



# Financial Wellbeing and Capability Financial Resilience – No Interest Loan Scheme for Women Experiencing Family and Domestic Violence (NILS-DV) Grant Opportunity Guidelines

<b>Opening date:</b>	10 February 2020
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	11.00PM AEDT on 28 February 2020
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Department of Social Services
<b>Administering entity</b>	Community Grants Hub
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact Community Grants Hub Phone: 1800 020 283 (option 1) Email: <a href="mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au">support@communitygrants.gov.au</a> Questions should be sent no later than 5.00PM AEDT on 21 February 2020
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	10 February 2020
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Closed non-competitive

## Contents

<b>1. Financial Resilience: NILS-DV processes</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Introduction	5
<b>2. About the grant program</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Grant amount and grant period</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Grants available	6
3.2 Grant period	7
<b>4. Eligibility criteria</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?	7
4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?	7
4.3 What qualifications, skills or checks are required?	7
<b>5. What the grant money can be used for</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1 Eligible grant activities	8
5.2 Eligible expenditure	8
5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for	8
<b>6. The assessment criteria</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>7. How to apply</b>	<b>10</b>
7.1 Timing of grant opportunity processes	11
7.2 Questions during the application process	12
<b>8. The grant selection process</b>	<b>12</b>
8.1 Assessment of grant applications	12
8.2 Who will assess applications?	12
8.3 Who will approve grants?	12
<b>9. Notification of application outcomes</b>	<b>13</b>
9.1 Feedback on your application	13
<b>10. Successful grant applications</b>	<b>13</b>
10.1 The grant agreement	13
10.2 Commonwealth Child Safe Framework	13
10.3 Multicultural Access and Equity	14
10.4 How we pay the grant	14
10.5 Grants payments and GST	14
<b>11. Announcement of grants</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>12. How we monitor your grant activity</b>	<b>15</b>
12.1 Keeping us informed	15
12.2 Reporting	15
12.3 Non-audited financial acquittal	16
12.4 Grant agreement variations	16
12.5 Compliance visits	17

12.6	Record keeping.....	17
12.7	Evaluation .....	17
<b>13.</b>	<b>Probity.....</b>	<b>17</b>
13.1	Enquiries and feedback .....	17
13.2	Conflicts of interest .....	18
13.3	Privacy .....	18
13.4	Confidential information .....	19
13.5	Freedom of information.....	20
<b>14.</b>	<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>21</b>

## 1. Financial Resilience: NILS-DV processes

**The Financial Resilience program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives.**

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Social Services' Outcome 2: Families and Communities. The Department of Social Services works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 \(CGRGs\)](#).



### **The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on the [GrantConnect](#) and [Community Grants Hub](#) websites.



### **You complete and submit a grant application**

You complete the application form and address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant.



### **We assess all grant applications**

We assess the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. If you are eligible, we then assess your eligible application against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with money. A Selection Advisory Panel may be convened to contribute to the review of applications.



### **We make grant recommendations**

We provide advice, through the Selection Advisory Panel (if used), to the decision maker on the merits of each application.



### **Grant decisions are made**

The decision maker (Branch Manager, Financial Wellbeing) 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 enter into a grant agreement with you if successful. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature or complexity of the grant and is proportional to the risks involved.



### **Delivery of grant**

You undertake 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 NILS-DV**

We evaluate your specific grant activity and NILS-DV as a whole. We base this on information you provide us and that we collect from various sources.

## 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the NILS-DV grant.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Community Grants Hub on behalf of the Department of Social Services (the department).

## 2. About the grant program

The NILS-DV program (the program) will run over four years from 2020-21 to 2023-2024. The program was announced as part of the Women's Economic Security Package.

NILS-DV aims to increase the economic empowerment of women experiencing domestic and family violence by providing safe, affordable credit in the form of a no interest loan.

This grant opportunity is to make a grant to one organisation to administer the NILS-DV program. It is anticipated that the organisation funded for NILS-DV will provide up to 15,000 loans per year to women who are victims of domestic or family violence. The department will provide funds to administer NILS-DV, while the National Australia Bank will provide loan capital. Additional services available to NILS-DV clients include:

- the 'financial conversation' component of the existing No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) program, with a specific focus on developing strategies and plans to help clients regain control of their finances
- access to a loan provider, who will assist to manage the complex financial arrangements associated with leaving a violent relationship, build further financial literacy, manage existing debt and strengthen long-term financial independence
- referrals and networks with specialist community organisations who have experience helping women affected by domestic violence

The objectives of the program are to provide women who are victims of domestic and family violence with access to special funds and specialist financial advice/advocacy in order to:

- give them financial options
- support them to establish a safe household, after leaving a situation of domestic and/or family violence
- contribute to rebuilding their lives.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- to ensure that women have the support they need to achieve economic independence, strengthen their financial resilience and assist in the rebuilding of their lives
- to help women with the financial costs of establishing a new household such as relocation expenses, rental bonds, rental payments and essential household items.

