



Australian Government

Department of Industry, Science and Resources

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts**

Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Stronger Communities Programme Round 8

Opening date:	Wednesday 8 February 2023
Closing date and time:	5.00PM Australian Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday 17 May 2023 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
Administering entity:	Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
Date guidelines released:	Wednesday 8 February 2023 Tuesday 9 May 2023 (updated applications close date) Tuesday 17 September 2024 (updated to extend project period)

Type of grant opportunity:	Closed non-competitive
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1. Stronger Communities Programme Round 8 processes

The Stronger Communities Programme is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts Outcome 3. The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#)



The grant opportunity opens

Federal Members of Parliament (MPs) must establish a community consultation committee or consult an existing committee to assist in identifying applicants and projects. After consulting with the community, MPs will invite selected applicants to submit an application online. We publish the grant guidelines on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.



Invited applicants complete and submit a grant application



We assess all grant applications

We assess the applications against all eligibility criteria.



Grant decisions are made

The Program Delegate decides which applications are successful taking into consideration the proper use of public resources.



Notification of the outcome

Your MP may advise you of the outcome of your application. We will provide written confirmation.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants and pay the grant.



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 Stronger Communities Programme

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts evaluates the specific grant activity and Stronger Communities Programme as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

2. About the grant program

The Stronger Communities Programme (the program) supports the Australian Government's commitment to deliver social benefits in communities across Australia by funding small capital projects in each of the 151 Federal electorates. The program is part of the government's 2022-23 budget initiatives focussed on making local economies stronger and boosting community organisations.

The objective of the program is to deliver social benefits for local communities.

The intended outcomes of the program are to:

- encourage and support participation in local projects
- improve local community participation
- contribute to vibrant and viable communities.

Community consultation is a critical element of the program. In consultation with their community, each MP must identify potential applicants and projects in their electorate and invite them to apply for a grant. We will assess invited applications against the program's eligibility criteria through a closed non-competitive process.

Round 8 of the program aims to support communities recover from the widespread impacts of adverse weather events and current economic pressures. For this round, grant funding will be up to 100 per cent of eligible project costs except for local governing bodies where grant funding will be up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs. Local governing bodies must provide matched funding contributions towards their eligible project.

We will publish the opening and closing dates for MP nominations and for the nominated organisations to apply for a grant and any other relevant information on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs)¹.

2.1. About the Stronger Communities Programme Round 8 grant opportunity

These guidelines contain information for the Stronger Communities Programme grants.

This document sets out:

- 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.

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR) is responsible for administering this grant opportunity on behalf of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA).

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the glossary at section 13.

You should read and understand this document carefully before you fill out an application.

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

2.2. Community consultation

Each MP must either consult with an existing consultation committee or establish a new consultation committee comprised of representatives from the local community, to identify potential applicants and projects in their electorate. The identified projects must be consistent with the intended program outcomes and criteria. MPs must advise the department of the basis for project selection, their method of consultation and provide a detailed list of nominated applicants and projects.

The MP will invite identified potential applicants to apply for a grant for identified projects by sending them a link to apply via the grant portal. Only applicants invited to apply can submit an application. Invited applicants must not forward the link to the application form to anyone else.

Invited applicants must submit a completed application via the portal. We assess all applications for eligibility and completeness.

An invitation to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

MPs and their consultation committees are not responsible for the administration of the grants program.

3. Grant amount and grant period

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$22.7 million in 2022-23 for the Round 8 grant opportunity to provide up to \$150,000 in each of the 151 Federal electorates.

3.1. Grants available

Each electorate has total funding of up to \$150,000 that can be allocated to successful applications. A maximum of 20 projects will be funded in each electorate.

The grant amount will be up to 100 per cent of eligible project expenditure (grant percentage) except for local governing bodies where the grant amount will be up to 50 per cent of eligible project expenditure.

- The minimum grant amount is \$2,500
- The maximum grant amount is \$20,000.

The maximum cost of your project cannot exceed \$50,000.

