

Department of Local Government and Regional Development



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL INITIATIVES SCHEME (WARIS)

Guidelines (2008/2009)

OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

The primary objective of this cross regional Scheme is to encourage, promote and support the sustainable development of regional Western Australia. Funding of up to \$250,000 per project will be available for projects which will assist in building the human, cultural and social capital necessary for sustaining regional communities. **Projects must affect two or more of the nine regions in regional Western Australia.** The regions of Western Australia are illustrated on the attached map. The State Government has allocated \$1.25 million a year for this Scheme for four years from 2005/06.

The Western Australian Regional Initiatives Scheme is a part of the Carpenter Government's \$80 million Regional Investment Fund.

The Scheme supports the Government's regional development policy, *Regional Western Australia – A Better Place to Live*. This policy embraces a triple bottom line approach, which integrates economic, social and environmental issues and opportunities. The policy aims to: strengthen regional economies by attracting investment and increasing jobs; enable regional communities to be more educated, healthy, safe and supportive, with an enhanced quality of life; and protect and value the environment. Applicants should refer to this policy document for more details (<http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/RegionDev/Policy.asp>).

The WARIS Scheme is administered by the Department of Local Government and Regional Development (DLGRD).

WHO CAN APPLY

The Scheme provides financial assistance to organisations to progress projects in regional Western Australia. Eligible applicants include community organisations, volunteer organisations, business groups, educational institutions, Aboriginal Corporations, philanthropic foundations, local government and State government agencies.

State government agencies need to be able to demonstrate that projects cannot be funded from their own budgets.

All community/volunteer and business groups applying for funding must be incorporated or have equivalent status.

This Scheme is not intended to provide support to individuals or individual businesses. Funding to individuals or individual businesses will only be considered where a significant benefit will accrue to the broader community or industry sector in regional Western Australia from a proposed project.

Non regional organisations may be eligible for funding where the project is carried out within regional Western Australia and meets all the Scheme's essential criteria as a minimum. Organisations outside WA maybe considered for funding if it is clear that the benefits will accrue to regional Western Australia.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED

Projects may be of a governance, social, economic or environmental nature and should contribute to the achievement of outcome priorities of the Regional Development Policy in two or more of the nine regions in regional Western Australia.

These outcome priorities include:

- Research and development on regional issues and opportunities;
- Improved access to business guidance and training for both start-up and established businesses;
- Enhanced capacity of regional communities, including Indigenous communities, to plan and manage their futures;
- Improved access to, and participation in, arts and cultural activities, physical activity, sporting activities and recreational pursuits;
- Implementation of lifelong learning initiatives that enhance the quality and diversity of regional life;
- Adoption of best management practices in natural resource management;
- Effective management of environmental risks whilst achieving market benefits in the agriculture industry.

Specific priorities may be set for project funding in each year. If so, these will be available from the Regional Development Commissions and the Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Examples of projects which may be funded include:

- Skills and capacity–building programs, such as mentoring and coaching, developing on-line training courses;
- Festival and arts events/tours in regional WA;
- Leadership programs;
- Research which is clearly related to the Regional Development Policy outcomes;
- Time-limited pilots or trials.

This list is not exhaustive.

WHAT CANNOT BE FUNDED

Projects relating to one region only are not eligible for funding under this Scheme.

Requests for retrospective funding where projects have been completed or commenced prior to receiving WARIS approval.

The following items of expenditure are not eligible for WARIS funding:

- Capital works
 - Purchase of capital equipment (eg office furniture, computers).
 - Purchase of physical infrastructure (eg land, buildings)
- Recurrent costs
 - Recurrent costs such as operating costs and salary costs would not be considered beyond a reasonable initial period to instigate the project. The intent of this Scheme is not to fund operating costs for existing staff.
- Other projects which are best funded by another element of the Regional Investment Fund, such as the Regional Infrastructure Funding Program, the Regional Development Scheme and the Indigenous Regional Development Program. Applicants for WARIS should also refer to the guidelines for these programs to see which source of funding best suits their project. More information about these programs is available at

www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au. Enquiries can also be made to the relevant Regional Development Commission. A list of contacts for the Regional Development Commissions is attached.