The program will be measured against the following performances indicators:

- number of clients assisted
- number of events/instances of service delivered
- percentage of clients achieving improved independence, participation and wellbeing
- number of staff with relevant skills to deliver the grant activity
- number of referrals to financial counsellors
- percentage of loans repaid.

The Community Grants Hub administers the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 \(CGRGs\)](#).

NILS-DV is appropriated under the Financial Wellbeing and Capability (FWC) Activity, which is a component of the Families and Communities Program. The Families and Communities Program aims to strengthen relationships, improve the wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, strengthen family and community functioning and facilitate the settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants in the community.

Services provided under the FWC Activity include the provision of crisis support, broad financial capability building services, financial counselling, and access to microfinance products. Funding may also be provided to ensure the organisations and staff (paid and voluntary) delivering the Activity have adequate capacity and capability to deliver high quality, high functioning services. Services are free, voluntary and confidential and are delivered by community and local government organisations.

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

#### 3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$20 million GST exclusive over four years for NILS-DV. For this grant opportunity, \$20 million GST exclusive is available from 2020-21 to 2023-24 for one organisation to administer NILS-DV.

#### **Commonwealth Social and Community Services Award supplementation**

The NILS-DV grant recipient may be eligible to receive Commonwealth Social and Community Services (SACS) Award supplementation. The SACS supplementation is provided only to programs that existed in February 2012 and is limited to programs that were in-scope as at 1 February 2012. This is because when new policy proposals and programs are developed, SACS wage costs (at the relevant award rate) are included in the baseline program funding. If the program is an in-scope program the SACS supplementation can only be used to pay SACS workers' salaries and costs associated with meeting their obligations as a result of the Equal Remuneration Order.

Applicants who are eligible for the SACS supplementation need to complete the relevant SACS questions in the application form; and if successful, complete a SACS Financial Declaration form

as outlined in your grant agreement. SACS supplementation ceases on 30 June 2021. Further information can be found on the [department's website](#).

### 3.2 Grant period

The maximum grant period is four years.

You must complete your grant by 30 June 2024. Following the grant period, an evaluation period of five months will commence.

## 4. Eligibility criteria

This grant opportunity is a closed non-competitive grant selection process. The department considers that this is an appropriate type of selection process considering the invited organisation is the intellectual property owner that underpins the design of the program. The invited organisation has access to the current NILS network as well as an expanded network of community providers who specialise in providing support for women experiencing family and domestic violence.

### 4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

The eligible organisation listed below is invited to apply for the NILS-DV grant through GrantConnect.

The organisation was determined because of their proven experience and success with the existing NILS program, which aims to increase the financial inclusion of individuals, households and families. Since 2003, the invited organisation has delivered over 200,000 no and low-interest loans to vulnerable Australians, facilitating the purchase of basic and household goods and improving their financial literacy and economic wellbeing.

Invited Organisation	Service Delivery Area	Funding (GST exclusive)			
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Good Shepherd Microfinance	Australia	\$4.9 m	\$4.9 m	\$5.1 m	\$5.2 m

\*includes an estimate for future indexation payments

No further organisations will be invited to apply.

### 4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity if you have not received an invitation to apply through GrantConnect and your organisation is not listed as an eligible invited organisation at Section 4.1.

### 4.3 What qualifications, skills or checks are required?

If you are successful, relevant personnel working on the grant activity must maintain the following skills:

- Highly developed knowledge and understanding of the financial complexities involved with cases of domestic violence.
- Ability to support clients by providing guidance, facilitating external referrals and monitoring clients' progress.
- Training and appropriate support systems for NILS-DV case workers and referring NILS providers.

## 5. What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your grant activity must:

- provide specialist NILS-DV loan providers
- deliver an accredited NILS-DV loan
- provide financial literacy support
- provide appropriate referrals.

### 5.2 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred on eligible grant activities.

Eligible expenditure items are:

- staff salaries and on-costs which can be directly attributed to the provision of services as per the grant agreement
- employee training for paid staff delivering activities that are relevant, appropriate and in line with the activity objectives
- establishment costs
- administration expenses directly related to the delivery of services such as:
  - interpreting services
  - telephones
  - rent and out goings
  - computer/information technology/ website/software
  - insurance
  - utilities
  - postage
  - stationery and printing
  - accounting.

