



LIVESTOCK EXPORT COLLABORATIVE FUNDING PROGRAM 2019-20

OVERVIEW

The **Livestock Export Collaborative Funding Program (“Co-Funding Program”)** is an initiative of the MLA and LiveCorp Livestock Export Program (LEP) to support exporters of Australian livestock (cattle, sheep and goats) to international markets.

The **aim of the Co-Funding Program** is to assist exporters deliver continuous improvements in animal welfare and to improve the performance, efficiency and productivity of livestock through their overseas supply chains. Importantly, it has also been developed to facilitate the uptake and extension of research and development (R&D) outcomes, as well as assist with the processes involved in shipment preparations and on-board vessel activity during voyages.

The Co-Funding Program is designed to facilitate projects that are additional to normal commercial arrangements and which are outside of daily and routine in-market exporter staff or consultant activities. That is, projects that will stimulate and facilitate broader industry and trade benefit, as well as enhancing the efficiency of individual commercial operators. By leveraging industry and exporter funds, the Co-Funding Program will contribute to the delivery of key objectives in the Meat Industry Strategic Plan (MISP) 2020, such as:

- Continuous improvement in animal health, welfare and management throughout the supply chain
- Productivity gains and improved efficiency in regulation and logistics through the supply chain
- Market access improvements through industry advocacy and supporting trade delegations at appropriate industry conferences to promote the Australian live export industry.

The Co-Funding Program requires exporters to submit an **Activity Proposal** that, once approved by the LEP, will be funded on a 50:50 cost shared basis up to a maximum LEP contribution of \$75,000 per exporter. The LEP will not cost share components of the Activity Proposal which leverage customers’ or other organisations’ activities. Funding criteria and administration procedures are detailed in the following pages.

Exporters are encouraged to participate in the Co-Funding Program through submission of an Activity Proposal. Examples of eligible activities or project areas are provided in Section B.

The LEP will use merit-based assessment criteria to review each exporter’s Activity Proposal in accordance with Section C.

GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA

A. Eligibility Assessment and Co-Funding Criteria

1. The Co-Funding Program is open to all Australian exporters who hold a;
 - a. valid livestock export licence issued by the Australian Government, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources under the *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997* and the *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry (Export Licensing) Regulations 1998*;
 - b. registered ABN; and
 - c. LiveCorp membership.
2. The LEP will consider applications within program funding limits and in accordance with the LEP funding ratio of 50:50 per project.
3. Funding is available across all export regions and no regional limit applies.
4. Up to a maximum LEP contribution of \$75,000 (excl. GST) per exporter is available. Applications exceeding this amount may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

B. Eligible and Ineligible Activities and Expenses

The LEP **WILL** fund Activity Proposals and provide support for activities and expenses that align with the following MISP objectives. This list is not exhaustive and provides exporters with a guide:

1. Animal health and welfare activities:
 - a. ESCAS risk assessments and gap analysis in new supply chains.
 - b. In-market training programs.
 - c. R&D extension to stakeholders. Refer to [MLA's R&D website](#) for latest reports.
 - d. Industry delegation visits.

Examples of eligible animal health and welfare projects include:

- Conducting risk assessments and gap analysis in new supply chains and markets
 - Education and training workshops or practical courses (point of slaughter and animal handling)
 - Value-add initiatives such as “Train-the-trainer” programs with measurable outcomes and impacts
 - R&D adoption and implementation of heat stress mitigation strategies in Middle East feedlots
 - In-market management programs in preparation for festivals (Eid/Korban/Ramadan), targeted at reducing stress on livestock, controlled slaughter and stunning, improved sales systems and processes
 - Activities involved in pre- and post-arrival shipment processes, including shipment preparations, on-board vessel activity and discharge procedures upon arrival at the destination port.
 - Improving animal health and welfare and addressing specific issues along the supply chain
 - Delegation visits, particularly relevant at Australian industry events (e.g. LIVEXchange), that facilitate improved knowledge transfer and increased awareness of Australia’s animal health and welfare standards through ESCAS to importers and in-market personnel.
2. Supply chain performance and efficiency activities:
 - a. Projects in slaughter and feedlot facilities.
 - b. Livestock production, performance and efficiency.
 - c. Feasibility studies.

