



# Families and Communities Program Volunteer Management Activity Grant Opportunity Guidelines

<b>Opening date:</b>	<b>27 April 2021</b>
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	9:00 PM AEST on 17 May 2021
<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 9:00 PM AEST on 10 May 2021
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	27 April 2021
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Closed non-competitive

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# 1. Families and Communities Program: Volunteer Management Activity processes

**The Volunteer Management Activity 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 2.1 Families and Communities Program. 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 and advertise on the [GrantConnect](#) and [Community Grants Hub](#) websites.



**You complete and submit a grant application**

You must read these grant guidelines before you submit your application. These guidelines can be found on [GrantConnect](#), the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system.



**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.



**We make grant recommendations**

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



**Grant decisions are made**

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



**We notify you of the outcome**

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



**We enter into a grant agreement**

We 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 the Volunteer Management Activity

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the Volunteer Management Activity 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 Volunteer Management Activity grant.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the 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 Families and Communities Program

The Volunteer Management Activity is an element of the broader Families and Communities Program (Outcome 2.1). The Families and Communities Program aims to strengthen relationships, improve well-being of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, and strengthen family and community functioning.

The Families and Communities Program aims to provide a foundation for integrated, community led program delivery that understands and meets local needs and promotes innovation and collaboration. This includes the establishment of a platform for continued improvement in the way the department does its business, clarifying and strengthening Commonwealth and state/territory government responsibilities and fostering stronger relationships with civil society and partnering with service providers.

The Families and Communities Program provides a range of services to families, children, young people, **volunteers**, multicultural communities, humanitarian entrants, migrants and individuals with particular circumstances.

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

### 2.1 About the Volunteer Management Activity grant opportunity

#### The Volunteer Management Activity

The objective of the Volunteer Management Activity is to create a thriving volunteering culture, which meets the changing demands for capable and committed volunteers in local communities across Australia.

The Volunteer Management Activity aims to increase opportunities for people to participate in the social and economic life of their broader community through volunteering, by:

- building effective volunteering practices and opportunities within organisations and communities
- increasing the diversity of volunteers
- improving access to information on volunteering
- providing access to the training, resources and support volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) need.

The current Volunteer Management Activity has funded 52 organisations to deliver 72 Volunteer Support Services from 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2021, with total funding of \$18.791 million (excluding GST). Volunteer Support Services are funded to increase participation in volunteering by providing information and support to individual volunteers, volunteer managers and volunteering organisations. The Australian Government acknowledges the contribution that Volunteer Management Activity funded organisations have made in support of the volunteering sector in Australia.

In order to ensure the Volunteer Management Activity is aligned to a head/s of power under the Australian Constitution and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, the department has redesigned it.

In January 2021, the department wrote to all currently funded organisations to advise them of the decision made regarding the redesign of the Volunteer Management Activity.

From 1 July 2021, the Australian Government will distribute up to \$33.5 million (excluding GST) over 5 years under the new Volunteer Management Activity to Volunteering Peak Bodies.

Volunteering Peak Bodies will develop and implement strategies to build the capacity of VIOs, through online<sup>1</sup> volunteer management services, and breaking down barriers to volunteering for identified priority groups. Volunteer Peak Bodies will consult and partner with relevant local organisations to develop and deliver the Volunteer Management Activity.

Volunteering Peak Bodies receiving grants under the new Volunteer Management Activity must deliver services funded under the program free of charge or through a revenue neutral model.

Online services to build the capacity of VIOs will focus on:

- best practice recruitment and training of volunteers
- supporting and retaining volunteers
- volunteer management
- provision of information, tools, training and resources for VIOs including:
  - regulatory obligations and risk management (governance, work health and safety, insurance, background/police checks.)

