

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture



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DRIVING FORESTRY INNOVATION ACROSS GIPPSLAND

New funding for industry-led research and development will play a key role in shaping the future of the timber industry across Victoria and driving its growth.

The Gippsland Centre of the National Institute for Forestry Products Innovation (NIFPI) has up to \$3.8 million available for research grants and is now calling for proposals .

Through the first round of grants opened today, individual research grants from \$50,000 to \$500,000 are available for projects including the development of new and improved timber products, enhancing tree growing, improved supply chain innovation and efficiency and other research priorities identified for the Victorian industry.

The NIFPI Gippsland Centre was established in July 2020 and is a joint initiative between the Victorian and Commonwealth governments. The centre's committee members were appointed in late 2020 – chair Professor Andrew O'Loughlin from Federation University leads a group with a range of experience and expertise in Victoria's local timber and forestry industry.

The NIFPI initiative complements the support available through the Victorian Timber Innovation Fund as well as the work being undertaken by the Gippsland Forestry Hub.

Funding proposals for eligible research and development can be made before 14 May 2021. Visit www.nifpi.org.au for more information about NIFPI Gippsland Centre or to apply for funding.

Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"We must innovate and do things differently to ensure a strong future for our forestry industry – this new funding will be vital in kickstarting more timber research and development in Gippsland."

"The grants complement a range of existing support and transformation opportunities available to industry through the Victorian Timber Innovation Fund. We encourage interested parties to put forward their best ideas."

Quotes attributable to Commonwealth Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries Senator Jonathon Duniam

"The Gippsland region has battled drought, bushfires and the economic fallout of the pandemic, and this funding will encourage innovation that will support the strong future of Victoria's forestry industry."

"The grants will provide a major boost to Gippsland's native and plantation forest industries, and the thousands of jobs they support."