



Plant Growth Central Research and Innovation Platform

Frequently Asked Questions

Operational

1. In regards to the CRIP funding model - where does the other 1/3 of funding come from if 2/3 is funded centrally by the CRIP?

All Central Research and Innovation Platforms (CRIPs) operate with a funding model where a portion is funded by the University and a portion is funded by external funds which might be from sources such as users (typically via research grants covering access costs), philanthropic gifts, NCRIS funds, etc. This is driven by UQ Policy [UQ PPL1.30.06](#) and is uniform for everyone.

2. Has the PG CRIP Operations manager been appointed and when will they be announced?

The Operations Manager, Plant Growth Central Research and Innovation Platform, has been appointed and commenced on 6 December 2021. Sarah Armstrong has ten years of business experience and comes from a position as Operations Manager at SoilCyclers, one of the largest soil recyclers in Queensland, where each year, the company recycled almost half a million cubic metres of soil. At SoilCyclers, Sarah played a major role in contract management, Human Resources, safety, staff productivity, risk management, quality control, all while overseeing the smooth running of day-to-day operations. Sarah grew up on a farm in the Toowoomba region where her passion for the environment, agriculture and sustainable farming began.

As the operations manager of the new Plant Growth CRIP, Sarah will have a key role in the establishment of new processes and procedures, oversight of the delivery of new infrastructure as well as the development of a strategic plan for the delivery of world-leading capabilities in Plant Growth Research.

3. How will the CRIP be resourced?

Currently the CRIP has an Academic Lead and an Operations Manager. From 1 January 2022, ownership of infrastructure and associated HR, Finance and Central Glasshouse Services staff will transfer from the Faculty of Science to DVC (Research & Innovation) portfolio under the Plant Growth CRIP.

With additional space being made available over the course of 2022 and 2023 via the St Lucia Plant Growth Facility, Gatton Glasshouses and Digi-field, there will be a need to review staff structure and look at resources needed to deliver services to users.

4. How much will it cost to use CRIP infrastructure and when will new pricing be released?

Static operational costs will be reviewed in 2022 with the new infrastructure and additional CRIP resourcing taken into account. Any changes to pricing will be communicated well ahead of 2023. Pricing of the Biora's at Gatton will initially be similar to that of the temperature-controlled glasshouses adjacent to them.

5. Will teaching have to pay to use services?

No, teaching will not pay to use space. Consumables will be charged at current rates.

EOI Process

6. Is there an EOI Process for allocating undergraduate teaching time as well?

Yes, there will be a separate process for teaching space. Teaching will have priority to ensure space is available and that appropriate support conversations can take place.



7. When does the EOI process open?

We will be piloting the EOI process with the new Biora's at Gatton in early 2022. During the pilot, we are very interested in your feedback. Space allocation for other infrastructure in 2022 will not use the EOI process until we have completed the pilot. We will continue to communicate with our users about any changes in this space.

8. How will space be prioritised?

The EOI process will help determine how to prioritise space and this will include consultation with users, with CRIP staff and the CRIP steering committee, as required.

9. How will you timetable teaching activities?

Teaching space will be timetabled according to the requirements provided by the schools.

10. Will there be a calendar created so that Researchers and Teaching staff see availability?

This will be made available. However, the technicalities haven't yet been worked out.

Plant Growth Facility (PGF) – St Lucia

1. Has the design for the new Plant Growth Facility been finalised?

The detailed design work for the structure and room sizes of the building has been finalised.

a. What about benches and how the rooms will be used?

i. No, bench size has not been finalised.

b. Do the rooms open up to make larger spaces?

i. No, the rooms will not open to make larger spaces. There are rooms of various sizes ranging from 11 m² to 150 m². However, you can request multiple rooms in your EOI if you require more space with common capabilities.

2. When is building start for the Plant Growth facility?

Site clearing and demolition starts in December 2021 with construction commencing in February 2022.

3. Are there any spaces in the PGF for soil and dirt?

The PGF will be a clean facility with space for potting up, dirty work etc. made available in the Headhouse across the road. The Headhouse will be reinvigorated and enhanced as part of the PGF development. Processes for removal of PC2 waste (soils, pots) from the PGF are being developed.

Storage space

1. Will there be storage space in the PGF?

There will be secure storage space for equipment, but not for consumables. There will likely be short term (3 months) post-harvest storage space for samples either in the Seddon building or in a dedicated shed.

2. Will there be a seed storage facility at St Lucia?

There are currently no provisions for seed storage however we will be happy to explore options if there is demand. The short term plan is to continue to use the seed store in the Seddon Building.

Glasshouses and Digi-field - Gatton

1. Are there plans for PC2 spaces at Gatton?

Not at this point but we will be happy to explore the needs of researchers.

2. When does building start for the Glasshouses and Digi-field?

This will commence in early 2022 and is scheduled for completion by December 2022



a. Will the facilities be certified?

- i. We haven't made any decisions about this yet for Gatton.

3. What are the plans for the Digi-field – will it be cabled or will be drones?

We believe it should be drone capability and discussions are underway with funding bodies.