- Funding applications for feasibility studies, business and marketing plans, cost benefit analyses, marketing research, economic impact studies, conferences etc, for more than \$20,000 will be considered but will be accorded a low priority.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA USED FOR ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Essential:

1. The project must involve positive regional development outcomes in two or more of the nine regions in Western Australia and be of State significance.
2. The project must demonstrate that it will result in a positive social, environmental, and/or economic return to regional Western Australia.
3. Applicants should have the in principal support of at least two of the Regional Development Commissions from the regions affected by the project, although a letter of support is not required at the time of application.
4. Applicants must demonstrate that they have thoroughly investigated alternative sources of funding and that reasonable effort has been taken to access funding from other sources.
5. All voluntary and community groups applying for funding must be incorporated or have equivalent status.

Desirable:

1. Applicants should demonstrate a high level of commitment to the project through sourcing other project funding or a direct financial contribution.
2. Projects should have substantial flow-on effects or demonstrate a high degree of innovation and have support from local government and key regional stakeholders.
3. The project should promote partnerships (ie between the community/business sector and government; or across/between various levels of government).
4. The project should be a priority established by a regional or community planning process.

INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR ASSESSMENT

Submissions must be made on the approved application form and must include:

1. Name, address and contact details of the applicant.
2. Comprehensive project description including its aims and objectives. As a guide, applicants should write at least 100 words on this item. Information is to include estimated start and completion dates.
3. Funding category indicating which area of Government priority for regional development the project addresses.
4. Organisational structural arrangements, including a copy of the organisation's Certificate of Incorporation or an equivalent legal status document.
5. Information on how the project satisfies each eligibility criterion.

Applicants should prepare their applications by addressing each of the five (5) essential and four (4) desirable eligibility criteria as detailed in the guidelines under 'Eligibility Criteria for Access to the Scheme'.

Please note that this section requires the applicant to make contact with the Regional Development Commissions from regions affected by the project to discuss the proposal. Applicants should contact the relevant Commissions a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the application closing and provide the Commissions with a draft of the application. A letter of support from the Commissions is no longer required to be attached to the application. However, letters of support from local government and key regional stakeholders and letters of support from co-funding bodies would greatly enhance the application.

6. A detailed cash budget for the project including the amount of funding (exclusive of GST) requested through the Scheme. Full disclosure of all co-funding sources is required. The budget must also include:
 - Thoroughly costed cash budget including detailed list of items of project expenditure.
 - All resources of contributory funding identified and realistically costed including quotations where appropriate.
 - A division of the total project budget between items that are to be funded by WARIS or by other funding sources or by the applicant.
 - An estimate for audit costs. Audit costs which fulfil accountability requirements for WARIS expenditure are eligible items for WARIS funding. Audits must be prepared and signed by a qualified, independent auditor.
 - If applicable, the amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST) applicable to the project should be added.
7. Information demonstrating that the applicant has adequate planning and management experience and expertise (including financial skills) in managing projects of this type. As a guide, applicants should not write more than 150 words on this item.
8. Details on how any in-kind contributions have been calculated and will be acquitted.
9. Information that demonstrates that the viability of the project is not dependent on ongoing funding or continuing Government support. In particular, applicants must demonstrate how recurrent funding will be sourced.
10. Where applicable, details of planning, environmental or any other related licences, permits or approvals which have been, or will need to be, obtained to allow the project to proceed.
11. Details of previous Government (Federal or State) support provided to the applicant organisation within the last three years for similar projects.
12. Tax information including applicant's ABN number.
13. Declaration by the Chief Executive Officer or equivalent that information supplied is correct.

Applicants should discuss their project and the application process with the relevant Regional Development Commissions. Applicants should have the in principal support of at least 2 Regional Development Commissions from the regions affected by the project, although letters of support are no longer required to be attached to the application.

