



# REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

## NORTHERN NATIVE SEED INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (NNSIDI)



**REOI Issue date:** October 6, 2023

**EOI Submission deadline:** November 6, 2023

**Request to:** Aboriginal owned business enterprises



NNSIDI – Request for expressions of interest



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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) is to assess the interest of Aboriginal owned business enterprises to participate in the Northern Native Seed Industry Development Initiative (NNSIDI). Responses to the REOI will assist the Pilbara, Goldfields-Esperance and Kimberley Development Commissions identify potential Seed Production Area (SPA) trial sites within their respective regions of Western Australia.

There will be SPA trial sites set up across the three regions, subject to the quality of responses. The final number, sizes and locations of trial sites will be determined following the NNSIDI EOI and grant application processes.

### WHAT IS A SEED PRODUCTION AREA?

A Seed Production Area (SPAs) is a managed space where native plants are grown primarily for seed harvest. This seed may be sold commercially and/or used in environmental restoration projects.

### WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF A SEED PRODUCTION AREA?

SPAs vary in size and design. Below are some basic examples.

- **Small** areas using containers or garden beds. These are good for grasses and herbaceous plants, suited to small scale commercial, non-commercial or training facilities.
- **Medium to large** areas may use mounded rows to grow grasses, creepers, and smaller shrubs. This makes seed collection easier than wild harvest.
- **Large** areas can be used for planting lines of trees, shrubs or mixed plantings of numerous species. They may also resemble the natural environment or be a managed area of bushland.

### WHAT IS REQUIRED TO OPERATE A SPA?

Although SPAs vary in size and complexity, most will require the following:

- Willing workers and managers
- Secure land tenure for the time the SPA is operating
- Access to services such as power and water
- Fencing and plant protection
- Access for vehicles and equipment
- Appropriate land and soil conditions
- Irrigation/reticulation, storage and other facilities (requirements will vary depending on site)

### CAN I START SMALL AND SCALE UP MY SPA OVER TIME?

The short answer is yes if you have the space for growth. You could start small on a larger area and expand as your production increases. This strategy may also allow you to learn as you go whilst minimising risk.

### HOW LONG WILL THE NNSIDI TRIAL SITES RUN FOR?

The NNSIDI will support the establishment and operations of SPA trial sites until July 18, 2025. Continued SPA operations beyond that date will be at the discretion of each individual enterprise.

## BACKGROUND

Commercial SPAs and seed orchards operate across the world in areas such as forestry and horticulture. In more recent times, native SPAs have become more common as the global focus turns to a nature positive future driven by the emerging restoration economy.

In Australia, native SPAs are also growing in popularity. They are currently concentrated along the eastern and southern coasts with the majority being used for small, local restoration projects.

New native SPAs have recently been created in the Southwest and Wheatbelt areas of Western Australia. The latter, operated by Greening Australia, is one of few large-scale SPAs targeting the commercial native seed market.

Western Australian mining companies require vast quantities of native seed to meet their post-closure revegetation obligations and this demand is beginning to outstrip supply. As a result, many remnant plant communities are coming under increasing pressure through the current practice of wild seed harvest. SPAs can play a role in meeting this shortfall whilst reducing the impact on country and helping to boost regional economic development.

Outside the mining sector, other markets for native seeds and associated products are emerging. Commercial opportunities for the native seed sector include bush foods and medicines, carbon farming, native nurseries and landscaping projects of all sizes.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Aboriginal-owned business enterprises are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in the Northern Native Seed Industry Development Initiative (NNSIDI). The NNSIDI seeks to support the establishment of native Seed Production Areas (SPAs) across the Pilbara, Goldfields and Kimberley regions. The aim will be to grow native species for seed supply to -

- Mining and other land restoration projects
- Wholesale and retail nurseries/domestic retail seed supply
- State and local government projects
- Bush foods and medicines
- Future carbon and biodiversity markets

The NNSIDI is open to new or existing businesses and may include joint ventures or cooperatives if they are majority Aboriginal-owned. The opportunity is suited to enterprises that have experience in environmental restoration, conservation, land management, horticulture, landscaping or other nature-based initiatives.

Seed Production Area trial sites would also provide local people with a range of training and employment opportunities. Through the NNSIDI, participants will be assisted in identifying the skills and knowledge required for their operations and connected with the appropriate service providers.

Participating enterprises across the project regions will have the ability to collaborate and, where appropriate, share information. This will help build a network of native seed production operations with a comprehensive knowledge base that values and protects Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).

