



# **National Institute for Forest Products Innovation**

## **Launceston Hub**

### **Call for Project Proposals Briefing Document**

### **Research and Development Projects - Round 1**

#### **Program Objective**

The Launceston hub of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI Launceston Hub) aims to grow Australia's forest and forest products industry by exploring and facilitating innovation in the forest products sector in areas such as forest management, timber processing, wood fibre recovery, value adding, advanced manufacturing and the bio-economy.

Innovation is defined as an idea that translates to a solution that industry adopts.

#### **Outcome Statement**

"Improving the returns to industry and the community from our plantation and native forest estates consistent with their sustainable management".

NB: The outcome statement for the NIFPI Launceston Hub is consistent with the Vision and Growth Objectives outlined in *Transforming Australia's Forest Products Industry (Recommendations from the Forest Industry Advisory Council)* and in *the Tasmanian Forest Industry Growth Strategy (A Strategic Growth Plan for the Tasmanian Forests, Fine Timber and Wood Fibre Industry, MAC 2017)*.

#### **Round 1 Priorities**

The NIFPI Launceston Hub is calling for project proposals to conduct research and development projects in (but not limited to) the following priority areas relating to Tasmania's forest resources:

- i) improved utilisation of the forest resource
- ii) new product development
- iii) non-timber forest products and services
- iv) improved efficiency and safety along the supply chain

*Note for applicants:*

Projects need not be limited to these priority areas if they can demonstrate innovation in the forestry sector in Tasmania and can demonstrate potential benefit across a wide cross-section of Tasmania's forest industry. There is an expectation that outcomes of projects will have national applicability where practicable and relevant.

## Eligibility

### **Applicant eligibility**

To be eligible for funding from the NIFPI Launceston Hub, the applicant must:

- have an Australian Business Number
- have (or be able to partner with and/or acquire) the demonstrated operational capability and expertise to successfully deliver and operate the project
- not be subject to any legal disability, including bankruptcy or liquidation
- identify governance arrangements for project delivery where more than one entity is involved in project delivery
- have evidence of support from Tasmanian industry partners.

*Note for applicants:*

- a) To enhance broader industry reach of project outcomes, joint applications are encouraged and may include registered Research Service Providers as appropriate.*
- b) Applicants can only receive one grant in round 1 as a Lead Applicant, but may be listed as a partner or contributor on, or be a beneficiary from, more than one Project.*

### **Project eligibility**

To be eligible under the NIFPI Launceston Hub, a project must demonstrate innovation and that its outcome(s) will benefit Tasmania's forest industry. There is an expectation that funding support from industry will be obtained for the project. Projects that can demonstrate nationally significant outcomes and leverage industry funding are encouraged and will be considered favourably.

## Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be judged on the quantum of deliverables within the NIFPI Launceston Hub term. Applicants must be able to complete funded activities within the nominated timeframe for the project, and within less than three years from project commencement.

Eligible projects will be evaluated against the following five evaluation criteria, which have equal weighting. However, projects must meet all criteria to a minimum sufficient standard to be considered for funding.

### **1. Level of Innovation**

The NIFPI Launceston Hub specifically aims to encourage innovations throughout the forestry and forest products sector.

### **2. Economic Benefits**

The contribution of the project towards industry growth and employment levels including potential to lead to improved returns from Tasmania's forest resource. Applications should preferably contain a cost benefit analysis of the project outcomes.

*Note for applicants: This criterion will be used to assess the importance of the project to the broader forest industry and the Tasmanian community rather than the importance of the project to the applicant's business. Applicants are encouraged to provide evidence of the widest range of industry support possible.*

### **3. Financial Capacity**

The applicant's financial capacity (or a financial strategy) to cover project costs not proposed to be funded through the NIFPI Launceston Hub.

*Note for applicants: The applicant must clearly demonstrate the level of investment to be made by the applicant, partners and industry in the project and how that investment is to be supported by the applicant. The investment may include both cash and in-kind contributions, and may identify funds contributed, or leveraged, from other sources including other funding programs.*

### **4. Project Feasibility**

The feasibility of the project including aspects such as:

- a) The degree to which the applicants proposed methodology and rationale is feasible and will achieve the project outcomes;
- b) Quality of the proposed project;
- c) Capacity of the applicant to deliver the proposal including: key personnel and project team skills, the collective suitability of team members (including any partners if applicable), technical, management and professional capabilities; degree, appropriateness and currency of experience; team composition, size and appropriateness;
- d) Pathway to industry adoption including: economic benefits and timeline for impact.

*Note for applicants:*

- a) *In addressing this criterion applicants must include a statement detailing any issues that will be critical to the success of this project and indicate the proposed approach and methodology to be used. A project outcome delivery program should also be provided.*
- b) *All team members proposed to be engaged in the project must be detailed in the application.*

### **5. Value for Money**

- a) Proportion of project costs required to be provided through the NIFPI Launceston Hub.
- b) Timeframe to achieving stated project outcomes.

*Note for applicants:*

- a) *Projects that require a lower proportion of their total project costs to be provided by the NIFPI Launceston Hub will be rated higher.*
- b) *Projects that have shorter timeframes to achieving tangible, beneficial outcomes for the forest industry will be rated higher.*

## **Intellectual property (IP)**

The Institute recognises that, given the level of public funding being provided to the program, project IP can be held as commercial in confidence only for the minimum amount of time required for it to be appropriately protected and made accessible to third parties. Background IP and Third Party IP will remain the property of the party providing it to the research project, unless otherwise agreed.

In managing IP, researchers will need to demonstrate that they have IP policies and procedures in place that are understood by staff and contractors.

IP arrangements will be agreed and detailed in the project funding agreement.

Queries regarding IP can be directed to Chris Lafferty, Manager, Research Development and Extension, FWPA, ph. (03) 9927 3220 or [Chris.Lafferty@fwpa.com.au](mailto:Chris.Lafferty@fwpa.com.au)

## **NIFPI Launceston Hub Offer**

It is expected that there will be at least two funding rounds under the NIFPI Launceston Hub. Importantly, this round (Round 1) is the only one offering the opportunity for funded activities of up to three years duration.

To ensure the best projects are rewarded under the NIFPI Launceston Hub, a flexible approach will be maintained (within the constraints imposed by NIFPI Launceston Hub cash flows) in determining both the total \$ quantum allocated in this round and the \$ quantum awarded to individual projects.

There is a total of \$4 million available under the entire NIFPI Launceston Hub. Indicatively, the grants are expected to range from \$50,000 to a maximum of \$500,000 for any one project. However, applicants with projects considered to rank strongly against the evaluation criteria that exceed this amount should not be discouraged from applying.