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<sup>1</sup> Online refers to using services such as the telephony and broadband networks

Additional services can be provided by Volunteering Peak Bodies, and their partners to build the capacity of VIOs to break down barriers to volunteering for identified priority groups and if deemed the most effective approach, provide face-to-face services to support these groups to participate in volunteering. These priority groups include:

- People with Disability<sup>2</sup>
- First Nation Peoples
- Newly Arrived Migrants<sup>3</sup>

Collaboration across state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies is required to minimise duplication, share best practice and ensure consistency of service provision, including participating in networking arrangements and sharing resources. State and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies are also required to ensure that in developing their jurisdictional strategies, consideration is given to ensuring services offered under the Volunteer Management Activity are complementary to any jurisdiction investment in volunteering. This may include an individual state or territory Volunteering Peak Body agreeing to enter into an agreement with some currently funded Volunteer Management Activity organisations in their jurisdiction, to deliver services as specified under the new model, and/or leveraging the existing resources of other VMA providers. These organisations must meet any reporting requirements and must perform to the standard expected to meet the needs of VIOs and volunteers.

The Australian Government will work with the successful applicants to develop an appropriate performance measurement framework that will outline measureable targets that demonstrate the outcomes achieved under this program.

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

#### 3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced up to \$33.5 million GST exclusive over 5 years for the Volunteer Management Activity.

The grant opportunity will run for 5 years from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2026, with a review taking place after 3 years to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. Following the review, there may be updates to the deliverables and objectives under the Volunteer Management Activity.

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<sup>2</sup> The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) defines disability as:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- total or partial loss of a part of the body
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment, or that results in disturbed behaviour

and includes disability that:

- presently exists
- previously existed but no longer exists
- may exist in the future

is imputed to a person (meaning it is thought or implied that the person has disability but does not).

<sup>3</sup> Newly Arrived Migrants within their first 5 years of settlement.

The grants provided under the Volunteer Management Activity are time-limited and not ongoing. Five-year grant agreements will ensure sufficient time for each Volunteering Peak Body to implement and deliver the redesigned Volunteer Management Activity. The level of funding each Volunteering Peak Body is eligible to receive under this grant opportunity has been pre-determined (as per section 4.1).

## 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 because Volunteering Peak Bodies are best placed to understand the opportunities and challenges within the volunteering sector in each jurisdiction they represent. This includes understanding which organisations to partner with in the delivery of the new Volunteer Management Activity program.

We cannot consider your application if it does not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

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

To be eligible you must be one of the listed invited organisations and have received an invitation to apply through [GrantConnect](#). No further organisations will be invited to apply.

The list of eligible applicants was determined as suitable to be invited to apply based on their experience, knowledge and capacity to deliver the new Volunteer Management Activity in their respective jurisdictions.

Invited organisations must partner with local organisations to deliver the Volunteer Management Activity. The department will need to approve in writing any funding partnerships that are established over the life of the funding period.

Invited Organisation	ABN
The Centre for Volunteering NSW	28002416024
Volunteering and Contact ACT Limited	30433789697
Volunteering SA and NT Inc.	82279275584
Volunteering Queensland Inc.	46621632398
Volunteering Tasmania Inc.	36610934969
Volunteering Victoria Inc.	79378017212
Volunteer Centre of Western Australia Inc.	24028468144

The following funding breakdown takes into account the proportion of formal volunteers across each state and territory. It also makes a base funding provision to all jurisdictions to ensure viable operating funding and provides equitable adjustments to the jurisdictional funding splits, reflecting variations across jurisdictions on diversity of population and remoteness of population. These figures were adjusted to ensure that level of funding provided to jurisdictions will not be less than they currently receive, exclusive of any SACS supplementation received by some jurisdictions prior to 1 July 2021.

The distribution of funding across the life of the grant may be varied, subject to the agreement of all parties.

Invited Organisation	Service Delivery Area	Funding \$million (GST exclusive)					
		2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	TOTAL
The Centre for Volunteering	New South Wales (NSW)	\$1.861	\$1.878	\$1.901	\$1.901	\$1.901	\$9.442
Volunteering and Contact ACT Limited	Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	\$0.191	\$0.193	\$0.195	\$0.195	\$0.195	\$0.969
Volunteering SA and NT Inc.	South Australia (SA) and The Northern Territory (NT)	\$0.587	\$0.593	\$0.600	\$0.600	\$0.600	\$2.980
		\$0.290	\$0.293	\$0.297	\$0.297	\$0.297	\$1.474
Volunteering Queensland Inc.	Queensland (QLD)	\$1.300	\$1.312	\$1.328	\$1.328	\$1.328	\$6.596
Volunteering Tasmania Inc.	Tasmania (TAS)	\$0.238	\$0.240	\$0.243	\$0.243	\$0.243	\$1.207
Volunteering Victoria	Victoria (VIC)	\$1.373	\$1.385	\$1.402	\$1.402	\$1.402	\$6.964
Volunteer Centre of Western Australia Inc.	Western Australia (WA)	\$0.759	\$0.766	\$0.775	\$0.775	\$0.775	\$3.850

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

You are not eligible to apply if you:

- have not received an invitation to apply through [GrantConnect](#) and are not listed as an eligible invited organisation in section 4.1.
- are an organisation, or any organisation you partner with, 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'.

