

**Invitation to submit an Expression of Interest  
to undertake the  
Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's  
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PROJECT, 2008**

---

**PART A:**

**I. Background**

**The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation was established in the Australian Capital Territory in 1992 as a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. It was granted gift deductibility status in 2006.**

The Foundation was formed to respond to a backdrop of emerging challenges for rural, regional and remote Australia including:

- the effects on primary production due to the competitive pressures exerted by international markets
- the developing awareness of the environmental consequences of past and present primary production practices
- the contraction of the rural sector due to agricultural change
- the reduction in infrastructure investment by businesses and government, leading to a withdrawal of services to the bush.

The Foundation's response to these challenges is focused on building capacity in rural, regional and remote Australia through the development and support of confident and competent leaders engaged in community, industry, services, business and government. The Foundation works with individuals, businesses, communities and organisations, and those associated with them, that have an interest in the development and sustainability of regional, rural and remote Australia including:

- those engaged in the production, processing, storage, transport or marketing of the products of primary production (including, but not limited to, agricultural, horticultural, livestock, forestry, mining, fishing), and associated production activities and related or ancillary processing
- those engaged in facilitating primary production or the sustainable use of the resources on which such activity depends
- government, business and service organisations that provide essential infrastructure, and products and services of a material, social, cultural, economic or environmental nature to regional, rural and remote industries, businesses and communities.

## 2. The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's role

The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's development and support activities fall into three areas:

- **Leadership development programs:** The Foundation provides a range of high-quality leadership programs that are responsive to national and local needs. The Foundation's flagship product is the Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP), an 18-month course run yearly for up to 35 individuals from regional, rural or remote Australia. The Foundation also provides programs tailored to the needs of specific groups or addressing particular issues (e.g. the Murray-Darling Basin Leadership Program, Rice Growers Program, Gippsland Future of Food and Fibre Program, Recreational Fishing Program, Women in Irrigation Program, etc).
- **Support for engagement in rural leadership:** The Foundation develops and supports an active network of rural leaders based on its 400 Fellows, graduates of the ARLP and the Murray-Darling Basin Leadership Program. These people form the corner stone of a growing group of outstanding Australians playing vital roles in their communities, in policy development and government, primary industry research and development, and in regional and rural businesses.
- **Strategic participation in rural development:** The Foundation draws on its network of Fellows to provide advice and to participate in discussion to advance rural leadership and drive innovations in primary production and development, service provision and creative and sustainable initiatives that will contribute to a sustainable and viable rural Australia.

The Foundation is funded primarily through corporate sponsorship of the ARLP, which is now in its fifteenth year. Each year, a significant annual budget is generated from sponsorship and allocated to fund the administration, program provision and support of the ARLP.

Further information can be found on our website: [www.rural-leaders.com.au](http://www.rural-leaders.com.au)

## PART B:

### Research and Evaluation Project 2008

The Foundation is calling for expressions of interest from individuals or organisations with the experience and capacity to undertake a research and evaluation project on leadership development needs in rural, regional and remote Australia, including an evaluation of the ARLP, now in its fifteenth year, and its outcomes.

The Research and Evaluation Project 2008, is expected to take between six to eight months and is to be completed by October 2008. The successful researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will be expected to commence work no later than March 2008.

## **Terms of reference for the research and evaluation project**

The terms of reference of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation Evaluation Project 2008 are:

- a. To increase the evidence base concerning the need for various leadership development programs in rural, regional and remote Australia.
- b. To provide information on the leadership development needs of rural, regional and remote Australia through a review of the literature and through canvassing the needs of rural industries, communities, governments, service providers, businesses and individuals and the Foundation's sponsors and stakeholders.
- c. To analyse and assess the effectiveness and outcomes of the ARLP including;
  - its curriculum, structure and delivery
  - its relevance and efficacy
  - the benefits to its participants and its sponsors.
- d. To document and assess the contribution of Foundation Fellows/ARLP graduates to leadership activities in rural regional and remote Australian communities, industries and related activities.
- e. To contribute to the Foundation's understanding of how to effectively engage and support rural leaders in rural leadership activities, with particular reference to Fellows of the Foundation.
- f. To make recommendations to the Foundation on its role in meeting the future leadership development requirements of rural, regional and remote Australia.

