



Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water

Business Grants Hub

Grant Opportunity Guidelines

First Nations Clean Energy Projects - Pilot Grants

Opening date:	1 September 2026
Closing date and time:	5:00pm Australian Eastern Standard Time on 28 September 2026 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
Administering entity:	Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
Date guidelines released:	19 August 2026
Type of grant opportunity:	Targeted competitive

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1. First Nations Clean Energy Projects - Pilot Grants processes

The First Nations Clean Energy Projects: Pilot Grants program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the DCCEEW Outcome 1.3: Support reliable, secure and affordable energy. DCCEEW works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles \(CGRPs\)](#).



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).



You complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form, addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.



We assess all grant applications

DISR assess the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. The Assessment Committee assess eligible applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with money and compare it to other eligible applications.



We make grant recommendations

We provide advice to the decision maker on the merits of each application.



Grant decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and will be proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

You complete the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of the First Nations Clean Energy Projects: Pilot Grants program

DCCEEW will evaluate the specific grant activity and grant opportunity as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

1.1. Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Australian Government's First Nations Clean Energy Projects - Pilot Grants program (the program).

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR) on behalf of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the glossary at section 14.

You should read this document and other key documents on business.gov.au and GrantConnect carefully before you fill out an application.

2. About the grant program

The program will run from 2026-27 to 2027-28. The program was announced as part of the implementation of the Australian Government's [First Nations Clean Energy Strategy](#) and will consist of one funding round.

The objectives of the program are to:

- support up to 2 First Nations organisations to progress their clean energy projects beyond feasibility towards financial close
- build evidence of the factors that enable increased investment in First Nations clean energy projects
- share First Nations clean energy project development lessons learnt with the sector.

The intended outcome of the program is to support the economic development and self-determination of First Nations peoples through increased opportunities to lead and benefit from clean energy project developments.

The program will support progress towards Goal 3 of the [First Nations Clean Energy Strategy](#), 'Achieve economic benefits with First Nations peoples'.

DCCEEW is committed to implementing [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) priority reform 2 to build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector through First Nations clean energy initiatives. The program will also contribute to Target 8: strong economic participation and development of people and their communities.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles \(CGRPs\)](#)¹.

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. Grants available

A total of up to \$10 million is available over 2 financial years for the program. A maximum of 2 grants will be awarded for the program.

- The minimum grant amount is \$1 million.
- The maximum grant amount is \$10 million.

The grant amount will be up to 100 per cent of eligible expenditure. You are responsible for the remaining eligible and ineligible grant activity costs.

Other funding can come from any source including Commonwealth, state, territory and local government grants. Funding from these sources must not be used for the same items of eligible expenditure funded by this grant program.

3.2. Grant period

You must complete your grant activity by 30 June 2028.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must:

- be a First Nations organisation (as defined in section 14)
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following:

- a registered land council representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, or an entity that manages or holds land rights, native title or other Traditional Owner related agreements and settlements, including a land council established under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, noting these organisations may, or are required to, establish separate legal entities for commercial purposes
- an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth)
- a company limited by guarantee

¹ <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-principles-2024>

- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust established for the benefit of First Nations peoples
- a not-for-profit incorporated association or cooperative
- an incorporated association or cooperative.

You must provide evidence that verifies your organisation and entity type and provide all mandatory attachments specified under section 7.1.

Joint applications are acceptable, provided both the lead organisation and grant activity partners are eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 7.2.

4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

To be eligible you must also:

- declare that the grant activity will be delivered as part of a broader clean energy project with an expected capacity greater than 1MW
- deliver your grant activity and clean energy project in Australia
- demonstrate that you have a legal right to access the land on which the clean energy project will be undertaken
- demonstrate that you have authority or support from relevant Traditional Owners to undertake the clean energy project on the land specified in your application
- declare that your clean energy project meets the definition of clean energy project as defined in section 14.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.3. Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- any organisation not included in section 4.1
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- an organisation that is insolvent, subject to insolvency proceedings, or that has declared bankruptcy
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*.
- a partnership
- an individual
- a Regional Development Australia Committee
- an unincorporated association
- a trust (however, an incorporated trustee may apply on behalf of a trust where otherwise eligible)
- a Commonwealth, state, territory or local government body (including government business enterprises) not specified in section 4.1
- a non-corporate Commonwealth entity.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your grant activity must:

- be aimed at progressing a First Nations clean energy project beyond feasibility towards financial close that will deliver economic benefits to First Nations peoples
- have at least \$1 million in eligible expenditure.