### 5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for:

- purchase of land
- wages not directly related to the delivery of NILS-DV
- major capital expenditure
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent not directly related to the delivery of NILS-DV
- major construction/capital works
- overseas travel

- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.
- loan capital or matched savings payments
- funding or establishing grants for peak bodies or other new organisations (legal entities).

We cannot provide a grant if you receive funding from another government source for the same purpose.

## 6. The assessment criteria

You must adequately address all of the following assessment criteria in the application. All criteria are equally weighted.

The application form includes character limits – up to 6,000 characters (approximately 900 words) per criterion. The application form will not accept characters beyond this limit. Please note spaces are included in the character limit.

### Criterion 1

#### **Describe your organisation and its capacity to deliver NILS-DV**

When addressing the criterion strong applicants will include details of:

- your organisation and what services it delivers (i.e. type of services, outlet locations, hours of operation, size)
- the relevant capabilities (experience, skills, qualifications) of staff who will be directly and indirectly delivering NILS-DV services
- the development and training you will provide to staff to ensure they have the necessary skills, qualifications and support to deliver these services
- support systems that will be implemented for staff who will be directly and indirectly delivering NILS-DV services.

### Criterion 2

#### **Ability to deliver NILS-DV to eligible people to assist them improve their financial capability**

When addressing the criterion strong applicants will include information on how your organisation will:

- assess clients to determine they are eligible to receive NILS-DV services
- facilitate access to NILS-DV loans for eligible clients
- provide financial literacy support including budgeting advice and information on financial safety to NILS-DV loan applicants
- provide appropriate referrals to support services as required.

## 7. How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the terms and conditions, sample grant agreement, and questions and answers.

These documents are found on the [GrantConnect](#) website. Any changes to grant documentation are published and addenda<sup>1</sup> will be published on GrantConnect and only accessible by invitees. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

Only invitees can access these documents and the application form.

You can only submit one application form for this grant opportunity. If more than one application is submitted, the latest accepted application form will progress.

To apply you must:

- complete the online application form on GrantConnect.
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- submit your application to the Community Grants Hub by 11.00PM AEDT on 28 February 2020.

We will not provide application forms or accept applications for this grant opportunity by fax or mail.

The application form includes help information. 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 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you need more help about the application process, submitting an application online, have any technical difficulties or find an error in your application after submission, but before the closing date and time, you should contact the Community Grants Hub immediately on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au). The Community Grants Hub does not have to accept any additional information, or requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

If we find an error or something missing, we may ask you for clarification or additional information. This will not change your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your application after the closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents submitted.

You will receive an automated notification acknowledging the receipt of your application.

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<sup>1</sup> Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, questions and answers documents.

## 7.1 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates.

### Late applications

We will not accept late applications unless an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application. Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by one or more of the following:

- reasonably unforeseeable
- beyond the applicant's control
- unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on their merits and in accordance with probity principles.

### How to lodge a late application

Applicants seeking to submit a late application will be required to submit a late application request to the Community Grants Hub. The request should include a detailed explanation of the circumstances that prevented the application being submitted prior to the closing time. Where appropriate, supporting evidence can be provided to verify the claim of exceptional circumstances.

The late application request form and instructions for how to submit it can be found on the [Community Grants Hub website](#).

Written requests to lodge a late application will only be accepted within three days after the grant opportunity has closed.

The Delegate or their appointed representative<sup>2</sup> will determine whether a late application will be accepted. The decision of the Delegate will be final and not be subject to a review or appeals process.

Once the outcome is determined, the Community Grants Hub will advise the applicant if their request is accepted or declined.

### Expected timing for this grant opportunity

If you are successful, you will be expected to be able to commence your grant activity around July 2020.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	1 week
Approval of outcomes of selection process	1 week
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	Up to 6 weeks
Earliest start date of grant activity	July 2020
End date of grant activity	30 June 2024

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<sup>2</sup> This may be the Hub Delegate or nominated staff member of the client agency at the EL2 level or above.

## 7.2 Questions during the application process

Only invited applicants' questions will be answered during the application submission period, please contact the Community Grants Hub on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au).

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within five working days. Answers to questions are posted on [GrantConnect](#).

The question period will close at 5:00PM AEDT on 21 February 2020. Following this time, only questions about using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

## 8. The grant selection process

### 8.1 Assessment of grant applications

We will review your application against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage. Eligible applications will be considered through a closed non-competitive grant process. This means the department has identified suitable organisations and has invited them to apply.

