



PROJECT FUNDING GUIDELINES 2021

1 GENERAL

1.1 Background

The SA Grain Industry Trust (SAGIT or the Trust) was established in 1991 to administer the voluntary research levy collected from South Australian grain growers.

1.2 Use of Funds

The Trust is required to use the funds for research, development and extension into the growing, harvesting, storage, processing and marketing of grain in SA in order to increase profitability and sustainability of the grains industry.

1.3 Project Emphasis

Preference will be given to projects which meet the following criteria:

- Major emphasis on benefit to SA farmers
- Most work will be conducted in SA, but this does not exclude outside activities of benefit to SA.
- As a guide applicants are encouraged to review the Grains Industry Blueprint, the GRDC Grower Surveys and the GRDC Regional Cropping Solutions Network for the Southern Region
- Applications should outline the issue being addressed, why it is important to farmers, the key questions, a brief summary of work done to date by the applicant and others, and why the approach has potential to succeed.
- Without losing sight of innovative research, emphasis will be on more immediate outcomes for farmers through development and adaptation of research, and extension.
- Greater emphasis will be placed on the impacts of the work on the farm system and business (rather than just science per se), and on the path to market for project outcomes both at the time of application, during the project and in the final evaluation.
- Opportunities for synergies and on leveraging through partnerships with other funding sources and industry.
- Emphasis on project evaluation, especially in terms of real or potential farmer benefit and how the adoption of the results will be measured.
- Commercial and IP revenues are an important consideration but not the main driver.
- particular consideration will be given to innovative research ideas, a limited level of separate funds will be allocated if such ideas are received

1.4 Opportunities for Collaborative Funding

In order to maximize value to its farmer clients, SAGIT will actively pursue opportunities to leverage funds from other sources through partnership arrangements.

There will be projects where cooperative arrangements with other Research Corporations such as GRDC have merit, especially where the results have broader application across Australia.

SAGIT will look favorably on projects where the applicant has shown initiative in identifying potential opportunities for cooperative funding arrangements.

SAGIT does not receive Commonwealth funds and therefore qualifies as an Eligible Partner in the Australian Research Council's (ARC) Linkage Projects. ARC Linkage projects apply to research conducted by tertiary bodies and cover training and as well research.

SAGIT will also consider proposals, which include collaborative funding with the private sector providing it meets with the Guidelines.

Details of SAGIT criteria and processes for partnership arrangements are available from the SAGIT Project Manager (Malcolm Buckby – Phone: 0417 722 231, Email: admin@sagit.com.au).

2 PROJECT APPLICATIONS

2.1 General

Applicants should read these guidelines carefully and provide all information requested.

All guidelines and forms are on the SAGIT website www.sagit.com.au.

If there are any queries contact the SAGIT Project Manager (Malcolm Buckby – Phone: 0417 722 231, Email: admin@sagit.com.au).

Failure to submit a properly prepared application may result in rejection.

All applications will be treated in confidence. However, in some instances, they may be referred at the Trust's discretion to referees of the Trust's choice for expert opinion.

A successful applicant will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with SAGIT, which sets out the Terms and Conditions of the Trust. **This agreement is not negotiable.**

The normal funding year for SAGIT is from 1 July to 30 June. SAGIT recognizes seasonal limitations which will apply to some projects and allows some flexibility in commencement / final dates.

Typically projects run from several months to a maximum of **three** years, reviewed annually. SAGIT does not approve projects for longer than three years in the first instance. However, the Trust recognizes that some research takes more time and follow-up projects may be considered. In these instances, rather than extending this existing project, a new project application will need to be submitted to SAGIT.

There are two payment dates. The first will be made on the **1 July** and the second on the **1st January**. For projects in their final year, the Trust will withhold 10% of the approved funding from the last payment until a satisfactory final report is received and approved.

The Grantee must issue the Trust with a tax invoice 14 days prior to the payment date. This invoice must clearly show the payment amount requested plus an additional 10% GST.

In the event that the invoice is not received within 28 days from the Payment Date, the trustees reserve the right to cancel the payment and/or the project.

Applications or Progress Reports must be submitted via email to admin@sagit.com.au as a Microsoft Word document in the format shown by COB on **Friday 5th February 2021**. Forms can be downloaded from www.sagit.com.au under Documents and Forms on the home page.

Please note that extensions for Applications for Funding will **not** be granted.