Eligible grant activities must directly relate to the program objectives and outcome under section 2 and may include:

- Front End Engineering Design (FEED)
- obtaining permits, regulatory approvals, development approvals, and undertaking Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA)
- undertaking commercial and contractual arrangements
- financing and funding activities
- risk management and mitigation planning
- procurement and clean energy project execution planning
- organisational business and workforce planning to support clean energy project delivery, including employment and training of staff and equitable gender and inclusion planning
- capability development including training and/or activities to improve clean energy project knowledge, skills and governance capability
- engagement activities with Traditional Owners, stakeholders and communities to support clean energy project development, capability development and First Nations community benefit planning.

We may also approve other eligible grant activities, provided they directly relate to the program objectives and outcome listed in section 2.

5.2. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have directly incurred on an agreed grant activity as defined in your grant agreement.

Provided they are incurred directly on the grant activities set out in your grant agreement, eligible expenditure items are:

- legal, audit and accounting costs related to the clean energy project
- costs directly related to the raising of capital and financing activities for the clean energy project, or the formation of consortia or joint ventures or other partnering arrangements
- costs to obtain government approvals (permits, planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals) to undertake the clean energy project
- costs to obtain clean energy project safety and operational certifications
- costs that directly contribute to or enable clean energy project knowledge sharing and reporting with the clean energy sector including database development, websites, applications and reports
- labour expenditure, such as salaries and wages, including reasonable labour on-costs of up to 30 per cent of total labour expenditure, for personnel employed directly on the grant activity

- costs of stakeholder engagement activities and community benefit planning for the clean energy project
- costs of organisational business and workforce planning to support delivery of the clean energy project
- costs related to clean energy project capability development up to a maximum of 10 per cent of total eligible grant expenditure
- costs related to clean energy project engineering design, technical specifications, construction plans and schedules
- costs associated with commercial and contractual negotiations and arrangements for the clean energy project
- costs associated with clean energy project risk management, mitigation planning, procurement planning and execution planning
- administrative expenses, including expenses incurred on communications, office accommodation, equipment and utilities, recruitment, printing and stationery, where such expenses are related directly to the grant activity up to a maximum of 5 per cent of total eligible grant expenditure
- reasonable costs for domestic travel, including flights (limited to economy class) and ground transportation related to the grant activity, including relevant domestic accommodation and meal allowance
- the cost of an independent audit of grant activity expenditure up to a maximum of 1 per cent of total eligible grant expenditure.

We may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your grant activity.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify grant activity costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your grant activity may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is a Manager within the department with responsibility for administering the program) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the grant activity
- be incurred by you for required grant activity audit activities.

You must incur the expenditure on your grant activities between the start and end date of your grant activity for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

Expenditure is not eligible if it is incurred before the grant agreement is executed. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

5.3. What the grant money cannot be used for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- expenditure for purposes of the clean energy project that does not fall within the scope of eligible grant activities as defined in the grant agreement
- clean energy project pre-feasibility studies
- activities beyond financial close (defined under section 14) of the clean energy project including construction and commissioning and operations and maintenance
- purchase of equity or ownership in a clean energy project
- international travel expenses
- costs for the purchase or lease of land or buildings
- costs relating to legal, land, native title, protection, heritage or similar claims under any Commonwealth, state or territory legislation, including:
 - costs relating to *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) claims
 - costs relating to the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (Cth) claims.
- incorporation cost for your organisation that is not directly related to the grant activity
- wages, hiring, or redundancy cost for existing staff not directly related to grant activities
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- costs successfully claimed through another grant application
- activities for which Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility
- benefit sharing payments to First Nations stakeholders or communities
- membership fees
- donations.

