



**Australian Government**

**Wine Australia**

**Wine  
Australia  
for  
Australian  
Wine**

# **Guidelines for assessing RD&E investment applications**

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## Introduction

The guide was developed to assist in the assessment of applications made Wine Australia for investment in research, development and extension projects:

The guide provides information on:

- Wine Australia
- preliminary investment questions
- assessment criteria for applications

Please contact us at [research@wineaustralia.com](mailto:research@wineaustralia.com) or on (08) 8228 2000 if you require further information or assistance.

## About us

Wine Australia is the single Australian Government statutory service body for the Australian grape and wine community.

We support a prosperous Australian grape and wine community by investing in research and development (R&D), building the international and domestic markets, disseminating knowledge, encouraging adoption and protecting the reputation of Australian wine.

We are funded by grapegrowers and winemakers through levies and user-pays charges, and by the Australian Government, which provides matching funding for RD&E investments.

We focus on extracting the full value of our investments in RD&E for the benefit of our levy payers, the Australian Government, and the wider community. Our investments are guided by the sector's strategic priorities which are detailed in our *Strategic Plan 2015–2020*.

## Investing

One of our roles is to ensure that returns on RD&E investment are optimised, that they fulfil stakeholder priorities, and that the values of the resultant economic, environment and community benefits are assessed and disseminated.

We objectively assess investment applications using a fair and equitable process.

We use clear and objective criteria and exclude any individuals with a conflict of interest from the assessment. Final investment decisions will be made by our Board.

## Preliminary questions

There are some activities that will not be considered for funding. They are:

- activities that relate to furthering the political objectives of individuals, companies or wine sector associations
- advertorial activities aimed at marketing the products of individuals, companies or wine sector and/or associations, and
- activities in circumstances where there is no market failure, where we could reasonably expect the activity to be undertaken by the private sector (the market) on a cost recovery/profit basis.

If our board believes that a proposal falls into one or more of these categories, the applicants will be informed in writing that the proposal will not be considered for funding.

Proposals that do not fall into these categories are assessed by using the criteria below.

If individual members of our Management team or RD&E Committee of the Wine Australia Board feel unable to properly assess an application, other internal or external reviewers may be sought (based on expertise) at the discretion of the RD&E Committee. In all cases, at least four individual reviewers will be used during assessment.

## **Assessment criteria**

Applications must detail how the project will either:

- deliver research outcomes to the Australian grape and wine sector that have a clear economic, environmental or social benefit and/or contribute to the sustainability of the sector, or the Australian community

or

- generate fundamental knowledge or research capacity that is to the long-term benefit of sector, or the Australian community and/or has potential to produce knowledge that benefits other priority areas of research.

R&D Program Managers individually assess and score the proposals against the following questions.

- Will this proposal deliver outcomes that will:
  - clearly address pre-competitive sector research priorities?
  - be feasible as defined in the research plan?
  - be good value for the scale of investment? (Detail the value to be delivered)
  - be novel and not duplicate other work?
  - be of clear benefit for the wine sector?
  - develop fundamental new knowledge or capacity?
  - include appropriate collaborations?
  - be in a sector-ready<sup>1</sup> form in a timely manner?
- Does the applicant have a good track record of delivery?
- Is the Chief Investigator contributing 10 per cent or more time to the project?
- Is the research organisation providing a suitable co-consideration?
- Is the time requested to undertake the project appropriate?<sup>3</sup>

We have the discretion to amend any or all individual criteria at any stage of the approval process.

We may suggest changes to an application, including asking for additional information or advising a revised funding amount that ultimately may be made available.

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<sup>1</sup>The sector 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 way it will be used for the longer term benefit of sector.

<sup>3</sup>The normal time frame is up to three years. Under exceptional circumstances, this period may be extended. Appropriate stop/go review points will be built into projects to allow for realignment of activities and/or termination as required.

R&D Program Managers will use the aggregated scores for the criteria to rank proposals. Rankings from individual R&D Program Managers are compared across the group to confirm that consistent assessment has been made.

When it is agreed that additional expertise is needed for assessment, independent experts are contracted to provide a confidential assessment of the proposals, using the same key assessment criteria.

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of our peak body, Australian Grape and Wine, individually assess and score the proposals for industry relevance. The aggregated scores are used to rank the proposals.

The assessment by the Research Advisory Committee and by Management is provided to the RD&E Committee for their consideration. The RD&E Committee evaluate the proposals and provide a recommendation to the Wine Australia Board.

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

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

## **Funding the portfolio**

We will invariably receive more fundable proposals than are affordable within our budget for new projects in any given year. Assessing each application against the above criteria assists us to rank the proposals and allows us to identify and prioritise new investments that will potentially deliver the greatest benefit to the sector.

If our revenue falls dramatically and cuts to existing projects are necessary, the above criteria may also be used to assist us to rank the value of existing investments. We have the discretion to terminate projects.

If a proposal addresses the criteria above but is not 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.