## **Activities involved in the Research and Evaluation Project 2008**

The Research and Evaluation Project will require the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) to undertake the following activities:

1. Develop an evaluation methodology that:
  - includes quantitative and qualitative data gathering and consultation processes designed to generate information on:
    - leadership needs and priorities of industry sponsors and stakeholders, women leaders, Indigenous leaders, immigrants, young and emerging leaders, and Foundation Fellows
    - barriers to participation in leadership development and leadership engagement activities as identified by industry sponsors and stakeholders, women leaders, Indigenous leaders, immigrants, young and emerging leaders, and Foundation Fellows
    - the effectiveness and relevance of the ARLP to its participants and sponsors

- employs an information-gathering instrument (to be developed in consultation with Foundation staff) to collect information on the skills and experiences of Foundation Fellows and other rural leaders in order to:
    - provide information to populate a database of key information on rural leaders and their experience, skills and interests
    - enable the recording and tracking of leadership engagement and skills development
    - generate data for the Research and Evaluation Project 2008 and provide a data-gathering tool for future evaluations
    - facilitate leadership engagement activities
  - employs other methods deemed necessary to address the terms of reference of this Project.
2. Research leadership development requirements in rural, regional and remote Australia by:
- undertaking a mapping and analytical evaluation of leadership development activities, products and resources currently targeted at the needs of rural, remote and regional Australia by:
    - completing a review of relevant literature, including reports, research material and other documents
    - identifying existing rural leadership programs and reporting on the points of difference between them (e.g. learning objectives, curricula, delivery strategies) and any documented outcomes
    - charting gaps in current program offerings and identifying priorities for leadership development in rural, regional and remote Australia.
3. Evaluate the ARLP with the view to determining whether it is meeting its objective of developing effective leaders for rural, regional and remote Australia by:
- analysing the background and perceived experience of ARLP participants including:
    - demographic profile and previous professional and personal experience
    - in-program experience and performance
    - perceived barriers to participation in the ARLP or particular segments of the ARLP
    - reported satisfaction and perceived personal and professional benefits derived from participation in the ARLP
  - identifying and assessing the leadership engagement and contribution of ARLP participants since graduation (personal and sponsor/industry /community perspective)

- examining the appropriateness and effectiveness of the educational philosophy and model, and the program structure, content, processes and delivery models.
4. Provide a report, structured as outlined in Part D of this document, that addresses the terms of reference and summarises and analyses the following information collected during the project:
- the evidence base concerning the need for, and effectiveness of, various rural leadership development programs
  - information collected and generated through project consultation activities regarding the leadership development needs of rural, regional and remote Australia, the Foundation's sponsors and stakeholders, rural industries, communities, government interests, service providers, businesses and individuals
  - the outcomes to date of the ARLP including:
    - its relevance, efficacy and its impact on rural leadership development
    - the benefits to its participants, sponsors and stakeholders
    - the contribution made by Foundation Fellows to leadership activities in rural, regional and remote Australian communities, industries and related spheres
  - recommendations made to the Foundation on future directions for leadership development and support programs in rural, regional and remote Australia, including but not limited to:
    - strategies and systems required to ensure the effective engagement and support of the Foundation's network of Fellows
    - suggested priorities in relation to leadership development needs and program delivery approaches
    - continuation/revision/enhancement/restructuring of the ARLP
    - focusing and/or repositioning the Foundation's work in leadership development to meet the identified leadership development needs and priorities of rural Australia
    - critical factors for the future success of the Foundation's leadership development role in rural, regional and remote Australia.

## **PART C:**

### **Developing and completing the project**

#### **Task 1**

After selection, the first task of the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will be to meet with Foundation staff to develop a detailed work plan for the Research and Evaluation Project 2008, which will:

- a. develop a common understanding of the terms of reference/objectives of the project between the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) and Foundation staff
- b. identify and agree upon the evaluation/data generation and collection methods
- c. establish a definitive timetable for undertaking the project
- d. address any logistical or administrative issues that might need to be resolved during the initial planning phase of the project
- e. outline the work plan with key milestones and deliverables
- f. finalise the contract between the Foundation and the researcher(s)/evaluator(s).