## FUNDING

The NNSIDI funding of \$4.4million will be allocated to project costs and through a competitive grants process. Targeted funds will assist participants to prepare, construct and commence their SPA operations. Areas of priority that may be funded include -

- Business cases and feasibility studies
- Training and research
- Construction and infrastructure
- Materials and equipment

This REOI is not a commitment to fund. It is designed to stimulate interest in the NNSIDI. The grants process will take place once the Expressions of Interest consultation period closes. This is outlined in the schedule on [Page 7](#).

## EOI CONSIDERATIONS

The table below is a guide designed to help potential applicants begin the planning process. When submitting an EOI, applicants are encouraged submit a broad outline of their SPA trial site proposal based on the elements and considerations listed below.

### SPA TRIAL SITE OPERATIONS

| Elements                 | Considerations  | Suggested actions   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Controlling entity       | <b>Majority Aboriginal owned –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business.</li> <li>• Joint venture.</li> <li>• Co-operative.</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify suitable business entity.</li> </ul>  |
| Knowledge and experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business operations.</li> <li>• Horticulture/Conservation.</li> <li>• Sales and marketing.</li> <li>• Communications.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess current knowledge and experience.</li> <li>• Consider training requirements.</li> </ul> |

### MARKET

| Elements  | Considerations  | Suggested actions   |
|-----------|---|---|
| Customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mining companies.</li> <li>• Restoration projects.</li> <li>• State/local government.</li> <li>• Nurseries.</li> <li>• Retail/online sales.</li> <li>• Landscape designers.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify market opportunities.</li> <li>• Engage with potential customers to identify need.</li> </ul> |
| Offerings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulk seed.</li> <li>• Wholesale/retail.</li> <li>• Seedlings/mature plants.</li> <li>• Bush foods and medicines.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify core business.</li> <li>• Are there “value-add” opportunities?</li> </ul>                     |

## SPA SITE

| Elements       | Considerations   | Suggested actions  |
|----------------|--|--|
| Location       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Near remnant plant population.</li> <li>Proximity to community/business.</li> <li>Country near mine site</li> <li>Land features (flat, easy access).</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify suitable site.</li> </ul>  |
| Size and Type  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small, medium, large.</li> <li>Managed remnant bushland.</li> <li>Containerised.</li> <li>Field crop.</li> <li>Rewilding/restoration model.</li> <li>Hybrid (mixed types).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess which size and type would be best suited to your operation.</li> </ul> |
| Land tenure    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freehold.</li> <li>Long-term lease (minimum 3, preferably 10+ years).</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose site(s) that meet or exceed minimum tenure requirements.</li> </ul>    |
| Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing.</li> <li>Structures (sheds, storage).</li> <li>Reticulation.</li> <li>Power and other services.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify requirements for infrastructure.</li> <li>Consider costs.</li> </ul> |

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Respondents are required to submit their expressions of interest by **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> of November, 2023** to Joseph Mann, Principal Regional Development Officer, NNSIDI at [joseph.mann@pdc.wa.gov.au](mailto:joseph.mann@pdc.wa.gov.au) with the email subject **NNSIDI SPA Trial site EOI**.

### In your email, please include:

- Name of primary contact person
- Organisation
- Contact telephone number
- Email address
- A brief description of the proposed SPA enterprise (no more than two pages), outlining the following elements:
  - Controlling entity
  - Knowledge and experience in native seed, or related industries
  - Customers (who will you be selling to?)
  - Offerings (product, or products to be sold through the SPA)
  - Location, size and land tenure of proposed SPA trial site
  - Infrastructure (existing and required)

**REOI Respondents are only required to provide a broad outline of their SPA proposals at this time. More detail will be sought through the grant application process following post EOI consultation.**

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – EXAMPLE

Below is a simple example of an Expression of Interest (EOI) based on the SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS outlined on [Page 6](#).

### NNSIDI SPA Trial site EOI – Smooth Rehab and Seeds

**Name of primary contact:** John Smooth

**Organisation:** Smooth Rehab and Seeds

**Contact telephone number:** 0404 040 404

**Email address:** john@smoothrehabnseeds.com.au

### Expression of Interest

Dear Joseph Mann,

I'm writing to **register our interest** in the **Northern Native Seed Industry Development Initiative**. Our Business **Smooth Rehab and Seeds** is **more than 50% Aboriginal owned** and registered on Supply Nation.

Collectively, the business has over **25 years' experience** in seed collecting, land care and land rehabilitation. We have been completing work for several resource companies for the past two years, including **mining business A124** and **mining business B354**. Both have **shown interest in purchasing more native seeds**. Smooth Rehab and Seeds believe we can meet this need through a locally owned and operated seed production area.