6. The assessment criteria

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. The Assessment Committee will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion. The assessment criteria weighting is provided below, and is equally split between sub-criteria.

The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the grant activity size, complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays character limits for each response.

We will only consider awarding funding to applications that score at least 50 per cent against each assessment criterion.

6.1. Assessment criterion 1

Alignment with intended program objectives and outcome (30 points)

You should demonstrate this by outlining (and providing evidence):

- a. how your grant activity contributes to the First Nations clean energy sector, the goals/objectives and actions of the First Nations Clean Energy Strategy and aligns with other Australian government priorities

- b. how your grant activity promotes First Nations leadership, decision-making and participation, including:
 - your engagement with First Nations stakeholders and communities (including women and other groups) and how they are involved in the clean energy project e.g. direct participation, capacity building or communication activities
- c. the organisational structure of your clean energy project and the role of First Nations organisations, including ownership or equity stake and role in decision-making and management of the clean energy project.

6.2. Assessment criterion 2

Capacity, capability and resources and commercial strategy to deliver the clean energy project (40 points)

You should demonstrate this by outlining (and providing evidence):

- a. a credible pathway to achieving financial close for the clean energy project and deploying a future clean energy project capable of generating long-term sustainable financial returns, including if commercial funding sources and partnerships are in place to help reach financial close
- b. your capability, including your clean energy project's access to personnel with the right skills and experience (e.g. clean energy project management, commercial, legal and technical), physical resources and facilities, and intellectual property to deliver the clean energy project; and how you will leverage existing capability and the strength of your partners
- c. your track record of delivering and implementing similar projects², and your capacity and clean energy project risk management plan to manage and deliver the clean energy project over its lifetime with clearly defined development milestones
- d. your financial capacity including current and future financial contributions to the clean energy project provided by the applicant, clean energy project partners, governments, investors or from other (including commercial) sources (where relevant), and how you will leverage private and/or government investment to achieve value for money.

6.3. Assessment criterion 3

Impact of grant funding (30 points)

You should demonstrate this (and provide evidence) by:

- a. identifying the key barriers preventing the clean energy project to progress towards financial close
- b. identifying how the grant activity will help overcome these barriers and enable the clean energy project to progress toward and/or achieve financial close, including:

² This is not limited to clean energy projects.

- an outline of how you intend to use the grant funding on eligible grant activities to progress your clean energy project, identified against your clean energy project plan delivery milestones
- c. describing the expected social, economic, and/or environmental benefits³ of your clean energy project, including to First Nations communities involved in or impacted by your clean energy project, e.g.
- First Nations workforce development and supply chain opportunities
 - benefits to First Nations women and other First Nations groups such as young people, Elders and people living with disability.

7. How to apply

Before applying you must read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#). Any alterations and addenda will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes to these guidelines.

Applicants should read all eligibility and assessment criteria closely and attach detailed evidence that supports the assessment criteria.

You will need to set up an account to access our online [portal](#).

To apply, you must:

- complete and submit the application through the business.gov.au online portal
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995](#). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information, we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

After submitting your application, we may contact you for clarification if we find an error or any missing information, including evidence that supports your eligibility/merit. The acceptance of any additional information provided after the submission of your application is at the discretion of the Program Delegate.

You can view and print a copy of your submitted application on the portal for your own records.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you have any issues with the portal, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

³ See glossary for an explanation of 'community benefit principles'.

