

Project Scope

Identify human dimensions critical to
landholder engagement and participation

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Prepared by Fitzroy Basin Association



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This document was prepared by FBA. If you have any questions or require additional details, please contact the undersigned.

1. Purpose

Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA) works in partnership with landholders (often through projects), to deliver improved land management, water quality and Reef health, by advocating for environmentally sustainable practice and enabling landholders to adopt practice or behaviour change.

The capability of our staff, and those of our delivery partners' is critical to attracting, securing and maintaining the interest of landholders to adopt new practices. Our staff also have a requirement to build trust and rapport with landholders, so that through extension activities these staff can inspire, foster and bring about improved knowledge and practice change, for the mutual and future benefit of the landholder, their land and the connected waterways and landscapes.

There are many challenges that make this requirement difficult, which include, however are not limited to:

- Competing and changing priorities of landholders, and therefore available time
- Climate variations, seasonal impacts and severe weather impacts
- Historical practices
- Shared land management responsibilities (generational influence and involvement)
- A lack of certainty as to 'why' landholders choose to participate in projects (their motivations)
- Limited local knowledge of how connected landholders feel to other landscapes (eg. the Reef), or how staff can assist in building recognition of these connections
- Limited certainty in regards to methods which would most effectively and efficiently communicate with and engage landholders across the Fitzroy Basin
- Limited staff confidence in leading conversations, and making connections between landholder needs, desires and motivations, and projects or extension that would be of relevance
- Limited staff knowledge/ability to determine if a landholder is ready to commit to project and to practice/ behaviour change.

FBA wishes to actively support staff to better understand their role in connecting and engaging with landholders, and build their capability and confidence to do so.

This is of particular important in the changing face of reduced available funding, competition for funding and FBA's requirements to meet outcomes directly related to water quality and the health of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR).

It is therefore proposed that FBA acquire the services of an external service provider to explore the challenges above, identify the motivations and barriers that exist locally across the Fitzroy region, and support FBA and its staff to implement engagement and extension practices (or other initiatives and approaches) to support long-term engagement with landholders.

2. Key Challenges

FBA has a number of staff that are responsible for engaging with landholders and delivering extension activities (much of this through one-on-one knowledge sharing, skills building, and collaborative property planning services). FBA also contracts field staff in regional delivery organisations to maintain networks with landholders, coordinate events and to make connections with landholders to encourage their participation in FBA's events and activities.

While not the textbook definition of engagement, it is nonetheless a process that often starts with a cold call or a referral, and may become a long-standing association, and hopefully collaborative relationship whereby one or many staff members support the landholder with their enterprise, fostering best practice land management and providing referrals to others in their network.

Various indicators have led FBA to believe that despite experience, some staff struggle in making contact with landholders they don't know, have difficulty reading a conversation and analysing it, and delivering back to the landholder (verbally) the win-win that a project may bring (to encourage the landholder to consider and commit to project participation).

Staff involved in extension have various levels of experience and a diversity of skillsets and professional backgrounds. This is recognised by FBA as an opportunity, more than a challenge.

3. Project Description

It is expected that this project would deliver:

- A desk-top summary and analysis of existing research relating to landholders, their drivers (for decision-making, actions and behaviours) and motivations for changing practices and behaviours
- Consultation with landholders and associated agencies to test if the findings from the desk top summary and analysis could be applied successfully and specifically with graziers and farmers from across the Fitzroy
- Explore with local landholders across the Fitzroy, the usefulness of and appetite for participating in peer to peer reference groups. Further to this, identify how many willing participants would also be open to investing time to informally (or formally) mentoring others in the industry
- A plan of recommendations, outlining actions and initiatives that FBA and its staff could undertake to improve its effectiveness in engaging and communicating with landholders, which will enable key motivators and other drivers to be incorporated into the communication, ongoing engagement and extension that FBA staff provide to landholders.

The above deliverables should also include as a minimum:

- Identification of key communication channels through which landholders of the Fitzroy currently seek information, or where they would like to 'go to' for information and support in the future.

- Preferences of landholders in regards to when, and how frequently FBA communicates project opportunities and in what type of format.
- A base assessment of how landholders within the Fitzroy view FBA, understand its services and consider it relevant to their needs, or otherwise.
- The level of awareness, concern and responsibility landholders hold in regards to Reef health and the water quality of the greater Basin and its catchments.
- An assessment of any knowledge or skills gaps of FBA staff (an initial skills assessment has been completed), and opportunities to build upon staff confidence and capability with extension out in the field. Where it is considered either critical or prudent to address these gaps, relevant recommendations should be made for training or upskilling staff.

4. Acceptance Criteria

It will be important for the successful service provider to demonstrate:

- understanding of how engagement (and extension) can be used as an organisational tool to build long-term ongoing stakeholder relationships, and to accelerate the adoption of behaviour/ practice change.
- an ability to engage staff, researchers and other stakeholders and build constructive partnerships aimed at achieving best practice
- a capacity and willingness to conduct aspects of the project in-person and on-ground (local ground-truthing is very important)
- experience working with multiple stakeholders, planning for and using processes which will enhance engagement, communication and extension
- identify, synthesise and present relevant research in plain language
- an ability to inspire fellow colleagues,
- a willingness to guide and encourage others to incorporate different extension techniques into their professional skillset.

There would also be benefit in possessing:

- an understanding of the agricultural industry
- an acute awareness of threats to the Reef from grazing, cropping and farming
- experience using engagement tools
- high level knowledge of extension and how these services are, or could be delivered.

5. Estimated Budget and Timeframes

Costs to deliver this project are anticipated to fall between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Costs will need to include planning, researching, consulting, analysing skillsets, observation out in the field, analysis and reporting back with recommendations. Dependent upon the findings and recommendations of the project, there may also be a need to consider a Stage 2, following completion of Stage 1.

This project will directly contribute to the future success of FBA projects and programs by:

- providing greater insight into landholder motivations and drivers for participation in programs and projects
- improving extension services of FBA, by looking at gaps and measures to build staff extension skills
- enabling tailoring of extension to better match the needs of landholders, and
- increasing efficiency in this program, and other similar programs that may be run into the future.

It is also anticipated that this project have a timeline of between three and six months, with completion by November 2018.

6. Milestones

Key Activities for Recommended Project Phases	Payment (% of quote)	Due Date (Completion date)
Research analyses and report/ presentation of findings	25%	30 Apr 2018
Consultation with landholders (local to Fitzroy) to identify drivers and motivations	25%	31 May 2018
Assessment of current extension and engagement practices, including on ground contact (may include mentoring and review with staff)	25%	31 Jul 2018
Analysis of skills, extension gaps and presentation of recommendations via report to FBA	25%	31 Aug 2018

7. Project Manager Authority Level

Staff Decisions

FBA's Engagement Manager, in collaboration with the FBA Senior Management Team.

Budget Management and Variance:

FBA's Engagement Manager, in collaboration with the Chief Operating Officer.

Technical Decisions:

FBA's Engagement Manager will make technical decisions about the deliverables of this project, and will collaborate with the Operations Manager (or delegate) to determine the project approach which may directly involve staff delivering extension activities.

Conflict Resolution:

FBA's Engagement Manager has the authority to resolve conflict within the team, within the organization and with external stakeholders. Any negative reputational risks will be discussed with the Senior Management Team and CEO.

8. Approval

Name:

Position:

Senior Management approval

Date:

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