You are responsible for the remaining eligible project expenditure (where applicable).

For local governing bodies, total Commonwealth funding for the project cannot exceed 50 per cent of the total eligible project expenditure. Local governing bodies can fund their matched funding contribution from any other source including from state government.

3.2. Project period

You must complete your project no later than 30 November 2024.

You may start your project from the date you submit your application. Any project expenditure incurred prior to the date you submit your application is not eligible. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. If you choose to start your project before you have an executed agreement, you do so at your own risk.

When calculating the duration of the project, you should factor in additional time for product sourcing and purchasing delays, obtaining approvals, contracting tradespeople, possible weather

delays and any other unforeseen circumstances that may prevent you completing your project on time.

4. Eligibility criteria

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

4.1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must:

- be invited to apply by your MP
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and

- be one of the following incorporated entities:
 - an incorporated not for profit organisation including:
 - incorporated associations, such as,
 - Police and Citizen Youth Clubs
 - child care centres
 - surf clubs
 - local aged care bodies
 - Parents and Citizens, Parents and Friends groups and equivalent bodies
 - A Commonwealth, state or territory government agency or entity that is a fire service, rural fire service, country fire authority, state emergency service or similar.
 - non-distributing co-operatives
 - companies limited by guarantee
 - Indigenous corporations
 - religious organisations incorporated under legislation.
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust with responsibility for a community asset or property. You will be required to provide relevant trust documents.
- a local governing body as defined by the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995.

For the purpose of this program, we also consider the following organisations to be local governing bodies:

- Anangu Pitjantjatjara, Maralinga, Gerard, Nepabunna and Yalata local governing bodies in SA
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council
- Lord Howe Island Board
- Norfolk Island Regional Council
- The Outback Communities Authority
- The Shire of Christmas Island
- The Silverton and Tibooburra villages in NSW
- The Trust Account in the NT and
- ACT Government.

As a not for profit organisation you must demonstrate your not for profit status through one of the following:

- state or territory incorporated association registration number or certificate of incorporation, e.g. clubs and other associations
- current Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission's (ACNC) registration, e.g. for organisations registered as a charity
- constitutional documents that demonstrate the not for profit character of the organisation
- legislation that demonstrates the not for profit nature of the organisation, e.g. religious organisations incorporated under legislation.

Joint applications are acceptable, provided you have a lead applicant who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 6.2.

4.2. Project sponsor

If you are an organisation that may not be able to incorporate, including parish churches, rural fire brigades, scout groups, Parents and Citizens Associations (P&C's) or equivalent bodies, you may be able to nominate an eligible project sponsor.

The project sponsor will need to meet all eligibility criteria, be nominated by the MP, and submit the application under their name on behalf of your organisation. The project sponsor must be authorised to enter into a grant agreement and will be responsible for any obligations under the agreement with the Commonwealth, including the finalisation and completion of the end of project report. If you are a local governing body applying in the capacity of a project sponsor refer to section 3.1 of the guidelines for additional information about grants available and project costs.

4.3. Additional eligibility requirements

In order to be eligible you must also:

- apply for the project and grant amount as agreed to and nominated by your MP
- have a plan for how you will carry out the project
- if you are a local governing body, be able to meet your share of the matching funds contribution for the project (at least 50 per cent) as outlined in section 3.1
- provide the relevant mandatory attachments as outlined in section 6.1.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.4. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- a for profit organisation
- an individual
- a partnership
- a Regional Development Australia Committee
- a university, technical college or school
- a hospital
- a Commonwealth, state or territory government agency or body (including government business enterprises) unless listed 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' (www.nationalredress.gov.au)
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be a small capital works or capital expenditure project that delivers social benefits to your community
- be nominated by your MP
- be located at an address in your MP's electorate. (Federal electorate boundaries as at the 2022 Federal election). Use the Nationalmap.gov.au [mapping tool](#) with reference to the Glossary for more information on determining project location eligibility in electorates)
- be used in your MP's electorate if it includes portable equipment
- include eligible activities and eligible expenditure
- have at least \$2,500 in eligible expenditure unless the applicant is a local governing body which requires at least \$5,000 in eligible expenditure
- have a maximum project cost of \$50,000
- be undertaken in the project period and completed no later than 30 November 2024.

