

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

INVESTIGATING POTENTIAL FOR SUGAR
INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN GREEN
MARKETS

SRA Investment Area: Research Mission 4

WEALTH GENERATING THROUGH LAND STEWARDSHIP

*Position the Australian Sugarcane Industry as leaders in the
profitability, environmental sustainability, and resource use
efficiency*

Closing Date: 5:00pm 13th of August 2021

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1. 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. SRA's [Strategic Plan 2021-2026](#) recognises that the future of the industry will be underpinned by innovation and a focus on impactful investment in research and development, together with an industry motivated to adopt and adapt.

Greenmarkets (e.g., selling carbon and biodiversity offsets) offer an additional revenue stream for growers and mills. However, there is a lack of understanding of what the markets potentially offer the industry and how the industry can access these markets. This investment will investigate the economic and technical feasibility of farmers and mills participating in current and emerging green markets. The Climate Change Authority has noted that many policy options exist for creating new markets or incentives on the land so that carbon offset projects can deliver multiple benefits across a range of opportunities ([Climate Change Authority, 2018](#)). Greenmarkets can be inherently complex due to the underpinning science and technical challenges with measuring environmental outputs such as carbon. To support the industry to access green markets, SRA may need to develop data, tools and management practices that are acceptable to markets. There are also barriers to the uptake of green market opportunities that need to be identified before they can be strategically resolved.

The sugarcane industry can potentially be paid for best management practices that encourage biodiversity, increase carbon stocks and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by taking part in green markets. Extensive investments in farming systems that encouraged soil health and regenerative farming by sugarcane growers provide the potential for [carbon credits](#), [soil carbon offsets](#) and [biodiversity stewardship rewards](#). These are supported by states, federal and international institutions.

The current life cycle assessment of raw sugar manufacturing project will also help quantify the environmental footprint of the industry which the industry could potentially use to guide practices to help it reduce its carbon footprint.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

SRA is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced individuals or groups to undertake the review. The work is to be completed within 20 weeks.

This review will:

1. Identify the best green market opportunities (verifiable/regulated) for the Australian sugarcane industry, name risks and recommend what growers and millers must do to exploit the opportunities.
2. Document available "methods", guides to implementing the methods, legal requirements to undertake the method for a successful contract, project activities, potential carbon claims, time frames, obligations, and implications.
3. Present case studies of farms that are optimised for green markets vs. those designed to grow more sugarcane.
4. Identify what industry can learn and adopt from other rural industries or RDCs.
5. Present the broad connection to circular and bioeconomy and sustainability practices.

The findings of the review will be used by SRA, to consult with industry and inform efforts to minimise environmental impacts and exploit opportunities for improving resource use efficiency, support diversification, influence policy and improve social licence to operate.

3. EOI OUTPUTS

1. A document addressing detailed project scope, objectives, and methodology.
2. Comprehensive stakeholder engagement and monitoring and evaluation plans.
3. A scan of currently available (verifiable/regulated) green markets and those likely to develop in the future.
4. The key domestic and global stakeholders associated with each of the potential markets.
5. Identification of what growers and mills need to participate in these markets.
6. Identification of barriers to participation and how these could be overcome, including mandatory conditions for participating. This information output should include grower and miller insights such as attitudes/ motivation to engage in green markets captured through market analyses e.g., focus groups, surveys etc
7. Recommendations for R&D needed to support the industry for exploiting green market opportunities.

A written interim report will be needed and reviewed by SRA before the submission of a final report. The accepted final report will be published on the SRA website.

4. TIMEFRAME AND PRICING

DATE	ACTION
16 JULY 2021	Expressions of interest sought by SRA
13 AUGUST 2021	Closing date for submission of EOI
16 AUGUST - 17 SEPTEMBER	EOI Assessment Period
1 OCTOBER 2021	Successful applicants notified
4-8 OCTOBER 2021	Pre-contract meeting and negotiation period to discuss and agree on requirements to be met before an offer can be made by SRA
11-29 OCTOBER 2021	SRA project agreement finalised and signed
1 NOVEMBER 2021	Expected project start date
1 FEB 2022	Draft report due
1 MARCH 2022	Industry update and presentation
1 MAY 2022	Final report- incorporating industry feedback Project completion date
BUDGET	Maximum budget available: \$80K + GST

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

5.1 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

EOIs must be submitted through the online Application Portal - SugarNet

<https://grants.sugarresearch.com.au/omniNet>

Proposal Form and further guidelines are available in SugarNet.

5.2 CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

SRA will use its Research Funding Panel to assess all submissions. All proposals will be reviewed for completeness and the extent to which they address the assessment criteria (below). Clarification of issues identified may or may not be undertaken. Non-conforming proposals or those containing insufficient information to properly assess their ability to satisfy the EOI will not be considered further.

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 and international green markets, including major government and states initiatives and Au sugarcane industry value chain, environmental and farming systems
 - 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 can contract. The tender submission must describe and provide evidence of the legal status of the tenderer, including an Australian Business Number (ABN) if appropriate.
- a detailed description of the proposed approach and methodology for undertaking the project and addressing all the expected deliverables. A stakeholder engagement plan accompanying the proposal will be an added advantage.
- A demonstrated capacity to effectively communicate project outcomes
- 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 can 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 the supply of the services

described. Tenderers must outline a strategy so that any actual conflict of interest will be avoided.

5.3 SRA RIGHTS

SRA reserves its rights at law or otherwise to:

- cease to proceed with or suspend the EOI process.
- alter timing of the EOI process.
- vary the EOI structure.
- vary any time or date specified in the EOI.
- require additional information or clarification from the applicant.
- enter into negotiations or discussions with more than one applicant.
- request a new EOI.
- reject any EOI received after the closing date as described in this document.
- reject any EOI that does not comply with the requirements as described in this document, negotiate, and enter final contractual documentation with respect to the project with any counterparty without prior notice.
- not attribute any reasons for actions or decisions taken, including on the exercise of any or all the above-mentioned rights; and
- take such other action as they consider appropriate in relation to this RFP process.

5.4 CONDITIONS OF LODGEMENT

The applicant agrees, by lodging an Expression of Interest, that it is bound by these conditions:

- All Expression of Interest documents become the property of SRA upon lodgement.
- It warrants that all information in the EOI is accurate and complete.
- That it has declared any actual or potential conflict of interest.
- That it will bear all costs for preparing the EOI submission, including any meetings that may be required related to the submission prior to the contracting stage.
- That it will keep confidential any confidential information provided by SRA in connection with the EOI.
- That it will make any inquiries relating to the EOI process only through the contact details provided; and
- That pursuant to the *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth) it will be bound by the Australian Privacy Principles in respect of any act done or practice engaged in by the respondent in connection with this EOI process.

Expressions of Interest are to be submitted to SRA **by 5.00pm on the 13th of August 2021** through the online Application Portal - SugarNet <https://grants.sugarresearch.com.au/omniNet>

6. SRA CONTACT

Requests for further information or clarification in relation to this request for Expressions of Interest should be directed to:

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