

AGMARDT

FUTURE SHAPERS

FOOD AND FIBRES AOTEAROA
NEW ZEALAND CHALLENGE
GUIDELINES

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OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Food and Fibres Aotearoa New Zealand Challenge is to encourage New Zealand agribusiness organisations and individuals to focus on initiatives that will accelerate change on challenging industry issues in identified priority areas and ignite a better future for the food and fibres sector in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The overall objectives of The Food and Fibres Aotearoa New Zealand Challenge are to:

- Support tailored, industry-led initiatives that contribute to a unified and aligned food and fibres sector with a common understanding and commitment to what needs to be done;
- Foster positive environmental change and sustainability with a commitment to a zero-carbon economy;
- Assist the food and fibres value chain to respond to changing consumer behaviours and move towards premiumisation;
- Align regional or place-based leadership to deliver outcomes for NZ Inc. while also providing regional resilience and growth; and
- Provide a future view of market and global drivers that influence the sector.

By growing our understanding of food and fibres future trends, ensuring the focus is on the big things that count and clearly identifying priority areas where change is needed, AGMARDT can help to develop people, build sustainable systems and add value to secure a better future for all New Zealand.

FUNDING

The Food and Fibres Aotearoa New Zealand Challenge is a contestable fund open to applications for AGMARDT funding from **\$50,000** up to **\$500,000** (incl. of GST*).

The fund will be made available up to 3 times a year. Projects are required to start within 3 months of the grant being approved and to be completed within a 3 year timeframe.

**Please note that AGMARDT is a "public authority" as defined in Section 2 of the Goods and Services Tax Act and is therefore an "instrument of the Crown". Under the Act [Section 5 (6D)] any grants allocated by a public authority are deemed to be GST inclusive and received in the course of the recipient's taxable activity.*

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Food & Fibres Aotearoa New Zealand Challenge is a two-stage application process.

STAGE 1: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Applicants wishing to develop a funding proposal must first complete an 'expression of interest' form which can be downloaded from the AGMARDT website (www.agmardt.org.nz). This stage is designed to elicit sufficient detail to enable Trustees to assess the nature and merit of the proposal.

The AGMARDT Trustees will assess each application for eligibility and alignment with both the stated objectives and conditions of the Food and Fibres Challenge and the strategic intent of AGMARDT. If approved the Trustees will invite the applicant to complete and submit a full funding application (Stage 2) for further consideration by the Trustees.

STAGE 2: FULL FUNDING APPLICATION

If the expression of interest application is approved, the applicants will be invited to complete and submit a full funding application through the AGMARDT [online portal](#) via the website. The application will undergo a second round of evaluation by Trustees at the Board meeting following the notified closing date.

Please note that by calling for a full application this does not mean that your proposal will be supported.

The funding of any programme is at the discretion of the Trustees. AGMARDT Trustees may also accept an application but fund it through a different AGMARDT funding programme if determined that this was more appropriate (e.g. Agribusiness Innovation Grant).

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF PROJECT

FUNDING UNDER \$200,000

For AGMARDT funding requests under \$200,000 (Incl GST) the applicant group needs to be able to demonstrate to AGMARDT that it has appropriate plans and processes in place to critically assess the project outcomes against milestones and budgets.

FUNDING OVER \$200,000

For AGMARDT funding requests cost over \$200,000 (incl GST) the applicant group is required to implement a formal governance structure to provide oversight of the processes that are consistent with good governance for the project (including clear identification of project goals, budgets and timelines; and ongoing monitoring of performance against goals, budgets and timelines of the project).

PRINCIPLES

In reviewing applications, due consideration is given to the following:

AGMARDT PRIORITY AREAS

While satisfying the objectives of the Challenge, applications must focus on **industry-led initiatives** that look to solve the “**big issues**” in the following priority areas:

- Designing catchment and/or regional solutions to solve the challenges of carbon, waste management, environmental and biodiversity issues that will benefit New Zealand as a whole
- Emissions – opportunities for farmers and growers to de-carbonise their farming systems
- Sustainable food packaging
- Waste – minimising waste from the food and fibres sectors through leveraging the circular economy.

ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Projects must be led by New Zealand businesses, communities of interest or sector groups connected with the food & fibres sector.
- Applications submitted by New Zealand individuals or research teams may be considered provided they are partnering with businesses, communities of interest or sector groups connected with the food & fibres sector that will directly benefit from outcomes of the initiative.
- The project must align with AGMARDT’s strategic objectives (www.agmardt.org.nz) and demonstrate how it will contribute to accelerating change on challenging issues facing the food and fibres sector of New Zealand.
- Projects must demonstrate the following guiding principles:
 - Collaboration
 - Benefit the broader food & fibres sector
 - Improvements across the food and fibres value chain
 - Identify a logical next step with a champion to drive progress on the outcomes.
 - Applicants must be committed to, where possible, retaining the value and benefits arising from the project within New Zealand.
- Non-cash contributions may be included in the total cost of the project provided they are essential and reflect direct and measurable inputs into the project.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- The Trustees will consider the makeup and capability of the Applicant/Group in being able to deliver on the objectives and project plan of the project.

- Grants will only be made where an application is scientifically credible, and proposes the use of appropriate technologies or practices (appropriate means that it is expected that the new product or practice developed will be socially acceptable, environment sustainable and economically beneficial).
- When required, advice on the technical feasibility of a proposal and its potential to benefit the target sector will be sought from an Advisory Panel made up of technical experts and recognised sector leaders.
- Grants will not be made that would result in unnecessary duplication of capabilities in provider organisations or amongst researchers operating independently.
- It is expected that intellectual property developed under a grant will be protected appropriately and that the primary benefits will be to New Zealand.
- The applicant must disclose to AGMARDT all such third-party funding (both when applied for and, if appropriate, when such funding is granted).

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Some activities are not funded by this programme. The following list is a guide to the types of project related activities or costs the programme does not cover. The Trustees have the right to exclude other costs if they believe appropriate. The programme does not cover costs relating to:

- 'Business as usual' expenses, including:
 - overheads incurred in the course of normal business/industry
 - activities that are already happening in business/industry
- Costs that are not directly related to the project
- Retrospective funding - costs incurred before the project is approved
- Duplication of work proposed in the project (i.e. the same project has recently been completed by the applicant/group or another party).

REPORTING

Successful applicants must comply with all the reporting requirements. The AGMARDT Board of Trustees view all reports provided by successful applicants. Please ensure the reports are understandable to a layperson. A highly technical report is acceptable for specialist review but it must be accompanied by the AGMARDT final report found in the [Resources tab](#) on the application portal <http://applications.agmardt.org.nz/>.

PROGRESS REPORT

Progress reports are required to allow the Trustees to stay informed on the progress of the project and how it is tracking against the milestones set in the original application.

Quarterly progress reports are required when progress payments are submitted. A progress report template has been created and can be found in the [Resources tab](#) on the application portal (<http://applications.agmardt.org.nz/>).

A progress report must include the following:

- Project title, group name, grant number, grant amount and reporting period.
- Overall Progress – this is a milestone summary table which outlines progress of the milestones and how these are tracking against the original application.
- Variations to Milestones – provide detail of any variations to milestones and explanation for the change in focus or timing.
- Progress this Period - outline and describe activities and progress against milestones over the reporting period.
- Project summary – provide a concise executive summary of the project to date.
- Summary of progress of project – using bullet points describe the main progress of the project and where any issues have arisen.
- Next Period – Proposed Activities – detail the key activities planned in the next reporting period.

FINAL REPORT

The purpose of the final report is to bring together the results of the project reported against the original objectives and KPIs of the project, it should demonstrate the benefits to New Zealand and provide information about the future of the project.

A final report template has been created and can be found in the [Resources tab](#) on the application portal (<http://applications.agmardt.org.nz/>).

Please note: If your report contains commercially sensitive information, please discuss with AGMARDT and supply a summary report which can be made publicly available.

