1. Snapshot of the Flexible Funding Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of the program</th>
<th>Flexible Funding Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide flexible funding to 73 local governments to implement projects that will support their community’s human and social recovery following a number of natural disasters and to be better prepared to respond to and recover from any future disaster events. Project priorities will be identified using community development and engagement activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding available under this initiative</td>
<td>Funding for this program will be provided through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (Category C – Community Recovery Fund). Jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Background

Following a series of natural disasters (flooding, cyclone and monsoonal rain) across Queensland from November 2010 to March 2011 the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) was activated to help support recovery. On 21 February 2011, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) was established as a statutory authority to ‘reconnect, rebuild and improve Queensland and its communities and economy’ through the development and implementation of the State Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (State Plan). Within the State Plan there are six lines of reconstruction, including ‘Human and Social’ recovery.

On 6 April 2011 the Queensland Premier Anna Bligh announced the $20M Community Development and Recovery Package and wrote to Councils informing them of the funding amounts they will receive. The Community Development and Recovery Package is provided through the NDRRA Category C – Community Recovery Fund and is designed to provide assistance to enable a more holistic recovery of communities severely affected by an eligible disaster event. It was agreed that the Australian and Queensland Governments fund the package on a 75:25 basis.

The Community Development and Recovery Package ($20 million) includes the following three components:

(a) **Community Development and Engagement Initiative** – providing targeted funding to 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) for 22 Community Development Officers (with brokerage funds) to be administered by Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ);

(b) Targeted funding to LGAQ to engage a Statewide Community Development and Engagement Coordinator, administer the funding for component (a), and review the initiative; and

(c) **Flexible Funding Program** - Department of Local Government and Planning administering grants to 73 LGAs (allocated on a prioritised and tiered basis) to implement community recovery projects to help local communities deal with the impacts of the disasters and to contribute to their disaster preparedness.

The Community Development and Recovery Package has been established for the purpose of assisting local councils to identify and implement projects that will support their community’s recovery efforts, particularly their human and social well-being, using a community development

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approach. Through this approach, the community will have the opportunity to identify what their recovery needs are and to help them be better prepared for any future disasters. The community will have a stronger voice and gain better skills in managing their own and their community's recovery.

The Community Development and Recovery Package is a two year funding package in recognition that community recovery takes time.

Within the Flexible Funding Program, funding packages for the 73 LGAs have been allocated on a prioritised and tiered basis. The list of highest priority communities was determined by a pre-disaster index of socio-economic disadvantage, a Rapid Damage Assessment as an indicator of level of damage in communities, and an assessment of community capability and vulnerability in consultation with State Government regional officers and community recovery partners, including LGAQ, Red Cross and Lifeline. The funding provided under each tier is –

| Tier 1 Councils | $250,000 over the two years, ($125,000 payments in 2011-12 and 2012-13) |
| Tier 2 Councils | $150,000 over the two years ($75,000 payments in 2011-12 and 2012-13) |
| Tier 3 Councils | $45,000 over the two years (up front payment) |

The 17 LGAs that were hardest hit will receive funding for 22 Community Development Officers funded under component 1 (a) of the Community Development and Recovery Package. Councils receiving this funding will ensure community engagement activities are used to identify priority projects/events that community members believe are necessary to support their recovery and future preparedness.

Those Councils not receiving funding for CDOs are expected to focus on using the funds to increase the community’s preparedness to deal with any future disaster events.

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority has produced a guide for Councils to develop a Local Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (Local Plan). Councils are expected to develop a Local Plan that covers all these aspects. Some of the Flexible Funding Program funds may be used by Councils to support this. The development of a Local Plan provides an opportunity for Councils to document how their community will be engaged in determining their own priorities for recovery.

### 3. Purpose

The Flexible Funding Program will fund projects that support local communities to recover from the impacts of the disasters and to help them prepare for future disasters. The projects need to deliver a community benefit and support the human and social wellbeing of community members based on what is important to them.

The initiative is aligned with the NDRRA Principles, namely:

- use a community development approach;
- think long term recovery;
- keep track of emerging needs;
- aim to increase individual and community resilience;
- ensure quick response time/timely;
- ensure equity and fairness;
- keep it simple, minimal red tape while maintaining appropriate checks and balances;
- maintain transparency;
- aim for consistency – use clear definitions and eligibility criteria;
- incorporate flexibility and don’t stifle innovation or creative solutions;

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3 NDRRA: Community Recovery Package Guidelines 2011
• balance flexibility with precedent setting;
• avoid duplication of other assistance programs;
• be wary of unintended consequences;
• maintain incentives for insurance and self help;
• set boundaries – financial, time, and exit strategies;
• pay due attention to sustainability; and
• incorporate review mechanisms and use knowledge to improve future recovery.

4. Criteria for projects to be funded under Flexible Funding Program

Projects funded through this program must meet the following criteria:
   a) Projects must contribute to the community’s human and social recovery from the disaster\(^4\) (where applicable), support resilience and future disaster preparedness.
   b) Projects must not be eligible for funding or financial assistance from other funding sources (eg. other NDRRA Assistance Schemes; other Queensland or Australian Government assistance schemes, including the Premier’s Disaster Relief Appeal Fund, Flood Fight Back Scheme etc).\(^5\)
   c) Projects must not have on-going funding requirements. Councils are responsible for project maintenance and up-keep costs and must confirm the funding source before proceeding.

Councils must ensure:
   d) Community engagement processes are used to identify and prioritise project/s;
   e) Prioritised projects are endorsed by a local committee for human and social recovery before council approves expenditure; and
   f) Community participation is included in the development and implementation of the project.

