

Goondiwindi Hub Strategy

Growing value from water in
a changing world



Scene Setting

This Hub Strategy was developed in consultation with the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), with questions posed to the group and discussion around each topic. During this discussion with the RAC, there were key areas that the RAC feel the Goondiwindi Hub strategy should focus on. These areas are:



Researcher Recruitment and Retention



Regionally Beneficial Projects



First Nations Opportunities



Valued Partnerships

This informed the basis of the Hub Strategy, which will then develop a Hub Action Plan to progress to the outcomes of the strategy.

Why we need a Hub Strategy

- Required within Hub Agreement
- Opportunity to refocus on outcomes as opposed to activity
- Expectation Hubs will leave legacy – How this is to be done is unexplored

Delivery Expectations on Hub

- Establishment and maintenance of the facility
- Supporting researchers
- Through RAC ensure regional needs are heard and being met
- Maintain strong positive engagement with Partners within the Region
- Ensuring good governance of research projects

Goondiwindi Hub Vision

It is expected that the legacy of the Goondiwindi Hub will be one of a future focused organisation, supporting a more water efficient and continually improving irrigation district for the cotton, ag tech, and horticulture industries, and the wider community of the region.

Researcher Recruitment and Retention

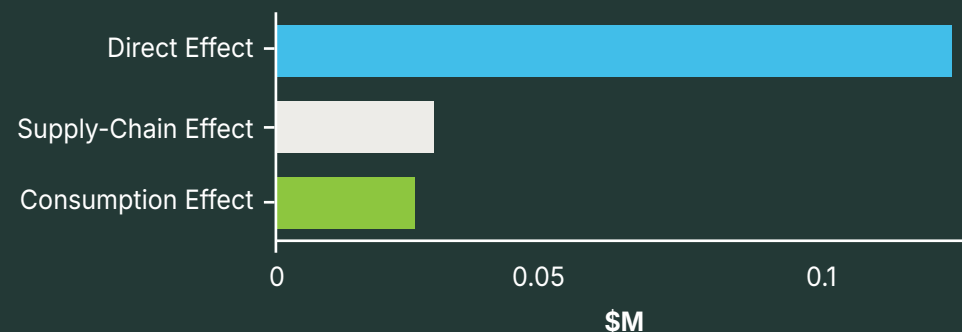
The Goondiwindi Hub requires a critical mass of PhDs and Post-Docs to ensure the success of the Hub Agreement, as is outlined by the Thriving Hubs Document. Recruitment and retention of researchers is crucial to the success of the Goondiwindi Hub, and the Goondiwindi RAC feels that this element is a key piece in the legacy of the Hub.

Researchers moving to and living in the Goondiwindi region has significant socio-economic impacts for the community. Goondiwindi Regional Council undertook an Impact Report, assessing the impact on the economy when new 1 FTE roles are introduced to the community. See below for impacts on wages and salaries for the region:



Impact on Wages and Salaries

Impact Wages and Salaries Total - Goondiwindi (R) (2023 Release 1)



From a direct increase in output of \$0.333 million it is estimated that direct wages and salaries would increase by \$0.123 million. From this direct expansion in the economy, flow-on supply-chain effects in terms of local purchases of goods and services are anticipated, and it is estimated that these indirect impacts would result in the gain of a further 0 jobs and a further increase in wages and salaries of \$0.028 million. This represents a Type 1 Wages and Salaries multiplier of 1.230.

The increase in direct and indirect output and the corresponding creation of jobs in the economy are expected to result in an increase in the wages and salaries paid to employees. A proportion of these wages and salaries are typically spent on consumption and a proportion of this expenditure is captured in the local economy. The consumption effects under this scenario are expected to further boost employment in sectors such as retail therefore further increasing wages and salaries by \$0.025 million.

Total wages and salaries, including all direct, supply-chain and consumption effects is estimated to increase by up to \$0.177 million. This represents a Type 2 Wages and Salaries multiplier of 1.434.

Due to this, the RAC and wider partner community of the Goondiwindi Hub feel that emphasis on recruitment and retention of researchers in the Hub is one of the areas we should spend the most time on.

Following on from this, the strategy for the Goondiwindi Hub to recruit researchers is as below:

- Create a value proposition for the Goondiwindi region, including:
 - Promotional video of the Goondiwindi region, showcasing local people, farmers, industry representatives, and PhDs from other Hubs
 - Financial benefits (i.e. relocation package for Post-Docs)
 - Benefits of moving to Goondiwindi
- Work with the Education and Training team and Program leads to develop and identify specific roles for the Goondiwindi Hub, based on industry partners and key topics of conversation
- Attend conferences/careers expos in Australia, United States of America, and Canada to showcase the Goondiwindi region, and promote specific topics of research relevant to the Hub
 - Aim to recruit 6-8 PhDs to obtain the critical mass of researchers in Goondiwindi. An action plan will be developed to highlight specifics and logistics of this approach.

Following this, the strategic plan to retain researchers is as follows:

- By creating a critical mass, students will have a network and community, which will ensure they feel supported by both the CRC and their peers
- The Hub Relocation policy can reduce the expenses associated with moving for Post-docs and non-PhD researchers, thus reducing the financial load and encouraging people to stay longer
- Support will be provided by the Hub to students with housing and transport (Education and Training)
- Social support will continually be provided by the RHM and community members to ensure researchers feel they are valued members of the community.



