

LIVESTOCK EXPORT COLLABORATIVE FUNDING PROGRAM (LEP CO-FUNDING PROGRAM) 2024-25

OVERVIEW

The **Livestock Export Collaborative Funding Program (“Co-Funding Program”)** is a key initiative of the MLA and LiveCorp Livestock Export Program (LEP) established to support commercial participants (livestock exporters) in developing and implementing strategic welfare and productivity improvements in the Australian live export sector.

The **aim of the Co-Funding Program** is to assist exporters and producers in the delivery of risk mitigation strategies and adoption of best practice livestock management to support the growth, productivity improvements and sustainability of the livestock export industry. The Program also aims to join the improvement of supply chain productivity and efficiency with business development to improve operator competitiveness and trade sustainability. Importantly, it has been developed to facilitate the uptake and extension of research and development (R&D) outcomes, as well as assist with the processes involved in shipment preparations and on-board vessel activity during voyages.

The Co-Funding Program is designed to facilitate projects that are additional to normal commercial arrangements and which are outside of daily and routine in-market exporter staff, producer or consultant activities. That is, projects that will stimulate and facilitate broader industry and trade benefit, as well as enhancing the efficiency of individual commercial operators. By leveraging producer and exporter funds, the Co-Funding Program will contribute to the delivery of key strategic priorities of Red Meat 2030, including:

- **Our Markets:** Improving the economic resilience for industry by increasing access to, and the performance of, existing and new markets.
- **Our Systems:** Maintaining our valued integrity systems, built on trust and respect that supports strong partnerships and sharing of information, reducing unnecessary industry and government regulation.

The Co-Funding Program requires participants to submit an **Annual Plan** of activities that, once approved by the LEP, will be funded on a 50:50 cost shared basis or up to 100% LEP funded via reimbursement (depending on the nature of the project submitted). The LEP will not cost share components of the Activity which leverage customers’ or other organisations’ activities. Funding criteria and administration procedures are detailed in the following pages.

Examples of eligible activities and program areas are provided in Section B.

The LEP will use merit-based assessment criteria to review each application in accordance with Section C.

GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA

A. Eligibility Assessment and Co-Funding Criteria

1. The Co-Funding Program is open to all Australian companies (with a registered ABN) who are:
 - a. Livestock exporters with a valid livestock export licence and LiveCorp membership; and
 - b. Willing to collaborate with MLA to deliver measurable and impactful results which provide benefit and value to stakeholders and overall sustainability of the Australian livestock export industry.
2. The LEP will consider applications within program funding limits and in accordance with the LEP funding ratio of 50:50 per project.
3. Funding is available across all states and export regions and no district or regional limits apply.

B. Eligible and Ineligible Activities and Expenses

The LEP **WILL** fund Activity Proposals and provide support for activities and expenses that align with the following overarching Priority Areas and Programs of Work. The following table is not an exhaustive list and provides applicants with a guide.

Priority Areas	Programs of Work
Animal welfare Market access Productivity	The key priority areas supports industry with initiatives that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and mitigate animal welfare risks • implement adoption of best practice welfare systems • maintain access to key overseas markets • improve supply chain efficiency

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

1. **Best practice animal welfare, biosecurity and welfare** initiatives on farm and in-market facilities:
 - a. Improvements in feedlot efficiency, feedlot management, feed conversion and nutrition
 - b. Improved breeder cattle reproductive performance and efficiency for smallholder production and integration under palm
 - c. Improved breeder cattle performance, productivity gains, livestock performance and efficiency
2. **Pre-/post-arrival shipment processes**, including shipment preparations, on-board vessel activity and discharge procedures upon arrival at destination
3. **Education and training** workshops or practical courses (point of slaughter and animal handling)
4. **Value-add initiatives** such as “Train-the-trainer” programs with measurable outcomes and impacts
5. **R&D adoption**: linking on-farm R&D outcomes and adoption in market such as implementation of heat stress mitigation strategies in MENA feedlots
6. **In-market management programs** in preparation for cultural festivals (Eid Al Adha/Korban/Ramadan), targeted at reducing stress on livestock, controlled slaughter and stunning, improved sales systems and processes
7. **Improved competitiveness** in higher value retail channels in overseas markets and consumer awareness both domestically and in overseas markets
8. **Delegation visits**, particularly relevant at Australian industry events (e.g. LIVEXchange) that facilitate improve knowledge transfer and increased awareness of Australia’s animal health and welfare standards
9. **Feasibility studies** of new supply chains, focussing on new markets and conducting gap analyses in new supply chains and markets with strong value propositions
10. **Improving digital connectivity** of data flow and integrity up and down the supply chain, enhancing shared value feedback systems and data pipelines between stakeholders.