Extensions for progress reports will **only be granted** when negotiated with the trust prior to the due time.

All project applications will be considered during February/March, with applicants being formally advised of the outcome of their submission in April.

Projects will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Significance to the Grains Industry

- Outline of the issue being addressed and its relevance to SA farmers, marketers and processors.
- Environmental benefit, social benefit
- Overall benefit to the State

Value for money

- What are the likely technical and economic benefits?
- Previous/current spend in this area (SAGIT and others).
- What other work is being done in this area.
- Total funding dollars spent and cost/ benefit

Validation and adoption

- Will data be in form suitable for farmers?
- Probability of adoption, how widely will it be adopted

Path to market

- What is the market?
- How will the results be delivered and by whom?
- For projects with an extension component, what activity is intended and how will you measure the outcome in terms of practice change?

Scientific merit

- Scientific merit of the project

Probability of success

- Performance history of the researcher/unit
- Barriers to success.
- Probability of achieving project KPI's

Innovation

- New, novel, creative
- Adds value to existing projects or existing knowledge
- Leads to further innovation

Other potential benefit to SAGIT

- Potential royalty/IP revenue
 - Partnerships and leverage of the funds
 - Provides training opportunity with longer term benefit.
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2.2 Application for Research Funding

See www.sagit.com.au for forms and details

All new Research Proposals should include the following:

2.2.1 Budget Summary

Please quote all costs exclusive of GST

Salaries. Salary costs will only be borne by SAGIT for **staff dedicated to a project**, with the salary amount payable for each year of the project entered on the application form.

Travel Costs. All requests for travel, which forms an integral part of the project, are to be detailed within the project application.

Operating Costs. Operating expenses can include payments for operating leases, and expendable items such as the fertilizers, chemicals etc that are necessary. All operating requests require appropriate justification in the context of the proposed research program. *Where possible, identifiable operating components (such as glass house lease) should be included under operating.*

Operating Costs must be identified separately from on-costs. The Explanatory Notes on Budget Items should be used to provide additional detail on operating costs.

On Costs. These costs relate either to salaries (work cover etc) or other overheads (such as rent, computing etc) **and must be provided separately in the budget.** The Trust is mindful of the practice of overstating overheads and reserves the right to seek justification.

Capital Costs. Capital items are regarded as items with a purchase price of greater than \$5,000. Whilst SAGIT may fund capital expenditure for items of equipment, capital expenditure for the purchase of land or the construction of buildings will not be approved. Capital requests are approved by SAGIT where it can be demonstrated that it is an integral part of the project and that it cannot proceed without purchase of that item. An explanation of the need for the capital item should be provided in the Explanatory Notes on Budget Items.

Explanatory Notes on Budget Items - Space has been provided to allow further detail about Budget Items to be included. Please note travel and capital items will be purchased in accordance with the policies of the applicant's employing agency.

2.2.2 Project Explanation

Project Aims. A concise statement of the aims, in outcome terms, should be provided. Particular note should taken of the criteria under Section 1.3 above.

Industry Significance. A description (not to exceed one page) of the likely benefits, to the South Australian grains industry, preferably in quantitative terms.

Research Proposal. Typically the Research Proposal should begin with a brief background to the research endeavor and should also indicate the soundness and technical feasibility of the proposed research methodology. Applicants should also indicate the risks relating to the project and how these will be managed. The proposed use of third party owned Intellectual Property must be identified, and whether or not approval has been gained.

Key Performance Indicators. The Research Proposal **must** provide at least 2 (but no more than 4) KPI's per year. Each KPI **must be measurable** and is a significant achievement against which SAGIT will assess the progress of the project. All projects should have a KPI which covers the development and submission of the Final Report.

For travel components, a copy of the applicant's itinerary should be included.

Extension of Results. A statement describing the proposed path to market for the results of the project to the grains industry and a strategy should be provided. For extension projects or projects

with a large extension component, this should include the likely barriers to adoption and how you will measure the outcome in terms of practice change

The SAGIT Project Manager should be advised of any commercially sensitive information.

Commencement Date / Completion Date - Should describe the complete period requiring funding i.e. if the project is expected to run for three years commencing in 2021, then the commencement is July 1 2021 and completion date would be 30 June 2024.

Person Responsible for Reporting. This is required for follow up purposes.

Authorisation. The applicant is required to indicate that the application has been authorised by their research organisation. Failure to do so could leave the applicant liable for return of funds in the event that KPI's are not met.