If eligible, the department will then assess your application against the assessment criteria (see Section 6). We consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- whether it represents value for money.

### 8.2 Who will assess applications?

Assessors will assess each eligible and compliant application on its individual merit. Assessors are Commonwealth staff, who will undertake training to ensure consistent assessment of all applications.

The department uses this information to help them develop recommendations on applications to be awarded a grant.

### 8.3 Who will approve grants?

The Branch Manager of the Financial Wellbeing Branch (the decision maker) decides which grants to approve based on the recommendations of the assessment centre and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

The decision maker's decision is final, including the:

- approval of the grant
- grant funding amount to be awarded
- terms and conditions of the grant.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

## 9. Notification of application outcomes

We will write to you about the outcome of your application. If you are successful, you are advised of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

### 9.1 Feedback on your application

A Feedback Summary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website to provide all organisations with easy access to information about the grant selection process and the main strengths and areas for improving applications.

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.

## 10. Successful grant applications

### 10.1 The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We will offer successful applicants a Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement for this grant opportunity.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed. You must not start any NILS-DV activities until a grant agreement is executed.

Your grant agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the decision maker. These are identified in the agreement.

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

#### **Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement**

We will use a Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement.

You will have twenty (20) business days from the date of a written offer to sign and return this grant agreement. The grant agreement is not considered to be executed until both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. 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.

### 10.2 Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the need for organisations to adopt child safe practices including appropriate screening of staff, mandatory reporting and adoption of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Australian Government committed to a new Commonwealth-wide framework to protect children and young people it is responsible for – the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (CCSF).

The Australian Government is considering appropriate ways to apply the requirements of the CCSF to grant recipients. A child safety clause is likely to be included in a grant agreement where the Commonwealth considers the grant is for:

- services directly to children
- activities that involve contact with children that is a usual part of, and more than incidental to, the grant activity.

A child safety clause may also be included in the grant agreement if the Commonwealth considers the grant activity involves children more broadly.

The successful applicant will be required to comply with all child safety obligations included in the grant agreement published with this grant opportunity or notified to the successful applicant prior to execution of the grant agreement. Irrespective of the child safety obligations in the grant agreement you must always comply with your state and territory legislative requirements for working with children and mandatory reporting.

### **10.3 Multicultural Access and Equity**

The Australian Government's *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy* obliges Australian Government agencies to ensure their policies, programs and services – including those provided by contractors and service delivery partners – are accessible to, and deliver equitable outcomes for, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Grant applicants should consider how they will ensure their services will be accessible to people from CALD backgrounds. For example, service delivery partners may require cultural competency skills. In addition, services, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with clients who have limited English proficiency. Based on an assessment of the client target group, costs for translating and interpreting services should be factored into grant applications (to assist with identifying these costs see the Translating and Interpreting Services costing tool in the grant opportunity documents).

### **10.4 How we pay the grant**

The grant agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid.

We will make an initial payment on execution of the grant agreement. We will make subsequent payments six monthly in advance.

### **10.5 Grants payments and GST**

Payments will be GST inclusive. If you are registered for the [Goods and Services Tax \(GST\)](#), where applicable, we will add GST to your grant payment and issue you with a [Recipient Created Tax Invoice](#).

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 your particular taxation circumstances.

## **11. Announcement of grants**

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by Section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](#).

## 12. How we monitor your grant activity

### 12.1 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 changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due because of these changes.

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 the terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately.

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

### 12.2 Reporting

Grantees must have systems in place to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in their grant agreement.

Performance information (e.g. client characteristics and service delivery information) needs to be collected by grantees at the client level and put directly into the department's performance reporting solution, the Data Exchange.

The performance information reported through the Data Exchange includes:

- client identity characteristics (given and family names, date of birth, gender and residential address)
- client demographic characteristics (Indigenous status, cultural and linguistic diversity, and disability status, impairment or condition)
- service delivery information (outlets, cases, sessions)
- client outcomes.

The Data Exchange has two standardised six-monthly performance reporting periods each year, which run from 1 July to 31 December and 1 January to 30 June, with a 30-day close-off period after each of these. Once the close-off period is completed no further changes can be made to the data.

Information must be provided in accordance with the Data Exchange Protocols available on the [Data Exchange website](#).

For this activity, participation in the “partnership approach” is a requirement of funding. By participating, you agree to provide some additional information in exchange for the receipt of regular and relevant reports. The main focus of the partnership approach is collecting information about the outcomes achieved by clients as a result of service delivery. The partnership approach also includes some extended data items that provide additional information about client demographics, needs and circumstances.