Regionally Beneficial Projects

The strategy for this Goondiwindi Hub is to have a meaningful and regionally beneficial project, focusing on the Northern Basin, with research being undertaken out of the Goondiwindi Hub. This research is to be developed in consultation with relevant partners and stakeholders, be specific and relevant to the Northern Basin, and provide tangible outcomes and/or direction for future projects.

In consultation with both the RAC and Northern Basin partners, it was agreed that there is a need for a future focused project for the Northern Basin. This then progressed to a discussion with the Foresight and Decision-Making Program Lead, Ariella Helfgott, to arrange an initial co-design process with the RAC and Northern Basin partners. A meeting was held in early April with a small group of partners and RAC members to discuss what this would look like, and future plans are underway to develop a future scenarios planning project.

The Evaporative Losses project is out for contract, which is also a regionally beneficial project. This project will create more opportunity in this space with partners like CRDC and UniSQ to continue to develop this work. This will also tie into the recruitment and retention of students, as this project includes funding for a PhD and Post Doc to be based in Goondiwindi.

Both the Evaporative Losses and Future Scenarios Planning projects are expected to continue beyond the life of each initial project. It is hoped that these projects will form part of the legacy of the Goondiwindi Hub, and will create tangible and meaningful outcomes for the region and our stakeholders.

Assuming Success, the engagement of projects in the community will be greatly improved.

The RAC identified they would like to see more action in the region, which includes more students and more projects, but can also be addressed by looking at the current projects in place and improve the integration and engagement of the region in these projects. It is suggested that the actions to lead to success in this strategy will be:



Both the Evaporative Losses and the Future Scenarios Planning projects will be contracted and progressed, highlighting further opportunities for development and phases of future projects, if appropriate.



RHM works with project leads on existing projects to promote Goondiwindi/Northern Basin and the regions innovation or groups who are doing interesting things. It is hoped that this promotion may entice project leads to consider local groups for pilots or case studies within the project.



Project Open Days: once a year, the Hub hosts an Open Day for all projects relevant to the region to showcase their project and where it is up to. Invite all regional partners to attend, ask questions, and network with each other to encourage more collaboration and local stimulation.

First Nations Opportunities

The Goondiwindi Hub will have a positive and consistently maintained relationship with the First Nations community in both Goondiwindi and the wider Northern Basin. This will be achieved by:



Continuing the relationship with First Nations representative on the RAC, Justin Saunders, Chief Executive of the Bigambul Native Title Corporation. We will maintain this relationship through regular contact, and inclusion of Bigambul elders and artists at the Annual Event 2025.



Bigambul Native Title Corporation have also expressed an interest in becoming a partner, so that will be encouraged and progressed where possible.



Feli McHughes was Elder in Residence at the Leadership workshop in Jindabyne and is also working on a project in development around Billabongs. Feli is a Ngemba man from the Northern Basin, near Brewarrina. We will continue to maintain and develop this relationship through the Goondiwindi hub and the CRC.



The First Nations research program will also play a strong role in this strategy, with both Troy Meston and Geoff Reid being heavily involved in the First Nations community. The Goondiwindi Hub will take advice and support from this program.



The Native Grains program through the University of Sydney is a successful First Nations project with one of our Tier 1 partners. One of our PhD students is also directly working within this project, so continuing to foster and support this work will strengthen this relationship.



Valued Partnerships

The RAC discussed the partnerships in the region and how the CRC has been engaging with partners. There were concerns with the representation of partners in the Northern Basin, and what gaps there are in the partnership with the CRC, specifically in the region.

As a result of this discussion, the suggested strategies are:

- **Approach other Local Governments in the region:**
 - Balonne Shire Council – already members of the Partner Forum, may be interested in being a T3 Partner
 - Moree Plains Shire Council
 - Toowoomba Regional Council
 - Others – TBD, taking guidance from RAC
- **Improve the communication between RHM and Tier 1 Partners in the region, including:**
 - MDBA – strong connection overall with the CRC, limited in the region.
 - Utilise the Regional Engagement Officers for regularly connection (Lucy Sevil, St George), and continue to engage at higher/project level
 - Murray-Darling Association (T3, but heavily involved)
 - Mark Lamb is involved with several projects, but could improve the involvement with Northern Basin (possibly Future Leaders project or Water Futures case studies)
- **University of Sydney**
 - Tim Weaver has recently taken over the role of University Lead for the University's involvement with the CRC. Suggest an increase in communication and involvement with Tim could improve the relationship and create potential projects for the region. Tim is based in Narrabri and lives in Wee Waa.

- Explore opportunities for University of Southern Queensland to increase their involvement.
 - Identify other potential partners based in Goondiwindi, Narrabri and Toowoomba (i.e. Cotton Seed Distributors now a T3 Partner, may have other contacts that could be interested).
 - Successful partner agreement with Bigambul Native Title Corporation (as above)



The Hub Legacy

It is expected that all of the above strategies and actions will lead to a clear legacy for the Goondiwindi Hub for the One Basin CRC. Through the Future Scenarios Planning work, along with the Evaporative Losses projects, it is expected that the legacy of the Goondiwindi Hub will be one of a future focused organisation, supporting a more water efficient and continually improving irrigation district for the cotton, ag tech, and horticulture industries, and the wider community of the region.

Learn more

To learn more about our Hubs, visit our website or contact us at: admin@onebasin.com.au



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

Cooperative Research
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