7.1. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

- clean energy project plan (see section 7.1.1) that must contain:
 - a financing and revenue model calculated over the life of the clean energy project
 - details of the proposed technology type/s and expected capacity.
 - grant activity budget with a detailed cost breakdown and outline of how you intend to spend the grant funding on eligible grant activities
 - clean energy project ownership structure, governance and partnership arrangements
 - evidence that verifies your eligibility for this program as described in section 4.1, including (where applicable):
 - if you are applying as an incorporated association or not for profit organisation and you do not have an active state or territory incorporated association registration or ACNC registration at the time of application, you must submit Constitutional documents and/or Articles of Association that demonstrate the character of the organisation
 - trust deed.
 - evidence of permission to access the land on which the clean energy project will be undertaken via a letter of endorsement if the applicant does not own or lease it (where applicable). This must include a map showing the site of the clean energy project.
 - evidence of authority or support from Traditional Owners for the land on which the clean energy project will be undertaken. This must be their written support and include:
 - support for you to undertake activities to progress your clean energy project
 - their authority to provide support (e.g. legislative or other basis)
 - that the decision to support the clean energy project was considered in accordance with their governance framework.
- this evidence may either be:
- documentation from the Traditional Owners that demonstrates the above points; or
 - a signed statement that provides the details above in line with the template available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.
- accountant declaration (template provided on business.gov.au and GrantConnect)
 - evidence of support from the board, CEO or equivalent (template provided on business.gov.au and GrantConnect). Where the CEO or equivalent submits the application, we will accept this as evidence of support.

7.1.1. Project Plan

Your clean energy project plan (up to 20 pages) should contain the following:

- key objectives/outcomes and success criteria of the clean energy project
- a map showing the site where the clean energy project will be located (if not already attached in support of section 7.1 above)
- financing and revenue model, calculated over the life of the clean energy project that shows expected returns of the clean energy project with or without grant funding, and should contain:
 - the total estimated cost of the clean energy project
 - the cash flow profile of the clean energy project
 - expected revenues, including the source of these revenue projections

- expected costs, with a clear breakdown of cost categories
- assumptions around mix of equity/debt financing and investment criteria for the clean energy project
- all assumptions to be clearly labelled.
- a detailed timeline for your clean energy project with key milestones, delivery dates and assumptions, with a well-defined contracting/procurement plan
- if known, commercial funding arrangements (including in-kind contributions if relevant) that demonstrate a pathway to financial close
- any relevant industry benchmarks for the economics of the clean energy project (where feasible)
- a list of the outstanding activities needed to achieve financial close of the clean energy project and anticipated expenditure
- status of any development, planning and environmental approvals, permits and /or licenses required for the clean energy project
- relevant pre-feasibility and/or feasibility analysis/assessment findings
- clean energy project risk management plan (this should also identify any known competing or co-located clean energy projects) articulating key delivery, technical and financial risks and how these will be managed
- clean energy project stakeholder engagement plan with evidence where applicable of consent from First Nations communities impacted by the clean energy project (e.g. via letters of support)
- expected community benefit plan/statement or other evidence to demonstrate the expected clean energy project impact e.g. letters of community support, studies, impact assessment reports.

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. Individual file sizes cannot be greater than 25MB, while the total of all attachments cannot exceed 50MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

You may include hyperlinks to publicly available evidence in your application. To be considered during assessment, any linked material must be directly relevant and clearly support your response to the assessment criteria.

7.2. Joint (consortia) applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a grant activity. In these circumstances, you must appoint a lead organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the grant activity partners.

Each letter of support should include:

- details of the grant activity partner organisation:
 - individual name
 - business name and ABN
 - contact details: telephone number and/or email address
 - evidence of how the partner meets the eligibility criteria in section 4.1.

- an overview of how the grant activity partner organisation will work with the lead organisation and any other partner organisations in the group to successfully complete the grant activity
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the grant activity partner organisation will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities the grant activity partner organisation will undertake, and the resources it will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

7.3. Timing of grant opportunity processes

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your grant activity around December 2026.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

The following table is indicative only, and subject to change:

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	August 2026
Approval and announcement of successful applicants	October 2026
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	November 2026
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	October 2026
Earliest start date of grant activity	TBC
End date of grant activity or agreement	30 June 2028

7.4. Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. Assessment of grant applications

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria.

If eligible, your application will be assessed against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

We consider your application on its merits, based on:

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 | [business.gov.au](#)

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.⁴

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objective/s of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your grant activity contributes to meeting those objectives
- the relative value of the grant sought
- the credibility of the proposed clean energy project development pathway to achieve financial close and deploying a future clean energy project capable of generating long-term sustainable financial returns
- how the clean energy project promotes First Nations leadership, decision-making and participation
- how the clean energy project will benefit First Nations peoples and provide opportunities including to women and other First Nations groups such as young people, Elders and people living with disability.