CLAIMING EXPENSES

Eligible expenses generally accepted (unless otherwise stated for specific Activities) include:

- Salaries/contractor fees, travel (economy airfares only), accommodation and meals.

All expenses incurred during project activities must include relevant proof of payment and receipts when submitted to MLA.

The LEP will **NOT** match or co-fund the following activities or expenses:

1. Activities that are categorised as on-farm or livestock export everyday business, commercial or sales operational expenses.
2. While companies are encouraged to leverage customers (importers/feedlots/abattoirs) and other organisations' funds towards this Program, these funds will **NOT** be eligible for LEP co-funding. The LEP will only match the exporter's contribution.
3. Any activities supported via another program, such as Austrade or other government programs.
4. Any expenses used by government bodies or officials.

C. Assessment Process

Prior to submitting applications via the online portal, the LEP highly recommends participants to refer to the [Project Development Checklist](#). This document explains how to build a business case through identifying a problem and considering goals rather than activities in the first instance.

Activity Proposals will be reviewed and assessed in consideration with the following merit-based assessment criteria:

1. Scope and extent of likely impact on animal welfare improvement (risk mitigation and continuous improvement). Animal welfare focussed projects will receive high priority on funding allocation.
2. Benefits in capacity development across the post-arrival supply chain (training locally engaged staff).
3. Alignment with and likely capacity to promote the implementation and adoption of research outcomes from the live export research and development program.
4. Communal benefit to the industry, market and other exporters and producers.
5. The strategic risk of the market and the supply chain.
6. The strategic alignment of the project with Red Meat 2030 Priorities.
7. Likelihood of delivery within budget and timelines.
8. Risk mitigation strategies, particularly for beef breeders.
9. Ability of the company to fully abide by the Program Guidelines, in particular, the measurement and reporting on the effectiveness of the Activity being proposed.

D. Reporting Requirements

Exporters will be required to complete and submit Milestone reporting against their planned objectives and activities, along with corresponding invoices, as outlined in their Activity Proposals. All reporting is to be submitted via the LEP online portal.

E. Confidentiality and Reporting

MLA and LiveCorp will not publish or share information about individual projects. MLA and LiveCorp will report on the Co-Funding Program in their respective Annual Reports, and information on the Program may also be published in other reports, or on the MLA or LiveCorp websites. MLA's Annual Report may include the following type of information:

- List of all companies with the total amount of MLA funding they received for the fiscal year
- Summary of Program outcomes.

F. Private/Personal Information

The information provided to MLA by an exporter or producer (Participant) during the application process for the Co-Funding Program may be personal information under the Privacy Act. By providing MLA with personal information, the Participant consents to the collection and handling of personal information in accordance with **MLA's privacy policy**, which can be viewed at <http://www.mla.com.au/General/Privacy> or obtained directly from MLA by calling 1800 023 100.

Participants may access and correct any personal information held by MLA on request. Where a Participant provides the personal information of others to MLA, the Participant represents that it is entitled to disclose such information having taken all steps required under the *Privacy Act* including that the Participant will be disclosing such personal information to MLA for the purposes of the Co-Funding Program. The Participant agrees to direct such individuals to MLA's privacy policy. If the Participant becomes aware of any breach or alleged breach of the *Privacy Act* concerning information disclosed by the Participant to MLA or by MLA to the Participant, then the Participant must notify MLA immediately and comply with any reasonable directions of MLA with respect to such breach.