

Continuity of Support for the National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service program

Questions and Answers (Q&As)

(Note – This questions and answers document does not, in any way, replace or override information provided in the *Grant Opportunity Guidelines for the National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service*, or the application pack.)

Program Details

1. What is Continuity of Support (CoS)?

The Government is committed to providing CoS to people with disability currently receiving government-funded services, to ensure they are not disadvantaged during the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

CoS will assist existing clients of Commonwealth disability programs who are ineligible for the NDIS to achieve similar outcomes to those they were aiming to achieve prior to the introduction of the NDIS, even if the services are delivered differently.

2. What is the National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service (NABS) program?

NABS provides a national service that books and pays for an accredited Auslan (Australian Sign Language) interpreter for Deaf people to attend medical consultations that attract a Medicare rebate, or specified health consultations, provided in a private medical practice by a general practitioner, specialist or health professional. The program has been operating since 2005.

3. What is CoS for NABS?

CoS for NABS will provide NABS clients who are ineligible for the NDIS, support to achieve similar outcomes to those they were aiming to achieve prior to the introduction of the NDIS. It will also support new clients that require access to the NABS service who are 65 years of age and over, and therefore ineligible for the NDIS.

4. What medical appointments and health consultations are covered under NABS?

Auslan interpreters are only available free-of-charge for eligible medical and specified health consultations provided in a private medical practice. Consultations that occur in private or public hospitals are not covered by the NABS service except for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Auslan users. These consultations are outlined in Section 2.6 – Eligible medical appointments and specified health consultations – of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

5. What is the target group for the CoS for NABS activity?

The target group is Deaf Auslan users. The service will also support situations where there is a deaf adult and hearing child or hearing adult and deaf child. CoS for NABS is only available for:

- Existing NABS clients who are ineligible for the NDIS and
- New clients over 65 years of age who are ineligible for the NDIS.

6. What will be the role of the NABS call centre?

The successful grantee will be required to operate a national call centre based in Australia which provides Deaf Auslan users with access to an Auslan interpreter free of charge when they attend eligible medical and specified health consultations.

This includes:

- providing Auslan interpreting services across Australia;
- providing a single contact point in Australia;
- receiving requests and arranging bookings for Auslan interpreters for eligible medical appointments and specified health consultations;
- developing and maintaining an accessible website; and
- being available from 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday – Friday and 8.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays excluding national public holidays. (Call centre hours will need to take account of the different time zones across states and territories).

7. How many current NABS clients are expected to receive CoS for NABS?

It is anticipated that up to 600 clients of the NABS program will be assessed as ineligible for the NDIS, and will therefore require ongoing supports through NABS.

8. What other programs will be part of CoS?

From 1 July 2020, existing clients of 15 Commonwealth programs who are ineligible for the NDIS will receive CoS through the following five packages:

- CoS for clients of NABS (administered by the Department of Social Services). This grant round only relates to CoS for existing clients of NABS, and accepting new clients 65 years of age and over who are ineligible for the NDIS.
- The CoS Fund (administered by the Department of Social Services)
 - Better Start for Children with Disability
 - Helping Children with Autism
 - Disability Employment Assistance
 - Outside School Hours Care for Teenagers with Disability
 - Remote Hearing and Vision Services for Children
 - Work Based Personal Assistance
 - Younger Onset Dementia Key Worker Program
- CoS for Mobility Allowance recipients (administered by the Department of Social Services)
- CoS for mental health programs (administered by the Department of Health)
 - Personal Helpers and Mentors
 - Partners in Recovery
 - Support for Day to Day Living
- CoS for carer programs (administered by the Department of Social Services under the Integrated Carer Support Service)
 - Mental Health Respite: Carer Support
 - Respite Support for Carers of Young People with Severe and Profound Disability
 - Young Carers Respite and Information Services Provision

9. How do I get further information about the NABS activity?

If you cannot find an answer to your question about this grant opportunity, please contact the Community Grants Hub by phone on 1800 020 283 or by email at support@communitygrants.gov.au.

Funding Details

10. How much funding is available to deliver NABS?

A total of up to \$2 million (GST exclusive) is available through this grant opportunity to provide CoS for NABS.

11. Is the funding ongoing?

No. The maximum grant period is two years, to commence 1 July 2020. The Department will undertake a review of the CoS arrangements in 2021-22 to establish if ongoing support is required beyond 2022.