The final report must include:

- Project title, group name, grant number and grant amount
- Executive summary – a concise summary of the project explaining what the objectives of the project were, what was achieved and what made the project a success
- Summary of project – Using bullet points describe the main outcomes of the project
- Impact of the project – what is the impact of the project on the food & fibres sector in New Zealand and demonstrate the guiding principles of AGMARDT’s strategic Priorities as outlined in the original application
- Report on the “next steps” or “future aspirations” resulting from the success of this project, for the next 6 to 12 months and beyond
- Milestone reporting - Detail results achieved against the milestones set out in the original application
- KPI reporting - Report against the Key Performance Measures (KPIs) as outlined in the grant application
- Identify all additional achievements and/or provide additional comment
- A summary of total income and expenditure of the project compared with the original budget.

PAYMENTS

The Applicant/Group must have its own bank account with authorised signatories appointed by the group. Payments are to be made out to AGMARDT and in the name of the Applicant/Group.

All payments must be applied solely and exclusively for the project AGMARDT has funded. Each claim for payment must include:

- An IRD approved tax invoice.
- AGMARDT [Claim Certificate](#) (this can be found in the [Resources tab](#) on the online portal (<http://applications.agmardt.org.nz/>) to be signed by the Project Manager and Financial Officer to confirm the expenditure is in accordance with the approved budget.
- A progress or final report (see section on [Reporting](#) above for more details)

PROGRESS PAYMENTS

All progress payments which meet the requirements of the grant are made 20th of the following month.

FINAL PAYMENTS

Final payments are withheld until they are approved by the Trustees at the next Trustee meeting. This date will be communicated to you on receipt of the final report.

If the actual total costs for whole project comes to less than the maximum amount of the grant, the final claim must be adjusted as AGMARDT will only reimburse actual expenditure incurred.

The final claim must therefore be supported by a full analysis of all costs for the project, as compared to the original budget, and the successful applicant must respond promptly to any queries that AGMARDT might have when considering the final report and accompanying costs analysis.

On approval of the final report and compliance with the requirements of the grant payment will be made 20th of the following month.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

DISSEMINATION/COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY

As a not-for-profit charitable trust, AGMARDT usually makes the information arising from its grants publicly available.

Unless otherwise agreed to by AGMARDT and the applicant, AGMARDT may publish a summary of the aims of the project, and or the final report. Should the project be identified as commercially sensitive, AGMARDT and the applicant will discuss and agree on the information to be made publicly available having regard to AGMARDT's policy obligations.

Successful applicants must not make any public statement or issue any press release or other publicity relating to this Funding Agreement, without the prior written approval of AGMARDT as to the form and content of such statement.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Advisors' and referees' comments are confidential to AGMARDT.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

AGMARDT does not normally take ownership and/or management of intellectual property. However, AGMARDT may seek to agree specific arrangements concerning intellectual property on a case-by-case basis and, if it does this, they will be dealt with in the Funding Agreement to be entered into between the parties.

FUNDING AGREEMENT

A successful applicant will be asked to sign/complete a Funding Agreement which sets out the terms of the grant.

DECLINED APPLICATIONS

It is AGMARDT's policy not to provide reasons why applications are declined.

GRANT WITHDRAWALS

A grant may be withdrawn at the sole discretion of the Trustees where:

- Reports have not been provided or have not been provided in a timely manner;
- Supporting information around expenses incurred or co-funding have not been provided or have not been provided in a timely manner;
- No part of the funding has been uplifted within one year of the grant being approved;
- There has been no response to AGMARDT's correspondence on the project;
- No satisfactory progress has been made;
- The Applicant/Group goes into liquidation or receivership or ceases to operate; or
- There has been unauthorised variation to the project or budget.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT

For financial performance and management of the project, the Trustees reserve the right to ask for an independent audit by an auditor of AGMARDT's choosing. The Trustees may, through AGMARDT's advisors, or if required AGMARDT appointed specialists, undertake a review of the work in progress and eventual outcomes.

CHANGE OF KEY PERSONNEL

The successful applicant must inform AGMARDT of any change in key personnel working on the project.