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MEDIA RELEASE

Regional Development Australia (RDA) committees have a key role to play in shaping infrastructure investment to meet regional needs during Rounds Three and Four of the Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF).

The Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon Simon Crean MP, announced the funding rounds this week, inviting applicants to submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for projects that will support local economies, build dynamic communities and enhance liveability across the country.

Round Three is worth \$50 million and will provide grants of between \$50,000 and \$500,000 for projects located in towns with a population of 30,000 or less.

Round Four will allocate \$175 million through grants of between \$500,000 and \$15 million for priority regional infrastructure projects that also leverage funding from state and local governments and the private sector.

As with RDAF Round Two, RDA committees will review EOIs from all potential applicants and select five priority projects for Round Three and three priority projects for Round Four to proceed to full application.

Jen Cleary of RDA Far North said that RDA committees are community leaders uniquely placed to determine viable projects that align with local priorities and regional plans.

“RDA committees are jointly appointed by the Australian and State and Territory Governments and we are closely in touch with our local communities,” Jen said.

“We welcome the opportunity to have a strong voice and contribute directly to localism. The regions and local communities are going to be the real winners with the announcement of these new rounds.”

In prioritising projects, Minister Crean has asked RDA committees to take into account regional priorities, the level of community support for the project, the impact of the project on the region and neighbouring regions, and its readiness to proceed.

Mr Crean said the Federal Government has improved the RDAF guidelines to make it easier to apply and broaden the sorts of projects which can be funded. He also encouraged proponents to work with the local RDA committee.

"Keep working with your RDA—it's the committee that decides which Expressions of Interest (EOI) are selected as priority projects to proceed full applications."

More information, including the Rounds Three and Four Guidelines, can be found at <http://www.regional.gov.au/regional/programs/rdaf.aspx>

Applicants can direct questions relating to the application and assessment process to rdaf@regional.gov.au

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