Councils receiving a flexible funding program allocation of $150,000 or more must deliver at least one physical project (eg. memorial garden) that will allow current and future generations to understand the legacy, impact, experience or contribution of the community during and after the disaster event.

Councils must plan to have all project/s completed by 30 June 2013 to ensure project funds can be fully expended by that time. No carryover of funding will be approved beyond this date.

5. Sample projects

Councils approved for Tier 1 or 2 allocations will be funded over two years, and are encouraged to take time to engage with their local community to develop ideas, and to put forward proposals that support community recovery, and promote resilience and community cohesion so people feel better prepared for any future disaster. Councils funded under Tier 3 are also encouraged to take time to engage with their local communities and should focus more on activities that promote resilience, strengthen communication and support future disaster preparedness.

The Flexible Funding Program should fund projects that promote:

• Building community capacity and resilience
• Healing and community support
• Community connectedness and identity
• Communication and planning for the community’s future and disaster preparedness.

\(^4\) NDRRA declared flood and severe tropical cyclone disasters that occurred between November 2010 and March 2011.
\(^5\) Contact QRA or LGAQ for advice about eligibility for funds under alternative schemes.
Projects may include:

- Establishment of support networks to build connectedness and resilience in vulnerable community groups (e.g., residents in aged care facilities, young parents, men’s groups, people with a disability)
- Commemorative and reflective gardens
- Public memorials
- Community events and festivals
- Community arts and cultural projects
- Sport, recreation, health and wellbeing projects
- Community forums and leadership groups
- Engagement activities for community input into Local Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (Local Plan)
- Development of a communication strategy promoting community safety and awareness
- Temporary contracting of specialists, experts, professionals or practitioners to support and deliver endorsed projects
- Neighbourhood and community strengthening activities that focus on capacity building for future events
- Programs to establish and build resilience and delivered in collaboration with Emergency Management Queensland
- Workshops or information sessions on issues such as insurance awareness, seasonal preparation, flood and cyclone-proofing homes
- Other community education and information sessions.

Targeted projects should be relevant to specific groups including:

- Children and families
- Young people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- Seniors

Opportunities to actively involve local businesses and primary producers in the above projects should be encouraged.

6. Recognition and acknowledgement of funding sources

The Flexible Funding Program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments under Category C of the NDRRA. It is a prerequisite of receiving NDRRA assistance that the financial contribution made by the Australian and Queensland Governments is acknowledged in all projects and products developed with NDRRA funding through the Flexible Funding Program.

For more information regarding acknowledgement text and signage requirements, please refer to the Guidelines for Acknowledgement and Recognition of Funding Source available from either:

7. Exclusions

The Flexible Funding Program is unable to fund:

- Individuals, businesses or primary producers for personal hardship
- Facilities that are not open to the whole community
- Clean up costs
- Losses covered by insurance or claimable through other funding sources
- Privately owned cultural assets, including collections, buildings and spaces
- Capital works/places/objects owned by Local, Queensland or Australian Governments
- Purchase of land or property
- Existing staff positions
- Salaries or general operating costs not directly associated with delivering a project under the funding
- Cash prizes or commercial gifts
- Civil infrastructure such as roads or bridges
- Environmental restoration
- Covering existing debts or budget deficits
- Projects that are not related to recovery from natural disasters activated under NDRRA between November 2010 and March 2011
- Assets, infrastructure or equipment not related to eligible projects (e.g. generators)
- Projects that have a political or religious outcomes focus
- Projects that may have a negative impact on existing businesses/services (refer National Competition Policy)
- Individual or personal support services that are eligible for funding under Category A of NDRRA
- Other activities, services, resources, equipment or products that may be eligible for funding through other categories of NDRRA or alternative funding sources.

8. Program Management

The Flexible Funding Program is managed by the Department of Local Government and Planning (DLGP) in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Communities, which includes a number of attachments: Tiered funding list; Payment and Reporting Schedule; and Governance arrangements. Funding will be allocated by Department of Communities to DLGP to administer the grants under the Flexible Funding Program over two years.

As a condition of accepting this funding, each Local Government is required to enter into a formal funding agreement with DLGP. The funding agreement provides details on general and specific conditions of funding associated with the delivery of this program.

The signed Sub-agreement is valid for the duration of the Flexible Funding Program and together with Councils’ current Head of Agreement, forms a binding agreement. The agreement includes: information about the funding recipient and approved program details including conditions of funding (timeframes for project completion, how funds can be spent, accountability and acquittal processes, forecast claim dates, reporting requirements and acknowledgement of government funding).

In managing the Program, DLGP staff will liaise with Councils in order to:

i. execute Sub-agreements
ii. respond to queries regarding the program
iii. monitor project progress against program guidelines and sub-agreements
iv. collect and collate Councils’ quarterly and annual Flexible Funding Program reports.
9. Additional Information

These guidelines may be updated and revised from time to time as new information, ideas or recommendations emerge.

Councils are encouraged to contact the QRA and LGAQ for advice and support on alternative funding options for projects that do not meet the eligibility criteria of the *Flexible Funding Program*.

**Department of Local Government and Planning**
Local Government Funding
Office of Local Government
Department of Local Government and Planning
Email: lgfundingunit@dlgp.qld.gov.au

**Local Government Association of Queensland**
Disaster Management Alliance
Local Government Association of Queensland
Website: [www.lgaq.asn.au](http://www.lgaq.asn.au)

**QRA Website**
[www.qldreconstruction.org.au](http://www.qldreconstruction.org.au)

**Department of Communities**