If applications are scored the same, the assessment committee will consider value with relevant money and alignment to the program objectives to recommend applications for funding.

We also consider any national interest, financial, legal/regulatory, governance or other issue or risk that we identify during any due diligence process that we conduct in respect of the applicant. This includes its directors, officers, senior managers, key personnel, its related bodies corporate (as defined in the Corporations Act) or its application that could bring the Australian Government into disrepute if it were to fund the applicant. Such issues and risks include where we consider that funding the application under this grant opportunity is likely to directly conflict with Australian Government policy. Where possible, we will provide you with an opportunity to comment on any material risks identified during this due diligence process prior to our determining the extent (if any) to which those issues or risks affect our assessment of the application and, if so, whether they are sufficient to warrant the exclusion of your application from the assessment process.

8.2. Who will assess applications?

We refer your eligible application to an assessment committee that may be made up of DCCEE, other Commonwealth department representatives and/or external independent advisors with expertise in the First Nations clean energy sector. The assessment committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts or advisors to inform the assessment process.

The assessment committee will assess your application against the assessment criteria and compare it to other eligible applications before recommending which grant applications to

⁴ See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

fund. The assessment committee, and any expert or advisor, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs.

The Assessment Committee may seek additional information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if you do not nominate the sources as referees. The Assessment Committee may also consider information about you or your application that is available as a result of the due diligence process or through the normal course of business.

8.3. Who will approve grants?

The Decision Maker (a senior executive within DCCEE with policy responsibility for the program) will decide which grants to approve considering the recommendations/advice of the assessment committee and the availability of grant funds.

The Decision Maker's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Decision Maker will not approve funding if there are insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

9.1. Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you may request an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1. The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

We will manage the grant agreement through the online portal. This includes issuing and executing the grant agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have accepted the agreement. Expenditure is not eligible if it is incurred before the grant agreement is executed. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur and cannot make any payments until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Decision Maker. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under the First Nations Clean Energy Projects: Pilot Grants, you cannot receive other grants for the same activities from other Commonwealth, state or territory granting programs.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

We will use a standard grant agreement.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the grant activity as approved by the Program Delegate.

10.2. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and Australian Government sanctions in undertaking your grant activity. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

You will be required to comply with (where applicable):

- state/territory legislation in relation to working with children
- Free Prior and Informed Consent (you may like to refer to [DCCEEW FPIC guidance: First Nations Engagement the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent](#))
- Commonwealth, state/territory legislation in relation to protecting cultural heritage
- *Modern Slavery Act 2018*
- reporting and compliance obligations of relevant regulatory bodies including Australian Securities Investment Corporation, Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, the Australian Taxation Office, and the Australian Charities and Non-profit Commission.

10.3. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage).

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement.

Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the grant activity.

10.4. Grant Payments and GST

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the grant period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities⁵.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of execution.

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful grant activities on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles \(CGRPs\)](#), Section 5.4. We may also publish this information on business.gov.au. This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the grant activity and its location
- description of the grant activity and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1. Indigenous cultural and intellectual property and Indigenous data sovereignty

The program will safeguard Indigenous cultural and intellectual property (ICIP). We acknowledge that First Nations peoples have the right to control, own and maintain their ICIP in accordance with Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We acknowledge that ICIP may be used as part of, or included or captured in, material created by the applicant and agree:

- ownership of that ICIP remains with the Traditional Owners
- the use of the ICIP will be in accordance with any terms or protocols that apply to the use of the ICIP

⁵ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](#)

- free, prior, and informed consent will be sought from the Traditional Owners for use of ICIP and the use of that ICIP will only be in accordance with that permission, with further permission sought for any additional or alternative use
- the Traditional Owners of that ICIP will be attributed in all use of the ICIP unless otherwise advised, and in accordance with any terms or protocols.

Indigenous data sovereignty (IDSov) will be respected. We support First Nations peoples' rights to IDSov, ensuring that they have authority over their data, including how it is collected, accessed, used, stored and shared. IDSov is crucial to ensuring self-determination and future data access for wealth generation.

We will follow the Australian Government [Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data](#) when working with grantees.

