



Sugar Research
Australia

REQUEST FOR TENDER

Review of Opportunities for Farming Systems RD&A in Australian Sugarcane

Proposals must be received by COB 25 November 2019

SRA Reference 2019/501

This document has been prepared to provide information to assist prospective tenderers in the preparation and submission of proposals to conduct a review of the current status and future opportunities for Research, Development and Adoption (RD&A) to improve farming systems in sugarcane in Australia.

Background

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) invests in and manages a portfolio of RD&A projects that drive productivity, profitability and sustainability for the Australian sugarcane industry. As an industry-owned company, SRA is committed to setting the right targets, managing research investments to maximise the likelihood of success, and ensuring the delivery and adoption of project outcomes and impacts across the Australian sugarcane industry.

The SRA Strategic Plan details eight Key Focus Areas (KFAs) for research investment in order to respond to industry's needs through to 2021-22 (https://sugarcane.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Strategic-Plan-2017-D0.6_FINAL.pdf). KFA4, *Farming systems and harvesting*), aims to drive "Improved farm input-output efficiencies and profitability" with the priorities of "Economic analyses and demonstration of new or improved technology, farm management practices and analysis tools".

SRA is developing an investment strategy for KFA4 that will identify, prioritise and address the needs of the Australian sugarcane industry. The first step is to identify the current state of play with respect to farming systems RD&A in sugarcane and, where relevant, in other agricultural industries.

In this context, SRA is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced individuals or groups to undertake a review of the farming systems landscape: what is being used in the Australian sugarcane industry, what has already been researched or developed but not taken up, and why, and what can be learned from other industries.

Project Scope and Objectives

The review should focus on four themes:

- A. Farming systems: improve planting systems, crop performance, crop rotations, on-farm energy use
- B. Water management: improve irrigation and water management
- C. Harvesting systems and cane cleaning: improve technology and identify and demonstrate harvesting best practice
- D. Enabling technologies, including digital technologies (for farm management, business management, precision agriculture and compliance) and commercial service providers

The review will provide a technical report to include the following:

1. A situation statement for each of these themes as currently practiced in the Australian sugarcane industry, including where possible a break down to regional level and referencing industry demographics.
2. A critical literature review and summary on each of these themes, covering work in both internal SRA reports and publications over the last 15 years from the Australian sugarcane industry, other sugarcane industries, and other agri-industries. Unrealised opportunities from past RD&A will need to be identified. These unrealised opportunities may stem from practice changes, technology or other changes over the last 15 years that have since removed barriers to adoption.
3. A review of techniques and technologies that address specific opportunities and threats in the current (and future) industry. What RD&A would be required to develop, adapt and commercialise/extend these techniques and technologies? What are the barriers to adoption?
4. A summary of the opportunities for RD&A identified as informed by the above three bodies of work

As a part of the development of this report, SRA, in consultation with the reviewer(s), will organise and facilitate a 2-day workshop on Farming Systems, and will separately fund all necessary costs for this workshop. Invited participants at this workshop will include researchers, advisors, and industry representatives. It will include an invited presentation on each of the four themes, to provide context for the review and to allow for airing of ideas, threats and opportunities that may not be identified in a literature review.

Outputs

A document addressing the project scope and objectives. A written interim report will be required and reviewed by SRA prior to the submission of a final report. The accepted final report will be published on the SRA website.

Resources and Budget

The proposal should include a detailed and fully costed budget commensurate with the key activities and deliverables required, and a formal payment schedule including GST provisions. While this report is expected to primarily be a desktop study, a limited amount of travel will be approved on request.

Selection Criteria and Process

SRA reserves the right to facilitate collaboration among tenderers with different fields of expertise, in order to construct a team with comprehensive coverage of the project scope.

SRA expects all applicants to be willing to collaborate with others, if necessary, to achieve the tender outcomes.

Selection of the successful proposal(s) will be based on the following criteria:

- The applicant or project team having:
 - a sound understanding of the Australian sugarcane industry and in-field crop management;
 - a demonstrated role in research delivery with well-developed industry and researcher networks;
 - a logical methodology to address the project scope and objectives.
- The quoted price for the work, including overall fees, the proposed timeframe and in-kind or other contributions from the research organisation and any other participants in the research.
- The tenderer being a legal entity with which SRA is able to contract. The tender submission must describe and provide evidence of the legal status of the tenderer, including an Australian Business Number (ABN) if appropriate.

Tenderers must declare to SRA any matter or issue which may be perceived to be, or may lead to, a conflict of interest regarding their proposal or participation in supply of the services described. Tenderers must outline a strategy so that any actual conflict of interest will be avoided.

Reporting Requirements

The successful applicant(s) will be required to enter into the standard service agreement with SRA. Milestone and final reports will be prepared in line with SRA report guidelines. There are three deliverables, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1.

Deliverable	Timeline
Progress report: The progress report will address items 1 and 2	1 March 2020
Draft report: The draft report will address items 1-4	1 May 2020
Final report: The final report will take into consideration feedback from SRA on the draft	1 June 2020

The successful applicant(s) may also be required to prepare and/or contribute to short articles for dissemination in SRA and industry publications.

Negotiation and Part-Offers

After short-listing, SRA may engage in detailed discussions and negotiations with one or more tenderers to maximise the benefits of the tender proposals submitted.

Confidentiality and IP

Where information is available which may assist the research organisation in meeting the requirements of this tender, SRA will provide such information to the researcher. All data and

cited references must be acknowledged appropriately in the final report and resulting scientific articles and it is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure copyright laws are not breached.

All proposals and any accompanying documents will become the property of SRA. Ownership of all information, reports or data provided by SRA to tenderers resides with SRA. The tenderer shall not, without written approval of the Chief Executive Officer of SRA, use the information or reports other than in the development of the proposal or the performance of the activity. Such information, in whatever form provided by SRA or converted by the tenderer, must be destroyed in a secure fashion following advice of the outcome of the tender or at completion of the assignment. The final review document will be publicly available via the SRA website.

Further information

For further information regarding this tender, please contact Dr Peter Samson (Research Funding Unit Program Manager).

Phone (07) 3331 3303

Email psamson@sugarresearch.com.au

Submissions

Proposals must be lodged by email to fundingunit@sugarresearch.com.au and must be received by **COB 25 November 2019**.