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

### 5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your grant activity must:

- have eligible activities that directly relate to the purpose of the Volunteer Management Activity and must include:
  - strategies to partner with relevant localised infrastructure and/or existing organisations
  - strategies that develop the capacity of VIOs to break down the barriers to volunteering for identified priority groups
  - strategies for implementation of online services and best practice resources to build the capacity of VIOs.

### 5.2 Eligible locations

Your grant can include activities at different locations, as long as they are all in your respective jurisdiction.

### 5.3 Eligible expenditure

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

Eligible expenditure items for you or any organisation that you partner with are:

- staff salaries and on-costs which can be directly attributed to the provision of the Volunteer Management Activity in the identified service area or areas
- employee training for paid and unpaid staff including Committee and Board members, that is relevant, appropriate and in line with the Volunteer Management Activity
- operating and administration expenses directly related to the Volunteer Management Activity
- purchase and maintenance of volunteer management IT system/s.

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

You, or any organisation that you partner with cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- purchase of land
- major capital expenditure
- the covering of retrospective costs
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent
- major construction/capital works
- costs to attend and travel to conferences
- overseas travel
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

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

Please note that the grant cannot be used for any costs incurred in the preparation of your grant application or related documentation.

## 6. The assessment criteria

You must address all of the following assessment criteria in the application. Each of the assessment criteria listed below has an equal weighting so you should provide an equivalent amount of information in responding to each criterion. A word limit of 1,000 words per criterion applies.

### **Criterion 1 – Implementation**

When addressing the criterion strong applicants will:

- demonstrate how the organisation will ensure state wide consistency by outlining a high level plan for the development of an implementation strategy that details how the organisation will:
  - work in partnership with relevant local infrastructure and/or existing organisations to build effective volunteering practices and opportunities within their organisation and across their state or territory
  - identify and respond to the volunteer management needs of VIOs in their jurisdiction and improve access to information on volunteering
  - develop strategies to support regional, rural and remote communities
  - respond to the changing landscape of volunteering in Australia
  - transition to and deliver services online (including partnering with other organisations where relevant)
  - provide access to training, resources and support that VIOs and volunteers needs
- demonstrate how the organisation will work with other state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies in the development of strategies to ensure national consistency of the Volunteer Management Activity.
- outline why the organisation requires the grant funds to undertake the proposed activities.

### **Criterion 2 – Partnership**

When addressing the criterion strong applicants will:

- demonstrate a plan for how they will ensure that any organisations they partner with in the implementation of the Volunteer Management Activity are suitably able to deliver services
- demonstrate how the organisation will engage with priority groups
- demonstrate strategies to build the capacity of VIOs in breaking down barriers to volunteering for identified priority groups to increase the diversity of volunteers.

### Criterion 3 – Governance and Administrative Structures

When addressing the criterion strong applicants will:

- provide details of the administrative structures that will support the activity including:
  - business continuity planning
  - financial management
  - governance and accountability.
- identify the key risks and issues of the activity, as well as, any mitigation measures that you have established/will establish (for example, risk mitigation regarding the loss of personnel).

### Criteria 4 – Technical Ability

When addressing the criterion strong applicants will:

- demonstrate the organisation’s technical ability to deliver the Volunteer Management Activity by:
  - describing the organisation’s relevant knowledge, expertise and experience in developing and rolling out effective:
    - online volunteer management and capacity building solutions
    - strategies and programs to improve diversity and inclusion in volunteering
  - describing how the organisation’s ICT system has the ability to meet the Commonwealth data collection and activity reporting requirements used to validate the achievement of objectives and outcomes.

## 7. How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the terms and conditions and the sample grant agreement prior to submitting an application.