We have an opportunity to **lease a five-hectare block of land over six years**. It is located between **A124's North x North-west mine site and the Rocky Outcrop A class reserve**. There are two unused sheds and access to three-phase power at the site. Mining business B354 have offered us the use of a transportable office building. The area would need **some earthworks, reticulation, fencing** and other materials for the construction and operation of a seed production area.

I would like to **arrange an information session** to discuss things further.

Regards

John

## SCHEDULE

|   | Open date       | Close date       |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Call for Expressions of Interest              | October 6, 2023 | November 6, 2023 |
| Respondents to submit Expressions of Interest | October 6, 2023 | November 6, 2023 |
| Post EOI consultation process                 | October 6, 2023 | February 2, 2024 |
| NNSIDI Grant applications                     | March 4, 2024   | April 5, 2024    |
| NNSIDI Grant assessments                      | April 6, 2024   | May 3, 2024      |
| NNSIDI Grant recipients announced             |                 | June 3, 2024     |

## NEXT STEPS

### STEP 1 – SUBMIT YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST BY NOVEMBER 6, 2023

Call for Expressions of Interest will commence on October 6, 2023 and close on November 6, 2023.

### STEP 2 – ORGANISE AN INFORMATION SESSION

Once you have submitted your Expression of Interest you can arrange an information session with the NNSIDI Project Team. Information sessions may be held in-person or online between October 6, 2023 and February 2, 2024.

### STEP 3 – PREPARE TO SUBMIT YOUR NNSIDI GRANT APPLICATION

NNSIDI Grant applications will open on March 4, 2024 following the completion of EOI information sessions. Grant applications close on April 5, 2024.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

REOI Respondents can obtain further information by contacting the NNSIDI Project Team.

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Project Lead - Pilbara, Goldfields and Kimberley | Project Officer - Goldfields     |
| Joseph Mann                                      | Nigel Bird                       |
| Ph: 0499 077 559                                 | Ph: 0448 023 781                 |
| Email: joseph.mann@pdc.wa.gov.au                 | Email: nigel.bird@gedc.wa.gov.au |





## LIMITATIONS

**Any Respondent making a submission in response to this Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) does so fully accepting the following provisions:**

This is a REOI only; it is not a procurement document. The information contained in this REOI is intended for information purposes only to assist interested parties in assessing whether or not to respond. No representation or warranty express or implied, is made by the Pilbara Development Commission or any of its agents, as to the accuracy or completeness of such information. Neither the Pilbara Development Commission nor its agents will be responsible for, and hereby expressly disclaim, any and all liability for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in connection therewith. In its response to this REOI, the Respondent must disclose to the Pilbara Development Commission, any potential conflict of interest that might compromise this process. If such a conflict of interest does exist, the Pilbara Development Commission may, at its discretion, refuse to consider the response in question.

The Respondent must also disclose whether it is aware if any Pilbara Development Commission employee or member of the Board has a financial interest in the Respondent and the nature of that interest. If such an interest exists or arises at any point leading to the selection of the successful Respondent, the Pilbara Development Commission may, at its discretion, refuse to consider the response, or proceed with the Respondent any further in this process unless and until the matter is resolved to the Pilbara Development Commission's sole satisfaction.

All information provided by or obtained at any time from the Pilbara Development Commission or its agents in any form in connection with this REOI that is not publicly available (i) must be treated in a highly confidential manner; (ii) is not to be used for any other purpose other than responding to this REOI; (iii) must not be disclosed to any other person without the prior written authorisation of the Pilbara Development Commission; and (iv) shall be returned immediately upon request of the Pilbara Development Commission.

This exercise is not a request for tenders. This is a request for information only and no legal obligations will arise hereunder in any circumstances. The Pilbara Development Commission reserves the right to amend the scope of this REOI, and to carry out discussions with one or more prospective Respondents at any time, or from time to time, for the purpose of attempting to finalise an acceptable agreement, at all times without recourse against the Pilbara Development Commission and its agents, should no such agreement be concluded.

The Pilbara Development Commission may proceed as it determines in its sole discretion, including to discontinue or invalidate this REOI and including to re-issue or proceed with a further REOI and the Pilbara Development Commission will not be responsible for any losses or costs incurred by any Respondent as a result thereof. The Pilbara Development Commission has the right not to respond to any report or request made by a Respondent and not to distribute copies of any reports or requests received from a Respondent and responses thereto, to the other Respondents. Where the Pilbara Development Commission, in its discretion, considers that such report or request necessitates a change to this REOI, the Pilbara Development Commission will prepare and issue an appropriate addendum to this REOI. The Pilbara Development Commission reserves the right to terminate this REOI at any time for any reason.