

## Expression of Interest EOI

### Part 1 – General Details

<b>EOI ID</b>	338		
<b>EOI Title:</b> (max 80 char)	Assess CRDC's research capacity and capability to support the cotton industry's RD&E		
<b>Type of Research</b>	Capacity & Education		
<b>Proposed Start Date:</b>	8/01/2024	<b>Proposed End Date:</b>	31/05/2024
<b>CRDC Pillar</b>	2. People		
<b>CRDC Theme</b>	2.2 Leadership and capacity		
<b>CRDC Sub-Theme</b>	2.2.2 Capacity		
<b>FRP Due Date</b>	30/11/2023		

### Part 2 – Expression of Interest Requirements

#### Issue to be addressed and project description:

**Purpose:** This expression of interest seeks proposals from qualified providers to undertake a research capacity and capability assessment for the Cotton Research and Development Corporation. (CRDC)

The future of sustainable cotton production in Australian rural communities depend on the growth and success of the industry. It relies on a pipeline of dedicated people who are committed to working or investing in the cotton industry. CRDC investment plays a key role in the pipeline of research capacity and capability.

**Background:** The CRDC Strategic RD&E Plan for 2023-2028 is Clever Cotton. A vision for sophisticated, prosperous and sustainable Australian cotton industry that is strongly connected to its value chain. Over the life of the plan, the Australian government and Australia's cotton growers will invest \$125 million in to cotton RD&E. This investment will be spilt across three pillars: Paddock, People, Planet.

Building the leadership and capability of people in the cotton industry is a key focus under the People pillar. The Leadership and Capacity theme of the People pillar identifies the importance of RD&E capability for the future of the cotton industry. The new program area will enable CRDC to assess research capacity and it will ensure a coordinated pathway for aspiring researchers to attain their higher degrees, as well as for support for mid-career scientists to become leaders and mentors in their field to ensure next generation industry growth.

The leadership and capacity program will ensure the industry has access to the right skills and capacity to support research and development. This is a complex issue that has no simple solution, but this is not CRDC's responsibility alone. Ensuring we have the required science, development and extension is a shared responsibility with our research partners, government, industry organisations, universities, and non-government organisations.

The People pillar requires a vision around what capacity and ability we have now as well as what we will need in the future to meet the immediate and long-term RD&E needs of the cotton industry. Together there must be a focus on adapting and providing solutions through the mapping of research capacity and patterns of career development in a way that benefits everyone.

It is critical to acknowledge that to be able to grow the industry in a sustainable, safe and profitable way and continue to support innovative science there must be investment to grow the agricultural research and workforce capacity to ensure Australian cotton's legacy at a regional, national and global level.

**Expected project outputs and outcomes:**

**Objectives:**

1. Map the current state of the cotton industry's research capacity and capability against the CRDC strategic plan 2023-2028 with key research partners.
2. Review the current strategies by CRDC to maintain research capacity and capability and assess the effectiveness of the 'pipelines' including CRDC graduate tour, Horizon scholarship, summer scholarships, PhD programs.
3. Determine the future state of cotton research capacity – what does cotton research look like for the new strategic plan and in the future?
4. Identify, assess and prioritise the gaps in cotton research capacity and identify the causes of the gaps.
5. Recommend approaches to capacity building interventions that support a foundational framework that can be utilised for understanding, measuring capacity and capability and conceptualising future work needs to support and CRDC strategic plan.

The project outcomes will deliver:

- Improve the understanding and knowledge of CRDC's research capability and capacity.
- Map research capacity needs of the new strategic plan and future state research requirements.
- Identify research capacity gaps are proactively addressed.
- Co-ordinate with our partners a co-design process to review the opportunities to collaborate in research capacity.
- A process for CRDC to provide clear signals to our research partners of the research and innovation capacity needs to address cotton research skills gaps and priorities.

**Project Investment:**

Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	TOTAL
Indicative budget (up to)	\$80,000	\$0	\$0	\$80,000

### **Part 3 – Selection Criteria**

The following selection criteria will be used by the CRDC to assess the full research proposals (FRPs) received for each Expression of Interest.

#### **The rationale of the project, how it will support CRDC’s Strategic Plan and the potential impacts for the Australian cotton industry and the Australian community.**

This criterion will be assessed on the soundness of the proposal’s understanding of the issues, and the extent to which the project outcomes will address the issues and support CRDC to achieve its measures of success.

#### **Project methodology.**

This criterion will be assessed on the soundness and clarity of the proposed R&D methods to achieve project deliverables and outcomes.

#### **The skills and capacity of the research team to undertake the project.**

This criterion will be assessed on the track record, technical knowledge and experience of all key personnel in the research area and the demonstrated capacity of the nominated researcher/s to provide project coordination, management, monitoring and evaluation for the timely delivery of high quality outputs.

#### **The proposed ‘Pathway to Impact’.**

This criterion will be assessed on the appropriateness of the proposed ‘Pathway to Impact’ and the demonstrated capacity of the project personnel to effectively translate research/project outcomes to on ground actions. Please include the target audience and process for extension/ communication/ commercialisation (as appropriate), as well as any collaboration partners and potential risks. Note that successful FRPs may be requested to develop specific milestones for delivery of project outcomes in collaboration with CottonInfo or CRDC Commercialisation Manager at the outset of the project.

#### **Proposed collaborations for the project and / or the collaborative networks of the project team.**

This criterion will be assessed on the demonstrated ability of the project personnel to form productive networks to build on national and international research already undertaken in related areas.

#### **How this project is cost effective for the Australian cotton industry, including details of the resources being brought to the project.**

(This criterion will be assessed on the cost effectiveness of this project including cash and in-kind commitments from the applicants and leverage through domestic or international linkages. Budget including descriptive text will also be assessed as part of this criterion. Max 2,000 character limit including spaces)

For information on how to apply, please refer to: [www.crdc.com.au/for-researchers](http://www.crdc.com.au/for-researchers)

If you have any queries, please contact the CRDC Project Administration team via 02 6792 4088 or [research@crdc.com.au](mailto:research@crdc.com.au).

This EOI is not a guarantee of funding.