#### **Task 2**

Task 2 will involve the preparation by the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) of a detailed project plan, which will provide a thorough description of the proposed methodology, project implementation and analysis, and any material in addition to that provided in the project proposal. If the project is to include surveys, questionnaires, case studies and so on, these tools need to be fully described and annexed to the project plan.

The project plan will provide an outline of the following:

- a. a description of the environment and the project context
- b. the logic or theory behind the proposed project model
- c. the purpose of the project; a clear statement of the objectives that reflect the terms of reference as outlined in this document
- d. the project methodology; the data collection methods proposed including the identification of the key evaluation questions to be tackled by each and how they will be addressed
- e. the implementation phase; the research/evaluative activities, outputs and expected outcomes and their inter-relationships
- f. the analysis and interpretation of the information generated through the project; the approach the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will use to assess outcomes, interpret findings, and extrapolate recommendations
- g. the work plan; an outline of the key milestones and deliverables.

Task 2 will involve refinements of the work plan and further details of proposed data generation and collection activities, which may include some or all of the following approaches:

- a. review of relevant documentation
- b. interviews with stakeholders and/or group interviews
- c. questionnaires/surveys
- d. analysis of relevant information
- e. field visits.

### **Task 3**

Task 3 will involve the implementation phase of the project during which the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will collect and analyse the necessary data to address the research and evaluation questions outlined in the project plan.

### **Task 4**

Task 4 will involve the preparation of a draft project report and a consultation process with the Foundation regarding its appropriateness. Revisions may be requested by the Foundation.

### **Task 5**

Task 5 requires the preparation of a final project report.

## **PART D:**

### **Project deliverables**

The main audience for outputs of the project will be:

- the Foundation's Board
  - the Foundation's sponsors
  - industry, government departments, service providers, businesses and primary producers engaged in working with and for rural, regional and remote Australia.
1. The project plan as outlined in Task 2 is to be completed and approved by the Foundation prior to its implementation. It is important that the plan include the proposed methodology, showing how each evaluation question relates to the terms of reference and how each will be answered, listing:
    - proposed methods
    - proposed sources of data
    - data-collection procedures.

The plan will also include a proposed timeframe/calendar of activities.

2. The draft project report is to be provided to the Foundation's Chief Executive Officer as per the agreed timeframe.
3. The final project report will describe the project and its outcomes and present the findings and recommendations and any lessons learned. It will base its recommendations on evidence. As well as addressing the areas outlined in Part B of this document, the final project report will also include, but not necessarily be limited to, the elements outlined below:
  - a. executive summary (maximum 4 pages); background of the evaluation, major findings, key achievements and key challenges and key recommendations
  - b. project purpose
  - c. project description and context
  - d. research and evaluation methodology
  - e. results achieved/data collection and analysis
  - f. major findings
  - g. recommendations
  - h. appendices, including tools used, consultation details and key documents consulted.

### **Tentative Timeframe**

The following table provides an indication of the timing of the implementation of the Research and Evaluation Project 2008 and the expected milestones (a definitive timeframe will be agreed with the provider as part of Task 1).

**Table 1: Estimated timeframe**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
25 January 2008	Terms of reference and documentation available
16 February 2008	Closing date for Expressions of Interest/Evaluation Proposals
18-25 February 2008	Short listing of Proposals; interviews with shortlisted researchers/evaluators; selection of Consultants by Selection Committee
27 February 2008	Advice to successful applicant
Early March 2008	Task 1 - Discussions between the Foundation and Provider
20 March 2008	Task 2 - Evaluation Plan -completed
March-August 2008	Task 3 - completed-- implementation phase
30 September 2008	Task 4 - Completed- Draft Project Report
1-7 October 2008	Task 4 - Draft Project Report consultation and feedback
25 October 2008	Task 5 - Final Project Report