2.3 Capital Item Application

SAGIT will usually only consider funding Capital Items as a part of a Project.

If there is an exceptional circumstance then a Capital Item Only Application will be considered. The relevant form can be downloaded from www.sagit.com.au

2.4 Travel Application

SAGIT will usually only fund Travel as a part of a larger project.

However they will accept travel applications alone where there is a demonstrable benefit to the SA Grains Industry. The relevant form can be downloaded from www.sagit.com.au. The call for travel applications occurs at the same time as capital and new applications and follows the same guidelines shown above. Funds are allocated for all projects in March. Given their nature, out of session applications for travel support are more likely to be considered than for other research or capital grants.

2.5 Out of Session Proposals

Out of Session proposals (i.e. other than those proposals submitted as a result of the annual general call), **are not preferred** and must relate to exceptional circumstances in order to be considered. Such projects will not exceed one year, and will be assessed using the same criteria for other project decisions.

Out of Session proposals must follow the following process:

Applications should be on the Out of Session Application Research Funding Form (available from www.sagit.com.au) and include the same information as required in a New Project Application. Reasons why it is an out of session request must be provided.

Advice regarding the success, or otherwise, will be forwarded within one month of the application being received.

A Funding Agreement with the Trust or an alternative method which has been prepared by the Trust, requiring an exchange of letters, will usually be used.

Successful applicants for Out of Session Projects are also expected to forward a Final Report, on completion of the project, in accordance with the outline provided below. 10% of the funding will be held until this report is received

Please note that in the instance that an application for funds is successful, a one off payment for the request will usually be made, depending on the nature of the project. Should further funds be required at the completion of the extraordinary application then the normal process for New Project Applications must be followed.

3 REPORTING

SAGIT requires that reports be written in a manner that is easily understood and relevant to SA growers, and should include a number of key dot points which can be used in SAGIT communication programs.

3.1 Progress Reports

The Trust requires an annual progress report to be completed **each year** for all projects.

Progress reports, along with new project applications, are due no later than close of business **on Friday 5th February 2021** of the funding year and should be lodged on admin@sagit.com.au.

Researchers responsible for projects which terminate between December 31 and June 30 (the second half) of the financial year **are required** to submit a progress report, **and** provide a Final Report on completion of the project.

The Progress Report must describe the research undertaken and results against the Key Performance Indicator(s) and in a form (text, tables, graphics, etc) that will enable the reviewers to make an informed assessment.

The **Commencement Date / Completion Date** should be the same dates outlined in the Funding Agreement.

Project Extensions: Extensions beyond the term originally agreed will not be automatically approved. A researcher who has cause to believe a project will not finish on the due date should consult with the SAGIT Project Manager (Malcolm Buckby – Phone: 0417 722 231, Email: admin@sagit.com.au) at the earliest opportunity. Any potential requirement to extend the project should be highlighted in the progress report.

The Progress Report should contain the following:

- **Budget Summary.** A summary of what has been spent to date on the project against budget.
- **Explanatory Notes on Budget Items.** Any variations in the budget should be highlighted for SAGIT assessment.
- **Progress Report:**
 - (a) **Project Aims.** A concise statement of the aims of the project in outcome terms should be provided.
 - (b) **Progress against Key Performance Indicators.** The Key Performance Indicators should be stated and a brief explanation as to how they were achieved or why they were not achieved.
 - (c) **Plans for the Coming Year.** This section provides the opportunity to amplify and comment on the work-plans to achieve the key performance indicators identified for the coming year and to where there is potential for further funding to be sought.
 - (d) **Conclusions Reached and Discoveries Made.** This includes prospects for commercialisation, use of results or the development of a new technique that might subsequently have a wider impact than predicted.
 - (e) **Communication Program.** Discuss what you have achieved in communicating your results to the grain industry in the past year.

3.2 Final Reports of Research and Extension Projects (including Capital Items)

Final Reports are an essential part of ensuring that the South Australian grain industry and the wider community benefit from SAGIT R&D investments. Accordingly, SAGIT will withhold 10 per cent of the project funds and will not consider further new project applications from the organization, until a satisfactory Final Report is received.