Examples of eligible supply chain performance and efficiency projects include:

- Improvements in feedlot efficiency, feedlot management, feed conversion and nutrition
- Establishment of a control and traceability system in non-approved facilities in preparation for ESCAS
- Improved breeder cattle reproductive performance and efficiency for smallholder production and integration under palm
- Improved animal handling and discharge efficiency on livestock vessels through training workshops for crew/stevedores
- Feasibility study of new supply chains, focusing on new markets.

3. Expenses:

- a. Eligible expenses include salaries/contractor fees, travel (economy airfares only), accommodation and meals.
- b. All expenses incurred during project activities must include relevant proof of payment and receipts when submitted to MLA.

The LEP will **NOT** match or co-fund the following activities or expenses:

1. Activities that are categorised as livestock export everyday business, commercial or sales operational expenses.
2. While companies are encouraged to leverage customers (importers/feedlots/abattoirs) and other organisations' funds towards this Program, these funds will **NOT** be eligible for LEP co-funding. The LEP will only match the exporter's contribution.
3. Any activities supported via another program, such as Austrade or other government programs.
4. Any expenses used by government bodies or officials.
5. Projects around facility infrastructure establishment or upgrades. Materials are **NOT** covered. If such funding is being sought, consider applying for LiveCorp's Infrastructure Grants Program for funding support.

C. Assessment Process

Prior to submitting applications via the online portal, the LEP highly recommends participants to refer to the [Project Development Checklist](#). This document explains how to build a business case through identifying a problem and considering goals rather than activities in the first instance.

Activity Proposals will be reviewed and assessed in consideration with the following merit-based assessment criteria:

1. Scope and extent of likely impact on animal welfare improvement (risk mitigation and continuous improvement). Animal welfare focused projects will receive high priority on funding allocation.
2. Benefits in capacity development across the post-arrival supply chain (training locally engaged staff).
3. Alignment with and likely capacity to promote the implementation and adoption of research outcomes from the live export research and development program.
4. Communal benefit to the industry, market and other exporters.
5. The strategic risk of the market and the supply chain.
6. The strategic alignment of the project with MISP objectives.
7. Likelihood of delivery within budget and timelines.
8. Risk mitigation strategies, particularly for beef breeders.

9. Ability of the company to fully abide by the Program guidelines, in particular, the measurement and reporting on the effectiveness of the Activity being proposed.

D. Application Process and Program Deadlines

Online application

(July 2019)

- Exporters wishing to participate in the 2019-20 LEP Co-Funding Program need to apply online for their participation in the Program via the following online portal website:
<https://lepcofunding.mla.com.au/>
- Only exporters who agree to the Terms and Conditions of the Program will be able to submit Activity Proposals for consideration by the LEP and participate in the Program.
- Log in using your myMLA login. If not a user, please create an account.
- **Step 1:** Participants will need to complete an eligibility assessment and if eligible, read and agree to the Program Terms and Conditions.
- **Step 2:** Enter company details and relevant program areas under which Activities will be co-funded.
- **Step 3:** Complete the Annual Plan template online with an estimate of quarterly budgets. Once this is complete, submit for LEP to assess for funding.
- *Applications for the 2019-20 Program close on **Wednesday 31 July 2019**. Applications received after this date will be placed on our waiting list and considered if budget becomes available throughout the year.*

Application assessment

(August 2019)

- Applications and LEP contributions will be assessed based on the Assessment Process and the Annual Plan to ensure all objectives and budget requests are reasonable.
- For successful applications, MLA will provide a budget allocation to enable the Participant to start developing Activity Proposals.
- For applications that require amendment, MLA will provide guidance as to what amendments are required.