## **PART E:**

### **Business arrangements**

1. The researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will enter into a contract with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, which will outline the terms and conditions of the provision of services.
2. The researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will be self sufficient as regards to logistics (office space, administrative and secretarial support, telecommunications, word processing, printing of documentation, etc).
3. The researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will be primarily responsible for the dissemination of tools such as surveys or questionnaires, but the Foundation will assist in such processes through the provision of mailing lists etc, and will assist in disseminating material through its current systems where possible.
4. The Foundation will provide all relevant documentation it holds to the researcher(s) /evaluator(s). The Chief Executive Officer, the Manager Leadership Education and Development and the Director Programs and Development will provide advice and information when required and as requested.
5. The total financial resources available for the project, including any travel and per diem, will be negotiated with the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) as part of the engagement process. Payment will be made according to a schedule based around the key deliverables and the agreed timetable.
6. Payments will be product based, and will be conditional on approval of the products agreed upon in the work plan. Failure to meet the deadlines may result in a withholding or a reduction of payment as outlined in the contract.
7. The final payment to the researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will be contingent upon the approval by the Foundation of the final project report.
8. The Foundation will own all project outputs; it will retain the right to publish the outputs and may make them publicly available if appropriate.
9. The Foundation reserves the right not to accept any project proposal received.

### **Project selection criteria**

1. The researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will have strong conceptual and analytical skills and at least five years research and/or evaluation experience. The researcher(s)/evaluator(s) will have expertise in research and evaluation, and in one or more areas relevant to this project (e.g. leadership education development and delivery, understanding of issues facing rural, regional and remote Australia etc).
2. A Selection Committee established by the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation will undertake selection of the researcher/evaluator. The Selection Committee will evaluate the project proposals received from potential researcher(s)/evaluator(s) using the following criteria:
  - a. quality and comprehensiveness of the proposal

- b. compliance with and understanding of the requirements and proposed method of addressing the scope of the project
  - c. suitability of the proposed methodology
  - d. the feasibility of the work plan and the capacity to meet the timetable for undertaking the project
  - e. relevance of the previous experience of the tendering organisation and/or the particular researcher(s)/evaluator(s)
  - f. analysis of risks regarding successful completion of the project
  - g. value for money (i.e. the cost of the proposal is reasonable and feasible given the availability of data, proposed methods and analysis).
3. To be considered, the proposal should:
- a. address all of the information requirements in the pro-forma Project Proposal/Expression of Interest
  - b. include evidence of the applicant's ability to undertake the project, specifically demonstrating the necessary knowledge and experience in undertaking similar initiatives
  - c. address the terms of reference of the evaluation as listed in Part B of this document
  - d. outline the methodology and implementation of the project with indicative resource requirements and timeframes
  - e. provide details of similar contracts recently carried out, with an indication of whether the client may be approached for a reference
  - f. include an analysis of risks to successful completion of the work
  - g. provide contact details and CVs of personnel who will be undertaking the project
  - h. include a budget showing personnel costs, detailing separately travel and subsistence costs.

### **Expression of interest and project proposal submission details**

1. The closing date for project proposals is 16 February 2008.
2. The project proposal must be completed using the attached Application Template for Project Proposals.
3. Project proposals may be submitted via e-mail to [lesley.fitzpatrick@arlp.net.au](mailto:lesley.fitzpatrick@arlp.net.au). Receipt of proposals will be confirmed by reply email.
4. Any enquiries regarding this project should be directed to Dr Lesley Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Rural Leadership Foundation Ltd. Phone 02 6281 0680 or email: [lesley.fitzpatrick@arlp.net.au](mailto:lesley.fitzpatrick@arlp.net.au)

# Australian Rural Leadership Foundation Ltd Application Template for Project Proposals

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PROJECT 2008

### 1. Summary

Name of lead individual/institution/organisation

List researcher(s)/evaluator(s)/partner(s)

Full contact details for primary contact:

Title:            Name:

Position/role:

Address:

Tel:            Fax:

Email:

Full contact details for other contacts (if any):

Title:            Name:

Position/role:

Address:

Tel:            Fax:

Email:

Summary of total cost to the Foundation over the lifetime of the Project:

## 2. Details of proposal

<b>Summary of the project proposal</b>
<b>Project objectives</b> (based on the terms of reference)
<b>Methodology</b> (how the terms of reference will be addressed)
<b>Proposed sources of data</b>
<b>Outline of the implementation phase of the project</b>
<b>Proposed budget</b>
<b>Key risk/success factors</b>
<b>Summary of researcher(s)/evaluator(s) relevant background and/or expertise</b>
<b>Summary of related prior experience</b> (please indicate if the client may be approached for a reference);
<b>Attachments:</b> CVs of those who will be undertaking the evaluation