Eligible activities can include:

- fit out, alterations and/or extensions to existing premises e.g. air-conditioning, kitchen upgrades, fixtures and fittings, painting
- acquisition and installation of equipment, including ICT hardware and associated operating software that is to be used by your organisation for the benefit of your community. Examples may include:
 - software to support and operate eligible purchased equipment e.g. software required for camera equipment, virtual reality equipment, electronic information boards
 - initial software license, purchase, customisation and installation of customer relationship management (CRM), database, booking and scheduling software
 - creation of a website that facilitates community access to information or services provided by the organisation
- modifications and refurbishments to leased buildings or grounds, providing approval has been given by the owner and you can provide confirmation of this approval.
- upgrades, construction and fit-out of community spaces, e.g. men's sheds, community centres, scout halls etc.
- development or upgrade of bike paths, streetscapes, skate parks or community gardens
- upgrades of sporting facilities and fields including new scoreboards, spectator seating, goalposts, fit-out of change rooms, new canteen, new lights, medical equipment, upgrade drainage and water systems, gymnasiums
- the purchase of musical instruments, sports equipment and uniforms that remain the property of the organisation

- upgrade of facilities to provide inclusive access
- upgrade or installation of park furniture including shade/shelters, BBQs, toilet facilities, drinking fountains
- acquiring equipment for the local State Emergency Service and rural fire brigades
- acquiring vehicles and trailers (and their modification) for community transport/services, surf lifesaving, medical transport.

If your project will be located on school grounds or involves school property, the project must deliver social benefits to the broader community. Projects that involve upgrades or provide equipment and other items to be used within the school, must be able to demonstrate social benefits to the broader community outside the school.

We may also approve other activities.

5.2. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

Eligible expenditure items are:

- the cost of suppliers, consultants and contracted labour undertaking eligible project activities
- the cost of obtaining planning, environment or other regulatory approvals as part of an approved eligible capital works or capital expenditure project such as architecture, engineering, planning, design and consultants fees
- the purchase of assets such as office furniture, TVs and equipment, motor vehicles purchase or upgrade of ICT hardware including computers and associated software and user licenses including tablets, printers or photocopiers that remain the property of the applicant
- the purchase or lease or hire of equipment required to complete eligible project activities
- the purchase of materials required to complete eligible project activities.

The above list is not exhaustive.

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 project.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is a manager within the department with responsibility for 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 project.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible.

You may elect to commence your project from the date you submit your application. 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 you cannot use the grant for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- in-kind expenditure

- the cost of delivering the services of your community organisation, including:
 - volunteer and paid staff time to provide training, education, transport, advisory, respite support, and outreach programs and services
 - volunteer and paid staff time to run organisations and to plan and develop events, programs and services, or travel associated with these operations
- the cost of business as usual activities including:
 - staff salaries, overheads, and consumables such as paper, printer cartridges, office supplies, brochures and other marketing materials, kitchen supplies including food and beverages
 - ongoing upgrades, updates and maintenance of existing ICT systems including websites, customer relationship management systems, databases etc.; the cost of ongoing subscription-based software; and IT support memberships and warranties for purchases
 - recurring or ongoing operational expenditure (including annual maintenance, rent, water and rates)
- funding to stage events, workshops, exhibit a display or for filming (includes activities such as marquee hire, guest presenter costs and catering)
- funding to develop or deliver ongoing training or educational courses
- funding to undertake studies, including feasibility studies, or investigations
- the cost of obtaining planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals that are not part of an approved eligible capital works or capital expenditure project such as architecture, engineering, planning, design and consultants
- fees to obtain planning, environmental, building or other regulatory approvals paid to the Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments
- purchase of land or buildings
- funding for the development of private or commercial ventures
- capital expenditure on private residential property
- funding to purchase items that will not remain the property of the organisation including items to be given away.