Activity Proposals

- Once the Annual Plan and budget has been approved, Participants need to submit their individual Activity Proposals, which MLA will review and confirm online.
- Once confirmed, the Participant may amend the budget or finish date of the Activity.
- *MLA must be aware of any planned activities PRIOR to the start of the activity, with the Activity Proposal submitted online PRIOR to the Activity commencement date.*

Activity Reports

- Participants have **six weeks from the Activity finish date** to submit claims. Participants will receive an email reminder for when Activity claims are due. *NB: for May and June Activities, claims must be submitted by 31 July 2020.*
- **Each claim must include:**
 1. Invoice to MLA from Participant
 2. Copy of invoice(s) from third party that provided the service
 3. Evidence to show that the Participant has paid the third party
 4. Comment on Activity outcome
 5. Image evidence of completed Activity (if applicable)
- **Late claims:** Unless previously advised to MLA, if a claim is not submitted for an Activity within eight weeks of the finish date, the Activity status will be changed to **Expired** and the Participant will no longer be able to submit a claim for that Activity.
- **Claims exceeding approved activity amount:** If the invoice amount is greater than the amount originally approved for the Activity, Participants can still make the claim, provided there is sufficient budget in the associated Annual Plan quarter. However, if the claim exceeds the quarterly budget, an explanation will be required in the Comments section outlining the reason.

Budget revisions

- Program budgets will be reviewed in **January 2020**, where Participants will be required to adjust their planned budgets for Q3 and Q4. If the Q3 and Q4 planned amounts exceed the initial budget allocation, MLA will consider requests for more funding, provided sufficient unallocated funds are available. A similar budget review process will take place at the beginning of **April 2020** for Q4 plans.
- Participants can adjust budgets online between objectives and quarters where necessary, for current and future quarters.
- At the end of each quarter, the planned amount will be replaced with the actual amount claimed in that quarter.

Annual Report (July 2020)

- On completion of all Activity Reports, Participants are required to complete the final step of the Co-Funding Program by submitting the Annual Report. This report measures the effectiveness of the full year Co-Funding Program, in relation to meeting objectives and overall outcomes achieved according to each Participant's Annual Plan.
- Annual Reports are due **31 July 2020**. Participants will need to complete an adequate Annual Report before being able to participate in the following year's Program.

Application and any administrative queries should be directed to the Co-Funding Program Manager, Rashelle Levonian at rlevonian@mla.com.au or +61 2 9463 9344.

E. Reporting Requirements

Exporters will be required to complete and submit Milestone reporting against their planned objectives and activities, along with corresponding invoices, as outlined in their Activity Proposals. All reporting is to be submitted via the LEP online portal.

F. Confidentiality and Reporting

MLA and LiveCorp will not publish or share information about individual projects.

MLA and LiveCorp will report on the Co-Funding Program in their respective Annual Reports, and information on the Program may also be published in other reports, or on the MLA or LiveCorp websites. MLA's Annual Report may include the following type of information:

- List of all companies with the total amount of MLA funding they received for the fiscal year
- Summary of Program outcomes.

G. Private/Personal Information

The information provided to MLA by an exporter (Participant) during the application process for the Co-Funding Program may be personal information under the Privacy Act.

By providing MLA with personal information, the Participant consents to the collection and handling of personal information in accordance with **MLA's privacy policy**, which can be viewed at <http://www.mla.com.au/General/Privacy> or obtained directly from MLA by calling 1800 023 100.

Participants may access and correct any personal information held by MLA on request. Where a Participant provides the personal information of others to MLA, the Participant represents that it is entitled to disclose such information having taken all steps required under the *Privacy Act* including that the Participant will be disclosing such personal information to MLA for the purposes of the Co-Funding Program. The Participant agrees to direct such individuals to MLA's privacy policy. If the Participant becomes aware of any breach or alleged breach of the *Privacy Act* concerning information disclosed by the Participant to MLA or by MLA to the Participant, then the Participant must notify MLA immediately and comply with any reasonable directions of MLA with respect to such breach.