12.2. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activity or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant activity, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details
- joint/consortia partners and related arrangements (if applicable).

You must also inform us of any instance where your organisation may no longer meet the eligibility definition of a First Nations organisation as defined in the glossary.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your grant activity and clean energy project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.3. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed grant activity milestones and outcomes
- expenditure of the grant
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant activity.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the grant activity size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your grant activity by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need

to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.3.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed grant activities
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- include evidence of expenditure
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant grant activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any grant activity or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

12.3.2. Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your grant activity. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the grant activity.

We may also request additional information about your grant activities that contributes to DCCEE's ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the First Nations Clean Energy Strategy.

12.3.3. Final report

When you complete the grant activity, you must submit a final report.

Final reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the grant activity
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date.

12.4. Audited financial acquittal report

We will ask you to provide an independent audit report at the end of the grant activity. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure.

12.5. Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect grant activity progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement, including:

- changing grant activity milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the grant activities but within the maximum 18-month period
- changing grant activities.

The program does not allow for an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant activity end date. You can submit a variation request via our online portal.

If a delay in the grant activity causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the grant activity outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

12.6. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the grant activity period to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.7. Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

12.8. Evaluation

DCCEEW will evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcome and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and grant activity reports for this purpose. We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcome.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your grant activity for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.9. Acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a grant activity funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

‘This grant activity received grant funding under the Australian Government’s First Nations Clean Energy Strategy.’

13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRPs.

13.1. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at business.gov.au. We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

General Manager
Business Grants Hub
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

13.2. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Assessment Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)⁶ on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

13.3. Privacy

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per below, or
- personal information as per below.

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

We must treat your personal information according to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the assessment committee, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites
- publish grant activity information and reporting as part of sharing lessons learnt to the sector.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)⁷ on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

⁶ <https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/conflict-interest-policy>

⁷ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

13.4. Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

We may disclose confidential information:

- to the assessment committee and our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if:

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

13.5. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation (ACCO)	An organisation that delivers services, including land and resource management, that builds the strength and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people and is: - Incorporated under relevant legislation and not for profit - Controlled and operated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people - Connected to the community, or communities, in which they deliver the services - Governed by a majority Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander governing body.
administering entity	When an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.
application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
Assessment Committee	The body established by DCCEEW to consider and assess eligible applications and make recommendations to the decision maker for funding under the program. The Assessment Committee may comprise of DCCEEW staff, other Commonwealth department representatives and/or external independent advisors with expertise in the First Nations clean energy sector.
assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application ranking.
clean energy	For the purpose of this program, clean energy is defined as power and/or fuel produced from eligible renewable energy sources in line with the definition of renewable energy specified in this glossary.

Term	Definition
clean energy project	A project that has attributes of generation and/or distribution and/or storage and uses or enables the use of renewable energy from eligible renewable energy sources in line with the definition of renewable energy specified in this glossary.
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs)	Establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
community benefit principles	The community benefit principles are defined under section 10(3) of the Future Made in Australia Act 2024: (a) that Future Made in Australia support should provide community benefits, in particular by: (i) promoting safe and secure jobs that are well paid and have good conditions; and (ii) developing more skilled and inclusive workforces, including by investing in training and skills development and broadening opportunities for workforce participation; and (iii) engaging collaboratively with and achieving positive outcomes for local communities, such as First Nations communities and communities directly affected by the transition to net zero; and (iiia) supporting First Nations communities and traditional owners to participate in, and share in the benefits of, the transition to net zero; and (iv) strengthening domestic industrial capabilities, including through stronger local supply chains; and (v) demonstrating transparency and compliance in relation to the management of tax affairs, including benefits received under Future Made in Australia supports; and

Term	Definition
	(b) any other principles specified in the rules for the purposes of this paragraph.
completion date	The expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award a grant.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
eligibility criteria	Refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a grant activity and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.3.
eligible grant activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a grant activity that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA)	A tool to identify, predict, evaluate and mitigate the biophysical, social, and other relevant risks of clean energy project development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made.
financial close	Financial close is when all clean energy project contracts are signed, debt/equity funding is approved, all conditions precedent have been satisfied and the clean energy project can progress from development to construction.
First Nations organisation	For the purposes of this program, a First Nations organisation is an organisation that is at least 51% or more First Nations owned and controlled for the duration of the grant. This may include, but is not limited to: ▪ a Traditional Owner entity ▪ an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation

Term	Definition
	an Indigenous Enterprise as specified in this glossary
First Nations peoples	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Free, Prior and Informed Consent	Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a right outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Free – Consent given voluntarily and without coercion, intimidation or manipulation. A self-directed process by the community, unencumbered by expectations or, where possible, externally imposed timeline. Prior – consent is sought sufficiently in advance of any authorisation or commencement of activities and not only when the need arises to obtain approval from the community. Informed – the engagement and type of information that should be provided prior to seeking consent and as part of the ongoing consent. Consent – a collective decision made by rights holders and reached through a customary decision-making process of the affected communities. DCCEEW FPIC guidance: First Nations Engagement the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent)
Front End Engineering Design (FEED)	Front End Engineering Design (FEED) is an early planning stage which includes establishing costing estimates and a plan for the execution of a clean energy project. FEED is a critical stage to establish scope, budget and the schedule of a clean energy project prior to Final Investment Decision and Financial Close.
General Manager	Position title for Senior Executive Service level staff within DISR.
grant	For the purposes of the CGRPs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:

Term	Definition
	a. under which relevant money⁸ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money⁹ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs.
grantee	The individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
grant activity/activities	Refers to the activities/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake.
grant agreement	A legally binding contract that sets out the relationship between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding, and specifies the details of the grant.
grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
grant opportunity	Refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant program	A 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
Indigenous Enterprise	An organisation that meets the Australian Government's definition of an Indigenous Enterprise as set out in the Indigenous Procurement Policy for the duration of the grant.

⁸ Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

⁹ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
	Note: the definition of Indigenous Enterprise in the Indigenous Procurement Policy is transitioning from '50 per cent owned' to '51 per cent owned and controlled' from 1 July 2026. For the purposes of this grant opportunity the strengthened criteria of '51 per cent owned and controlled' will be applied.
microgrid system	A power system that generates, stores, and distributes electricity to local users within defined boundaries.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for Climate Change and Energy.
partnership	An association of persons carrying on a business as a partner or receiving income jointly. ATO definition: Partnerships Australian Taxation Office
personal information	Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is: Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
pre-feasibility studies	Preliminary analysis of potential development scenarios for a clean energy project to identify the best scenarios for more detailed feasibility studies. Pre-feasibility occurs in the set-up and pre-development phase of a clean energy project and may include technical, economic, environmental and social considerations.
Program Delegate	A Manager within the Business Grants Hub in DISR with responsibility for administering the program.
program funding or program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
renewable energy	For the purposes of the program, the following energy sources are eligible renewable energy sources: (a) hydro; (b) wave;

Term	Definition
	(c) tide; (d) ocean; (e) wind; (f) solar; (g) geothermal - aquifer; (h) hot dry rock; (i) energy crops other than biomass from a native forest; (j) wood waste; (k) agricultural waste; (l) waste from processing of agricultural products; (m) food waste; (n) food processing waste; (o) bagasse; (p) black liquor; (q) biomass - based components of municipal solid waste; (r) landfill gas; (s) sewage gas and biomass - based components of sewage; (t) any other energy source prescribed by the regulations. The following energy sources are not eligible renewable energy sources: (a) fossil fuels; (b) materials or waste products derived from fossil fuels; (c) biomass from a native forest. This does not preclude the use of fossil fuels to support energy system reliability for microgrid systems.
Traditional Owner entity	A registered land council representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, or an entity that manages or holds land rights, native title or other Traditional Owner related agreements and settlements, including a land council established under the <i>Aboriginal Land</i>

Term	Definition
	<i>Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976</i> , noting these organisations may, or are required to, establish separate legal entities for commercial purposes.
value with money	Value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations. When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to: a. the quality of the proposal and activities; b. fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives; c. that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved; and d. the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.