6. How to apply

Before applying you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

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

You can only submit an application during a funding round.

To apply, you must:

- be invited by your MP to submit an application
- complete the online application form on the grants portal
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

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

You will receive confirmation when you submit your application. You should retain a copy of your application for your own records.

We may ask you to substantiate your project expenditure. You should have evidence for the costs that you include in your project budget to provide upon request.

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* (Cth). 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 that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

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.

6.1. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application (if applicable):

- evidence of your not for profit status
- trust deed
- letters of support from project partners for joint applications.

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. The total of all attachments cannot exceed 20MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

6.2. Joint applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a project. 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 should identify all members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the project partners. Each letter of support should include:

- details of the project partner
- an overview of how the project partner will work with the lead organisation and any other project partners in the group to successfully complete the project
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the project partner will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities the project partner 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. We will communicate with the lead organisation, and the lead organisation is responsible for communicating with all other parties.

6.3. Timing of grant opportunity

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

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	4-6 weeks
Approval and announcement of successful applicants	4-6 weeks
Negotiations of grant agreements	1-3 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	The date you submit your application
Earliest end date of project	After 1 August 2023

7. The grant selection process

Your MP, with the help of their community consultation committee, will identify potential projects, with a total value of up to \$150,000 in their electorate that are consistent with the program outcomes and eligibility criteria and are required to apply the CGRGs in undertaking their roles.

The MP will invite identified potential applicants to apply and send them a link to the online application form. It is important to note that being invited to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

We will assess your application for completeness and against all the eligibility criteria. To be recommended for funding, your project must meet all eligibility criteria, provide value for relevant money and be considered a proper use of public resources.

If the selection process identifies errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition to your application.

7.1. Replacement nominations

If a nominated organisation is not eligible or the nominated project is not in the MP's electorate, we may seek a further nomination from the relevant MP for an alternative project in their electorate or for the same project from an eligible sponsor organisation to replace the ineligible nomination during the application open period.

The nominated organisation and replacement project must meet all the eligibility criteria to be recommended for funding.

For this round of the program, the replacement nomination process runs concurrently within the application opening and closing dates. There is no additional opportunity for replacement nominations after the round closes.

7.2. Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate decides which grants to approve taking into account the application assessment, availability of grant funds and whether funding a project will be a proper use of public resources. When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, the Program Delegate will consider the overall objectives of the grant opportunity, the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives and the relative value of the grant sought.

The Program Delegate'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 Program Delegate will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

8. Notification of application outcomes

Your MP may advise you of the outcome of your application and we will provide you with notification in writing. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us.

9. Successful grant applications

9.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We use two types of grant agreements in this program. Our selection will depend on the size and complexity of your project. Each grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. Sample [grant agreements](#) are 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. We 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 Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under the program, you cannot receive other grants for the same activities from other Commonwealth granting programs.

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

9.2. Approval letter grant agreement

We will use an approval letter grant agreement when we have no need to clarify or amend any details in your application. This grant agreement comprises your completed application and the approval letter we send you advising that your application has been successful. We consider the agreement to be executed (take effect) from the date of our approval letter.

9.3. Exchange of letters grant agreement

We will use an exchange of letters grant agreement when we need to clarify or amend details in your application form. We will provide you with a letter of agreement with attached terms and conditions. You will accept the agreement through the portal.

You will have 30 days from the date the grant agreement is issued to execute the grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The offer may lapse if both parties do not accept the grant agreement within this time.

9.4. Project/Activity specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and Australian Government sanctions in undertaking your project. 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.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/territory legislation in relation to working with children.

9.5. 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 pay 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the project.

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

9.6. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and 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 project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities².

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.

10. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on business.gov.au. This information may include:

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

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

11. How we monitor your grant activity

11.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project 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 project, 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.

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 project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

11.2. 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.

11.2.1. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- 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.