The Department reserves the right to make such enquiries as deemed appropriate in the assessment of the application and may contact other agencies or organisations to discuss aspects of the bid.

THE TYPE OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Financial assistance of \$5 million has been allocated to this Scheme over four years (commencing financial year 2005/2006). Financial assistance can include grants, loans or State taxation concessions.

The provision of financial assistance under this Scheme is limited to a maximum of \$250,000 for each project and is dependent on the availability of funds. Funding can be provided for more than one year.

Applications for less than \$10,000 will generally not be accepted. The applicant may receive an offer for WARIS of full funding, part funding or be declined funding. Successful applicants must satisfy all of the Scheme's essential criteria as a minimum.

There will be one funding round per year to allocate \$1.25 million per year. Further submissions may be accepted throughout the year, at the discretion of the Department, as long as unallocated funding remains.

All payments will be made in progressive instalments unless the applicant can demonstrate that the project is unable to proceed without upfront financial assistance. Progressive payments/instalments will be made subject to the applicant providing the Department with

- sufficient information (including a written report) indicating that the project is proceeding satisfactorily and has reached agreed milestones as detailed in the Financial Assistance Recipient Agreement; and

- a statement of income and expenditure, to the date of the progressive payment/instalment claim, signed by the applicant's Chief Executive Officer or equivalent. The statement should include details of eligible project expenditure compared to budget.

Funding will not be provided retrospectively. Any expenditure must occur after the grant approval.

THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Each application will be assessed against the scheme's criteria by the Department of Local Government and Regional Development with input from the relevant Regional Development Commissions. Applications will then be submitted to an Advisory Panel for recommendation to the Minister for Regional Development. The Minister for Regional Development will make decisions on grants for amounts up to and including \$150,000. For amounts greater than this that are recommended for funding, the Minister will make a recommendation to the Cabinet Standing Committee on Regional Policy, which will make a decision for endorsement by Cabinet. The Minister may recommend supporting an application that does not meet all the eligibility criteria if particular benefits or exceptional circumstances can be shown to apply.

The Advisory Panel of three (3) members will be convened by DLGRD and consist of:

- a nominee of the Director General, Department of Local Government and Regional Development, to Chair;
- A senior representative from Healthway
- A senior representative from the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Senior representatives from relevant Regional Development Commission(s) will be invited to comment to the panel on projects in their region. Representatives from other Government agencies may be invited to comment to the panel on projects related to their agency or client groups (for example, Dep't of Culture and the Arts). The panel's assessment and any other invited assessments will be made available to the Cabinet Standing Committee on Regional Policy.

Successful applicants will be notified by the Minister. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised in writing by the Department. Successful applicants should be aware that funding will generally be approved subject to conditions being met.

In view of the number of applications received in previous rounds, it is likely that funding outcomes will be announced three months after applications close.

It should be noted that the number of eligible proposals will most likely exceed the financial resources that are available for this funding round and, therefore, comparisons and judgements will be made on the basis of the degree to which the project fulfils the objectives of the Scheme. Finite resources and grant priorities may result in proposals being declined even if they meet the criteria.

CONDITIONS & OBLIGATIONS THAT APPLY TO SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Before receiving funds, successful applicants are required to sign a Financial Assistance Recipient Agreement outlining the conditions of the financial assistance. As a condition of funding, all financial assistance recipients are required to provide detailed acquittals to DLGRD within twelve (12) weeks of the conclusion of the project.

This acquittal must include:

1. Details on how the funds were expended.
2. Audit report (prepared and signed by a qualified independent auditor) of a Statement of Income and Expenditure for the project, showing funds were expended in accordance with the application and used for the purpose for which they were provided. This Statement of Income and Expenditure for the project to be signed by the Chief Executive Officer, Chairperson (or equivalent) of the recipient organisation.
3. An evaluation report outlining the effectiveness of the project.

Financial assistance recipients should be prepared to provide public recognition to the Department for the financial assistance provided.

