive it. Upon receipt of your Offer of Funding the Department will commence the formal approval process, which includes signing of a Funding Instrument and creation of a Project Agreement.

## **11.2 Project Agreement**

When approved, a copy of the Funding Instrument and Project Agreement documents will be sent to you. It will advise you that your project may now commence and will contain the following information:

- Formal Approval of funding;
- The agreed milestones and payment schedule;
- Reporting Requirements;
- Signage information;
- Events (Public Recognition) information; and
- Contact Details for the Australian Government and your state contact.

## **12. CONTACT DETAILS**

General enquiries can be either emailed to [bridgesrenewal@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:bridgesrenewal@infrastructure.gov.au) or proponents can contact the Department using the BRP info line on 02 6274 8040.

Written enquiries can be directed to:

The Director  
Bridges Renewal Program Round Five  
Infrastructure Investment Division  
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development  
GPO Box 594  
CANBERRA ACT 2601