11.2.2. Ad-hoc reports

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

11.3. Independent audits

We may ask you to provide an independent audit report. 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. The report template is available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

11.4. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

11.5. Grant agreement variations

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

- extending the timeframe for completing the project
- changing project activities.

Note the program does not allow for an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must request the change through the portal. We will only consider a request for a variation submitted before the project end date.

If a delay in the project 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 project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- availability of program funds.

11.6. Evaluation

The DITRDCA will evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. They may use information from your application and project 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 outcomes.

The DITRDCA may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

11.7. Grant acknowledgement

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

‘This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.’

If you erect signage in relation to the project, the signage must contain an acknowledgement of the grant.

12. 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 CGRGs.

12.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the program. 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 and/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
- 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\(7\)\)](#)³ of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). Committee members and other officials including the Program Delegate must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)⁴ on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

12.1.1. MP and community consultation committee conflicts of Interest

MPs, their staff and community consultation committee members must declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interest to the community consultation committee and the department.

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

12.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 12.2.1, or
- personal information as per 12.2.3,

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.

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00057>

⁴ https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf_files_redirect

12.2.1. How we handle your confidential information

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.

12.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- To 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 the Member of Parliament representing the Federal electorate where the project is located
- 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.

12.2.3. How we use your personal information

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, 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.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy)⁵ 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.

⁵ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

12.2.4. 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.

12.3. Disclosure of Commonwealth, State or Territory financial penalties

You must disclose whether any of your board members, management or persons of authority have been subject to any pecuniary penalty, whether civil, criminal or administrative, imposed by a Commonwealth, State, or Territory court or a Commonwealth, State, or Territory entity. If this is the case, you must provide advice to the department regarding the matter for consideration.

12.4. 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](#)⁶ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

⁶ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Applicant	An entity that meets the eligibility requirements and is applying for funding under the program. In the Guidelines the term 'you' refers to the Applicant, and to the Project Sponsor (if applicable).
Application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
Community consultation committee	Committee either established or identified by the MP who assist the MP to identify the projects for consideration by the department.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
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	The mandatory criteria, which must be met to qualify for a grant.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.2.

Term	Definition
Electorate	<p>The project must be located within the MP nominating electorate. The electorate boundaries are the 2022 Federal electorate boundaries. Determining whether the project location is in the MPs electorate can be done by using the mapping tool</p> <p>How to use National Maps to check a project location is in the nominating electorate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Click on the Nationalmap.gov.au mapping tool <i>The Commonwealth Electoral Divisions (2022) data is pre-loaded in this link.</i> Enter a project site address in the white box on upper left of the screen “Search for Locations”/ Key “Enter” Click on the closest address match in either “Locations” or “Addresses” in the column on the left side of the screen. Click on the blue dot Location Marker on the map – the electorate information for that address will be displayed in a dialogue box on the upper right of the screen. <p>We recommend that you use the following browsers for optimum functionality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On Windows: The latest versions of Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome On Mac: The latest versions of Safari and Google Chrome
Federal electorate	A geographical area of Australia (known as an electoral division) represented by a Member of Parliament elected at a House of Representatives election.
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding.
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.

Term	Definition
Local governing body	As defined by the <i>Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995</i> . For the purposes of the program additional local governing bodies are identified in 4.1 of the grant opportunity guidelines.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.
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.
Program Delegate	A Senior Responsible Officer (who can be a General Manager or Program Manager) within the department with responsibility for the program.
Program funding or Program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.
Project Sponsor	A sponsor is an entity that meets the eligibility requirements of the program who agrees to sponsor an organisation (sponsor organisation) to apply for the grant opportunity. In this case, the project sponsor is considered to be the applicant. The project sponsor enters into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The sponsor must be nominated by the MP for the grant opportunity.
Sponsor organisation	A sponsor organisation is the organisation undertaking the project for the purposes of the grant, but is not the organisation entering into the grant agreement with the Commonwealth. Organisations that require sponsorship are usually groups that cannot meet the entity eligibility requirements for the grant program and cannot submit applications in their own right.