Successful applicants will be required to commence approved projects within 6 months of the date of approval by the Minister for Regional Development. The offer of funding may be withdrawn after 6 months unless a suitable time extension can be negotiated.

If the project is likely to extend beyond 12 months, successful applicants must provide the Department with a current status report on the project 12 months after funding is provided.

Any monies not spent for the purpose for which they were provided must be refunded to the Department.

Applicants need to be aware that where the applicant or a person employed by the applicant (including those employed on a casual or voluntary basis) are to be working with children, then the necessary assessment notices pursuant to section 12 (1) (a) of the Working With Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 need to be obtained from the Department of Community Development. Please contact the Department on 6217 8100 for information about who is required to have a Working With Children Check. Prior to funding being granted, the applicant will be required to advise the Department in writing that Working With Children Checks have been completed.

TAX INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The Department of Local Government and Regional Development is registered for GST and has been issued with Australian Business Number (ABN) 88 549 163 437. The Department regards financial assistance under this Scheme as payment for a supply. GST-registered financial assistance recipients will therefore be liable for GST in connection with the financial assistance.

For GST-registered financial assistance applicants, the Department will increase the financial assistance by the amount of GST payable. GST-registered financial assistance applicants must provide the Department with a tax invoice for the GST inclusive value of the financial assistance unless the Department and applicant have agreed in writing to the issue of a Recipient Created Tax Invoice. Payment will not be made until the Department receives a tax invoice or an agreement to issue a Recipient Created Tax Invoice. The applicant acknowledges that the financial assistance provided is consideration for a supply to the Department and that the GST component will be included in the applicant's next Business Activity Statement lodged with the Australian Taxation Office.

For applicants not registered for GST, the Department will *not* include GST. Nor will it reimburse an unregistered financial assistance recipient for GST paid or payable to a third party. Unregistered financial assistance applicants must provide the Department with an invoice for the amount of the grant.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Clients are informed that the Department is subject to the WA Freedom of Information Act, which provides a general right of access to records held by State Government agencies and local government authorities.

Clients should also be aware that information pertaining to the receipt of State Government financial assistance will be tabled in the Western Australian Parliament. This information could include the name of recipients, the amount of the assistance, the name of the project/activity and, possibly, a brief description thereof. This could result in requests for more detail to be released publicly.

Should you require any further information in relation to this issue, please contact the Department's Freedom of Information Coordinator on 9217 1500.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details on the scheme, applicants should contact their local Regional Development Commission or the Financial Assistance Branch at the Department of Local Government and Regional Development in Perth.

Gascoyne

Carnarvon 9941 1803
Exmouth 9949 2090

Mid West

Geraldton 9921 0702
Mt Magnet 9921 0785

South West

Bunbury 9792 2000
Collie 9734 2322
Manjimup 9777 1555
Busselton 9752 3257

Goldfields-Esperance

Kalgoorlie 9080 5000
Esperance 9083 2222
Leonora 9037 6944
Ravensthorpe 9838 1885

Peel

Mandurah 9535 0000

Wheatbelt

Northam 9622 7222
Moora 9651 1770
Narrogin 9881 5888
Merredin 9041 1445

Great Southern

Albany 9842 4888
Katanning 9821 3211

Pilbara

Port Hedland 9173 8400
Karratha 9185 0600

Kimberley

Kununurra 9168 1044
Derby 9193 1444
Broome 9193 6795

Department of Local Government and Regional Development (Perth)

Tel: 9217 1500 or Freecall: 1800 620 511 or visit the Department's web site:
<http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/FinancialAssist/RIF.asp>

APPLICATION LODGEMENT PROCESS

Applications should be submitted on the Departmental form provided by the due date to:

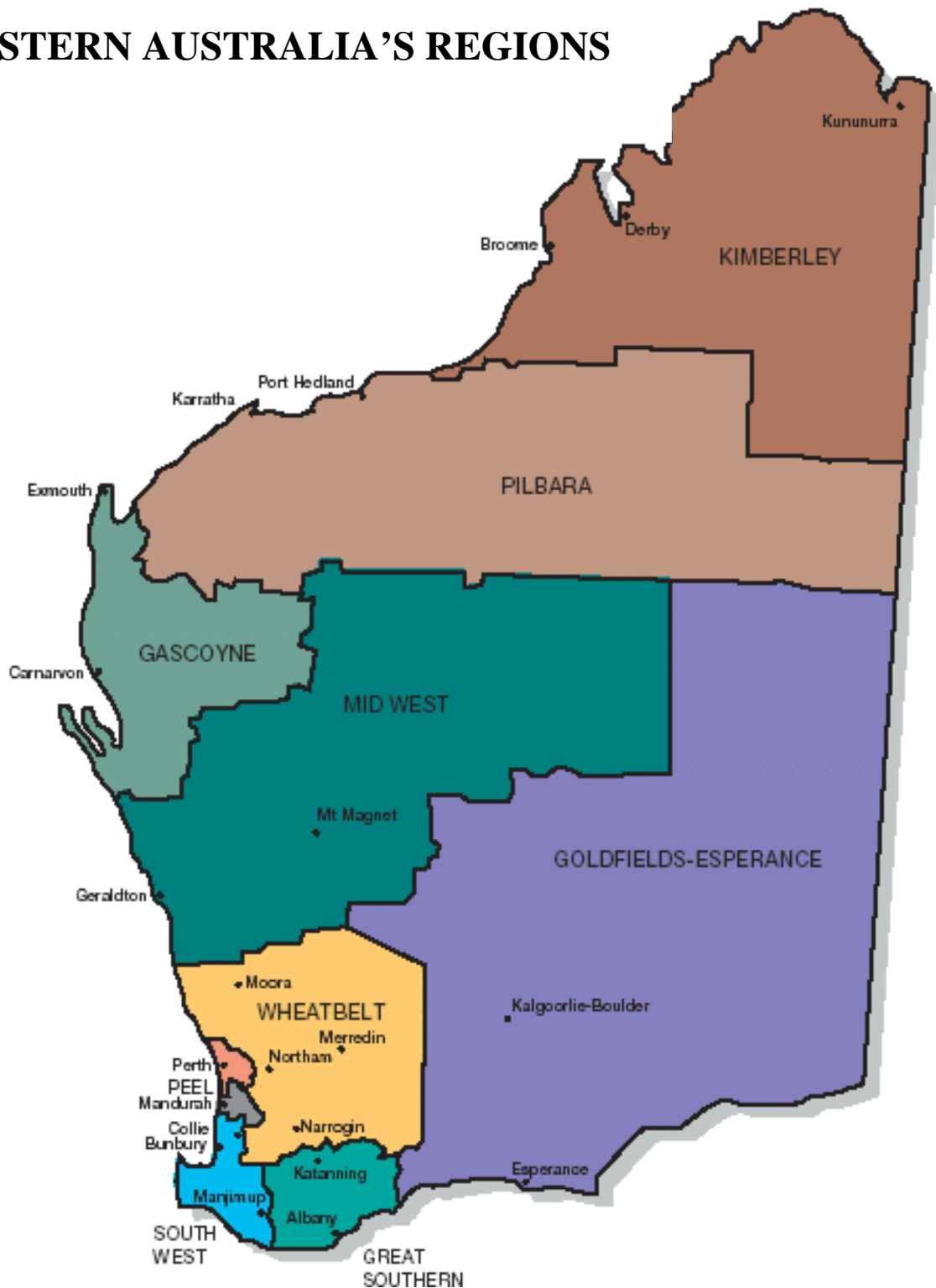
Financial Assistance Branch
Department of Local Government and Regional Development
GPO Box R1250
PERTH WA 6844

Street Address:

Department of Local Government and Regional Development
Level 1, 2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Please note that the original application plus four additional paper copies of the application are required to be lodged by the due date. Late applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S REGIONS



The project must affect two or more of the nine regions in regional Western Australia and be of State significance.