The Research Organisation is required to provide the Trust with a Final Report for the project **within 2 months** after the completion of the Project Term, lodged on admin@sagit.com.au

The Final Report should include:

- Executive Summary. **A number of key dot points which are written in a form which can be understood by farmers and can be used in SAGIT communication programs**
- Information regards overall performance of the project including:
 - List of personnel who participated in the Research Project including co-operators;
 - The extent to which the Project objectives and KPI's were achieved; and
 - Any difficulties encountered and the reasons.
- Technical Information. Sufficient data and short clear statements of outcomes not to exceed **three** pages.
- IP generated and potential for commercialisation.
- Extension of technology to farmers and their advisers including:
 - Publications, extension articles delivered as part of the project;
 - Path to market for the results, including likely barriers to be overcome and how the outcomes will be measured in terms of practice change;
- Possible future directions for the research including potential for further work and partnerships.
- Financial statements showing expenditure against budgets and any variations and the reasons for the same.

Further reasonable relevant information may be subsequently sought by SAGIT. If a Final Report contains confidential information relating to Intellectual Property or any other matter, the SAGIT Project Manager must be advised and the Trust requires the Grantee to produce an edition of the Final Report in a form suitable for general distribution.

SAGIT often asks the Principal Investigator (and others) of Final Reports to make a presentation at the Project Review Meeting in October. **This will normally require a visual presentation which highlights the main results of the project, the value to farmers, and the directions the work should take in future.**

3.3 Travel Final Reports

Attendance at conferences and other types of travel must be followed up with a report which meets the guidelines for completing a Final report. Where the travel is not part of a SAGIT Project, the report must be submitted **within 2 months** of the completion of the travel.

Travel reports are to be interpretative rather than descriptive and must **not** be based solely on rehashing of proceedings. Key findings with benefit to the grain industry and future project investments should be reported.

The itinerary and a detailed contact list should be included to allow others to follow up on the issues addressed within the report. Recommendations as to the value of the trip and suggestions for future travel should also be included.

3.4 Review of all Final Reports

The SAGIT Project Management Committee will review the Final Report within two months of receipt to ensure that it is of sufficient quality to be accepted. Once the Final Report is accepted, the grantee will be advised so that the final payment can be invoiced and paid.

In the event that the Final Report is not acceptable the Principal Investigator will be asked to resubmit the report. The final payment will be withheld until the report is accepted.

3.5 Ownership of Reports

All reports (including a Final Report), intellectual property and research findings generated from funds supplied by SAGIT are property of the Trust. SAGIT may use this information or tangible property, in any manner it considers appropriate in consultation with the research providers. Where the information is the subject of a thesis, negotiations with regards its release will be conducted with the relevant organisation, in accordance with the funding agreement.

3.6 Financial Statement Requirements

At the end of each financial year all recipient organisations are required to submit an annual financial statement for the project outlining the acquittal of funds. This statement is Form A and titled Statement of Receipts and Expenditure and forms part of the Funding Agreement which is signed by both parties. **Such annual financial statements are required to be lodged with the SAGIT Project Manager by 30th August of each year.**

Research organisations should take particular note that payment for projects can be withheld, and future New Project applications not considered, if appropriate financial statements are not forwarded to the SAGIT Project Manager as required. It is the responsibility of the research organization to ensure that all necessary financial statements are submitted in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

The SAGIT Project Manager must be advised of any unspent funds at the end of the project so that arrangements can be made for their return to SAGIT.

3.7 Supplementary Reporting Requirements

While the primary audit mechanisms are the Annual Progress Statements and Statement of Receipts and Expenditure, the Trust may seek a supplementary progress report at any time during the life of the project if deemed necessary or where a particular research phase is critical to the direction of the project.

SAGIT may request that the Project Supervisor or others associated with a project make a presentation at the review meeting in October.

4 PUBLICITY AND MEDIA COVERAGE

It is required that due recognition be given to SAGIT as the funding source of projects at field sites, conferences, in scientific articles, and particularly in articles in farmer publications and the media. This includes cases where the project is jointly funded with say GRDC, ARC or a private funder.

5 KEY DATES

NEW Projects

Key Date	Description
November	Call for Applications announced. Guidelines released.
first Friday in February 2021	Applications due
March	Applications reviewed by SAGIT
April	Applicants notified of results of review
July	First payment. Successful applicants must submit invoice.
January	Second payment. Successful applicants must submit invoice

CONTINUING Projects

Key Date	Description
first Friday in February 2021	Progress statements due
August	Final reports and financial statements (Form A) due.
September	Spring review of projects. Final reports considered.