



ASSESSING RESEARCH APPLICATIONS TO THE GWRDC

INTRODUCTION

The Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation (GWRDC) has a two-stage application process for R&D support within its mainstream programs. This initially involves a brief Preliminary Project Application and, when requested by the GWRDC, a more detailed Final Project Application.

All preliminary and final research proposals submitted to the GWRDC are assessed against the criteria outlined below by at least one GWRDC staff member. The research proposals and any recommendations are submitted to the GWRDC R&D Committee for consideration. The Committee comprises at least three non-executive directors and the Executive Director. The Finance and Compliance Manager and the R&D Program Managers attend the meetings. The R&D Committee makes a decision about whether to seek a Final Project Application, and in the case of Final Project Applications, makes recommendations to the GWRDC Board about whether or not to fund a research proposal.

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

There are some activities that will not be considered for funding by the GWRDC. These are:

- 1) Activities that relate to the furthering of political objectives of individuals, companies or industry associations;
- 2) Advertorial activities aimed at marketing the products of individuals, companies or industry sectors and/or associations; or
- 3) In circumstances where there is no market failure. This refers to activities which the GWRDC could reasonably expect to be provided by the private sector (the market) on a cost recovery/profit basis.

If a majority of the R&D Committee members is of the view that a proposal falls within one or more of the categories above (the Preliminary Questions), the applicants will be informed in writing that the proposal will not be considered for funding.

For proposals that do not fail because of one or more of the Preliminary Questions, the assessment criteria described below is used by the GWRDC staff members to provide an assessment of the proposal to assess the potential value of individual proposals and to assist the GWRDC to rank proposals in order of greatest priority and value to industry.

If individual members of the R&D Committee feel unable to properly assess an application, other internal or external reviewers may be sought (on the basis of expertise) at the discretion of the Committee. In all cases, at least four individual reviewers will be used during assessment.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Applicants must demonstrate that the work outlined in their application will **either**:

- 1) Deliver research outcomes to the Australian grape and wine industry that have a clear economic, environmental or social benefit and/or contribute to the sustainability of the industry, or the Australian community; **or**;
- 2) Generate fundamental knowledge or research capacity that is to the long term benefit of industry, or the Australian community and/or has potential to produce knowledge that benefits other priority areas of research.

Proposals will be assessed against the following:

- 1) Alignment to industry priorities (as identified in the GWRDC's 5 Year R&D Plan (which is informed by a broad spectrum of industry participants and industry R&D priority setting bodies and Government));
- 2) Feasibility of the proposed work and quality of the research plan;
- 3) Novelty of the proposal including a clear demonstration that the work is not duplicating other ongoing or previous research;
- 4) Appropriateness of collaborations (and an indication of the *value* that will be contributed by any potential collaboration);
- 5) Value of the proposed outcomes to industry in light of the scale of the total proposed investment (including consideration of the contributions, cash and in-kind, from co-funding agencies) and;
- 6) Whether the benefits will be deliverable or are capable of being delivered to industry, taking into account the nature of the research, the proposal timelines and adoption/extension activities.

Particular criteria are outlined in the following section. The GWRDC has the discretion to amend any or all of these individual criteria at any stage of the approval process.

Assessment Criteria

Will this proposal deliver outcomes that will:

- be in an industry ready[#] form in a timely manner?
- be feasible as defined in the research plan?
- be good value for the scale of investment?
- be novel and not duplicate other work?
- be of clear benefit for wine industry?
- clearly address industry research priorities?
- develop fundamental new knowledge or capacity?
- include appropriate collaborations?

[#] The 'industry readiness' of project outcomes is dependent on the nature of the research. Applied projects will need to demonstrate a well considered path to adoption by the end users, fundamental projects will need to demonstrate the beneficiaries of knowledge developed and the manner in which it will be used for the longer term benefit of Industry.

Each proposal will be assessed against each criteria listed above using a rating scale. If the R&D Committee are of the view that there is neither a high, nor some likelihood that the outcomes of the proposal will be or are capable of delivering of clear benefit to the wine industry or the Australian community **or** that it will develop fundamental knowledge or capacity, applicants will be notified in writing that their proposal will not be considered further for funding by the GWRDC.

DECISIONS

Preliminary Project Applications

The assessment criteria outlined above is initially used to assess Preliminary Project Applications. Following these assessments, the R&D Committee makes a decision about each proposal. The decision is either that:

- (i) the proposal is declined; or
- (ii) a Final Project Application is to be sought from the applicant (together with any recommended changes to the proposal).

Applicants are then notified of the decision in writing.

In requesting a Final Project Application, the GWRDC may suggest changes to the preliminary proposal, ask for additional information or advise of a revised funding amount that ultimately may be made available. The applicant will also be advised of the deadline for the submission of the Final Project Application. GWRDC staff can assist applicants with any requests made by the GWRDC in putting together their Final Project Application.

Final Project Applications

Once received, the full Final Project Application (with any suggested amendments) is then assessed against the same assessment criteria outlined above. Following this assessment, the R&D Committee makes a recommendation to the GWRDC Board about each proposal. The recommendation is either that:

- (i) the proposal be declined; or
- (ii) the Final Project Application be approved for funding (together with any recommended conditions).

Applicants are then notified of the Board's decision in writing.

In approving the funding of a proposal, the GWRDC Board may approve funding for all or part of a Final Project Application and may attach conditions to any approval. GWRDC staff will work through any required changes with applicants prior to issuing a contract.

FUNDING THE PORTFOLIO

The GWRDC will invariably receive more fundable proposals than are affordable within the GWRDC's budget for new projects in any given year. Assessing each application against the above criteria assists the GWRDC to rank the proposals and allows the GWRDC to identify and prioritise new investments that will potentially deliver the greatest benefit to Industry. In the event that GWRDC revenue falls dramatically and cuts to existing projects are necessary, the above criteria may also be used to assist the GWRDC to rank the value of existing investments.

If a proposal addresses the criteria above but is not be funded due to restrictions on the total budget available for new projects, applicants will be informed in writing of the criteria against which their proposals ranked lower, compared with other fundable proposals.

All recommendations by the R&D Committee to fund or not to fund proposals are presented to the GWRDC Board together with access to all original documents.