Grant conditions and eligibility

12. What are the grant conditions for the NABS Grant Opportunity Round?

A copy of the *Grant Conditions and Supplementary Terms for the CoS for NABS Funding Round* is included in the Community Grants Hub grant round documentation available from the [Hub website](#).

13. What can my organisation use the grant funding for?

You can use the grant to pay for operating and administrative costs directly related to the following activities, to the extent that they relate to the provision of services to CoS for NABS clients:

- Upgrading or maintaining existing call centre infrastructure to meet the operational requirements of the CoS for NABS call centre(s)
- Provision of training and professional development opportunities for call centre staff, administrative staff and Auslan interpreters
- Development and implementation of a customer satisfaction survey and feedback mechanism
- Development and implementation of a national communication strategy and communication products
- Development of strategies to support Deaf Auslan users, including those living in rural and remote areas
- Computer equipment and software
- Salaries and on-costs
- Interpreter costs for travel and accommodation and related interpreting services.

You can spend the grant to pay for the following, to the extent that it relates to the provision of services to CoS for NABS clients:

- Staff salaries and on-costs that can be directly attributed to the provision of the activities outlined in the grant agreement.
- The portion of operating and administration expenses directly related to the project as per the grant agreement, such as:
 - communications (telephone / internet / captioning)
 - facility hire / rental
 - Information technology (computer / website / software)

- insurance
- utilities
- postage
- stationery and printing
- accounting and auditing
- domestic travel/accommodation costs
- assets as defined in the grant agreement terms and conditions that can be reasonably attributed to meeting agreement deliverables.
- Larger requests for funding should allocate a proportion of the grant funding to be used for evaluation of the funded project to demonstrate delivery of outcomes.
- Use of external consultants to support development of resources is eligible but should be short term. The applicant must clearly describe in the application how the use of the consultant will result in a transfer of skill development (e.g. use of a consultant to design and deliver a train the trainer model) with subsequent training facilitated by the organisation.

14. How long do I have to submit my application?

You will have four (4) weeks to submit your application. Applications open on Friday 28 February 2020 and close on Friday 27 March 2020.

15. If I am not able to submit my application by the due time and date, can I be granted an extension?

Applications are due by 11.00 pm, Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) on Friday 27 March 2020. Applications submitted after 11.00 pm (AEST) that day will be considered as a late application.

In accordance with Section 7.2 – Timing of grant opportunity process - of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, if an application is late, or an applicant requests the Community Grants Hub to approve a lodgement after the closing time and date, the Community Grants Hub will apply its [late application policy](#), which is available on the Community Grants Hub [website](#).

Generally, a late application may be considered if the Department of Social Services (the Department) determines that there were exceptional circumstances beyond the applicant's control that meant that the deadline could not be met. Examples of exceptional circumstances could include, but may not be limited to:

- Community Grants Hub infrastructure failures
- natural disasters
- power outages affecting the ability of the applicant to submit their application by the deadline, and
- death or disability of key personnel.

16. What happens if I find a mistake in my application after it has been submitted?

If you find a mistake in your application after it has been submitted, you should immediately contact the Community Grants Hub by phone on 1800 020 283 or by email at support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The Community Grants Hub may ask you for more information, as long as it does not change the substance of your application. The Community Grants Hub does not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from applicants to correct applications after the closing time.

17. Can I apply as an individual organisation as well as a member of a consortium?

Yes. If you are submitting a grant application on behalf of a consortium, a member organisation or a newly created organisation must be appointed as the 'lead organisation'. Only the lead organisation can enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth and will be responsible for the grant. The lead organisation must complete the application form and identify all other members of the proposed consortium in the application.

18. Do I need to attach any additional documents to my application?

All of the following documents must be attached to your application for it to be considered compliant and for it to proceed to assessment. Templates are provided for your use with the grant opportunity documents as specified:

- Project Indicative Budget [mandatory] (template available on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites)
- Activity Project Plan [mandatory] (template available on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites)
- Copy of your most recently audited financial statements or accepted alternative documentation [mandatory], if audited financial statements are not available.
- Completed Auspice Authorisation form (only for organisations to authorise another organisation to apply on their behalf) (template available on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites)
- Signed trust deed and any subsequent variations, if applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust.
- If an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisation is registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), a copy of their Certificate of ORIC registration.