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed NILS-DV milestones and outcomes
- expenditure of the grant.

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

We will monitor progress by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, ask for more information or an independent audit of claims and payments.

### **Progress reports**

Progress reports must:

- include evidence of your progress towards completion of agreed activities and outcomes
- 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 activities).

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

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

### **Ad-hoc reports**

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

### **Final report**

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

Final reports must:

- identify if and how outcomes have been achieved
- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred
- be submitted by the due date and in the format provided in the grant agreement.

## **12.3 Non-audited financial acquittal**

We will ask you to provide a non-audited financial acquittal report. A non-audited financial acquittal report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement.

## **12.4 Grant agreement variations**

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement. You can request a variation by contacting your Funding Arrangement Manager, Community Grants Hub.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

## 12.5 Compliance visits

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

## 12.6 Record keeping

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

## 12.7 Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant program to see how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also 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.

We may contact you up to one year after you finish your grant for more information to assist with this evaluation.

# 13. Probity

The Australian Government 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.

These guidelines may be changed by the department. When this happens, the revised guidelines are published on [GrantConnect](#) and the [Community Grants Hub](#) websites.

## 13.1 Enquiries and feedback

### Complaints about this grant opportunity

The [department's complaints procedure](#) applies to complaints about this grant opportunity.

All complaints about this grant opportunity, including grant decisions, must be made in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au).

### Complaints about the selection process

Applicants can contact the complaints service with complaints about the Community Grants Hub's service(s) or the selection process.

Details of what makes an eligible complaint can be provided by asking the Community Grants Hub. Applicants can use the [online complaints form](#) on the [Department of Social Services](#) website, or contact the department's complaints line.

Phone: 1800 634 035

Email: [complaints@dss.gov.au](mailto:complaints@dss.gov.au)

Mail: Complaints  
GPO Box 9820  
Canberra ACT 2601

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

If you do not agree with the way the Community Grants Hub or the department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Community Grants Hub or the department.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

## 13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the department and the Community Grants Hub 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
- 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
- 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.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later think there is an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the department and the Community Grants Hub in writing immediately.

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

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the [Community Grants Hub](#) website.

## 13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

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

In submitting a grant application under this opportunity, you agree to the Australian Government collecting your personal information, including your name, contact details and role in your organisation, in order to assess your application and for the purpose of grants administration. If you do not provide this information we cannot assess your grant application.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information collected about you under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing

grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us in your application, including personal information, with other Commonwealth entities, the responsible Minister, Assistant Ministers and their staff, and with Members of Parliament, for other purposes including Government administration, research or service delivery, or as otherwise authorised or required by Australian law.

As part of your application, you also declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Australian Government would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

### **13.4 Confidential information**

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to give out 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 keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential.
2. The information is commercially sensitive.
3. Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

## 13.5 Freedom of information

All documents that the Australian Government has, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act gives people the ability to get information held by the Australian Government and its organisations. Under the FOI Act, people can ask for documents the Australian Government has. People may not be able to get these documents if these documents need to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons who the information relates to.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail:           Freedom of Information Team  
                      Government and Executive Services Branch  
                      Department of Social Services (DSS)  
                      GPO Box 9820  
                      Canberra ACT 2601

By email:         [foi@dss.gov.au](mailto:foi@dss.gov.au)

## 14. Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</a> .
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.
assessment criteria	are 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 rankings.
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity.
Commonwealth Child Safe Framework	A whole-of-government policy that sets minimum standards for creating and embedding a child safe culture and practice in Commonwealth entities. For more information please visit the <a href="#">Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website</a> .
Commonwealth entity	a department of state, or a parliamentary department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act.
<a href="#">Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs) 2017</a>	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.
completion date	the expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
co-sponsoring entity	when two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it.
date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant.
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.

Term	Definition
Funding Arrangement Manager	the officer responsible for the ongoing management of the grantee and their compliance with the grant agreement.
grant	<p>for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>3</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>4</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.</li> </ul>
grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake.
grant agreement	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant.
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
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 [entity] Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.

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<sup>3</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>4</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Program	described within the entity's <a href="#">Portfolio Budget Statement</a> , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be grant programs. A PBS program may have more than one grant program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.
selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
Selection Advisory Panel	provides strategic oversight, advice and recommendations to the decision maker on assessed applications from the program specific, service provider composition and service location perspectives.
value with money	<p>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.</p> <p>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 the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ quality of the project proposal and activities</li> <li>▪ fit for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives</li> <li>▪ absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved</li> <li>▪ potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>