Grant assessment

19. Who is undertaking the assessment of applications?

Section 8 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines sets out the assessment process.

The Community Grants Hub will administer the application process for this round.

The Community Grants Hub and DSS will provide advice to a Selection Advisory Panel on the outcomes of the assessment undertaken by the Assessment Team and other matters. The Selection Advisory Panel considers the overall value for money of proposals and provides list of recommended projects to fund to the Departmental Delegate for final decision.

20. Who is involved in the Selection Advisory Panel?

The Selection Advisory Panel may include a mix of employees of the Department of Social Services, Commonwealth Government, people with disability, and people of specialist relevant expertise.

21. When and how will my organisation know the outcome of our application?

The assessment period will take approximately three weeks. The announcement of the successful organisation for the NABS activity is expected to be around late May 2020. The person nominated in the application will be notified of the outcome in writing. The successful organisation will be listed on the Community Grants Hub website and will receive funding after the Letter of Agreement is signed by the organisation and accepted by the Department.

For probity reasons, to treat all applicants fairly and equally, it is not possible to give you advice on the outcome of your application before the announcement of the successful applicant is made.

22. What happens if we are successful, and when can we expect the grant money?

The successful organisation will be emailed a Standard Grant Agreement and asked to accept the Terms and Conditions between the organisation and the Department. The funded organisation must meet the Terms and Conditions of the Standard Grant Agreement. The grant funding will be made available once the Standard Grant Agreement has been signed and returned by the organisation and accepted by the Department. The grant funding can only be paid into the nominated bank account provided in the CoS for NABS Application Form.

23. What feedback will be available for this grant round?

A generic feedback summary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website following the finalisation of the funding round. Individual feedback will not be available for this grant round.

Question and Answer added on the 6 March 2020

24. Can I apply if I am a registered NDIS Provider?

In order to provide a seamless experience for all Auslan users, including NDIS participants and Continuity of Support for NABS clients, NDIS registered providers are encouraged to apply. Information on how to register for the NDIS is available at <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/becoming-ndis-provider>

Question and Answers added on the 27 March 2020

25. The grant opportunity states that the total funding available through this opportunity is \$2million, \$1 million per year. Will applications for funding above this amount be considered?

As indicated in the opportunity guidelines funding is fixed, with up to a maximum of \$1 million available per year. The objective of the CoS for NABS opportunity is to provide a national booking service for clients who need Auslan interpreting services at private medical appointments that attract a Medicare rebate and other specified allied health appointments in private settings, with broader Auslan supports out of scope. Funding is not available for infrastructure, and potential applicants will need to demonstrate that they already have, or have access to, an established call centre infrastructure as part of the application. The successful applicant will be required to demonstrate value for money within the specified funding provided.

The department will work closely with the successful applicant to monitor demand for the service.

26. Can additional data be made available to support applicants to estimate service costings, including workforce requirements?

The below figures (Table 1) are indicative and subject to change. Applicants should submit costings, including details of assumptions made to inform costing. Applications will be assessed based on value for money considerations.

Table 1: Current NABS clients over 65 by state

State/Territory	Clients 65 and over
NSW	165
VIC	134
QLD	205
SA	63
WA	60
TAS	12
NT	2
ACT	4
Australia	645

27. What are the transition arrangements for a potential incoming provider, to maintain service continuity and support service planning/establishment (e.g. client data etc)?

These details will be negotiated once the successful applicant has been announced. The department is committed to maintaining service continuity and will work closely with the successful applicant to ensure this occurs, including in relation to any transition matters if relevant.

28. What processes will the successful applicant be required to follow in relation to checking, recording, verifying and/or reporting on Deaf users' service program eligibility when accepting and delivering booking requests?

Auslan users are eligible to access CoS for NABS where they meet at least one of the following criteria (Table 2):

Table 2: Eligibility criteria and supporting evidence

Eligibility criteria	Evidence required
Auslan user over the age of 65	Standard proof of age (e.g. birth certificate, drivers licence or passport)
Auslan user under the age of 65 who has tested their eligibility for the NDIS and been found ineligible	Letter from the NDIA demonstrating they have tested their access to the NDIS and been found not to meet the access/eligibility requirements