These documents are found on the [GrantConnect](#) website. Any changes to grant documentation are published and addenda<sup>4</sup> will be published on [GrantConnect](#) and only accessible by invitees. [GrantConnect](#) is the authoritative source for grants information.

Invitees can only access these documents including the application form.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate.

Giving false or misleading information will exclude your application from further consideration.

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/s to the Community Grants Hub by 9:00 PM AEST on 17 May 2021.

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

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<sup>4</sup> Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents

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 Act 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 department 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 the nature of 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.

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

## **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 via [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au).

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.

Written requests to lodge a late application will only be accepted within 3 days after the grant opportunity has closed.

The decision maker or their appointed representative will determine whether a late application will be accepted. The decision of the decision maker 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 start your grant activity on 1 July 2021.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	Late May
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Mid June
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	Late June
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	Late June
Earliest start date of grant activity	1 July 2021
End date of grant activity	30 June 2026

## 7.2 Questions during the application process

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

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within 5 working days. Answers to questions are posted on the [GrantConnect](#).

The question period will close at 9:00 PM AEST on 10 May 2021. 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

The Community Grants Hub 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.

If eligible, the department will then assess your application against the assessment criteria (see section 6). We will consider your application on its merits, based on how well it meets the assessment criteria.

### 8.2 Who will assess and select applications?

Applications will be reviewed to ensure they meet eligibility requirements.

The department will assess each eligible and compliant application on its individual merit. Assessment will be undertaken by departmental personnel, 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.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or explain the information.

In determining the extent to which your Volunteering Peak Body represents value for money, the department will consider the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the funding.

### 8.3 Who will approve grants?

The Deputy Secretary of the Families and Communities Stream (the decision maker) at the Australian Government Department of Social Services decides which grants to approve based on the assessment outcomes and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant activity.

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

- the approval of the grant
- value for money
- the grant funding amount to be awarded
- the 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.

## 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 Simple Grant Agreement for this grant opportunity.

Each agreement has general/standard grant conditions that cannot be changed. Sample grant agreements are available on [GrantConnect](#) as part of the grant documentation. We will use a schedule to outline the specific grant requirements.

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 Volunteer Management activities until a grant agreement is executed.

#### **Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement**

We will use a Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement.

You will have 10 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.

You may request changes to the grant agreement. However, we will review any changes to make sure they do not affect the grant as approved by the decision maker.

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the department may terminate the agreement.

## 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 and the partnerships outlined in the implementation strategy 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 and the partnership must always comply with the respective 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.

## 10.4 How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- activity requirements
- maximum grant amount to be paid
- the payment amount and milestones
- performance indicators
- reporting milestones
- financial acquittal requirements.

We will make an initial payment on the payment date shown in your grant agreement, when the grant agreement has been executed. We will then make 6 monthly payments on the dates shown in your grant agreement.

If you incur extra expenditure in delivering the activity, you must pay it yourself.

## 10.5 Grant payments and GST

Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement. Payments will be GST inclusive.

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#) for more information.

## 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

#### Your responsibilities

If successful, you must carry out the grant activities in accordance with these guidelines and the grant agreement, which includes the standard terms and conditions and any supplementary conditions. The grant agreement will outline the specific grant requirements.

You will be responsible for:

- meeting the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and managing the activity efficiently and effectively
- meeting milestones and other timeframes specified in the grant agreement;
- complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements in accordance with the grant agreement
- participating in grant program evaluation as necessary for the period specified in the grant agreement
- ensuring that the grant activity outputs and outcomes are in accordance with the grant agreement.

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your Volunteer Management 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.

### **The department's responsibilities**

The department will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement
- provide timely administration of the grant
- evaluate the grantee's performance.

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

## **12.2 Reporting**

The Grants Manager must have a system in place to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in their grant agreement.

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

- progress against agreed grant activity milestones and outcomes in your Activity Work Plan, including any risks, barriers or sensitivities in achieving the grant objectives
- expenditure of your grant.

### **Progress reports**

Six-monthly progress reports must:

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

You must tell us of any reporting delays 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 Activity Work Plan**

You will be required to submit an Activity Work Plan, on a template provided by us, within 4 weeks of the execution of the grant agreement.

Your Activity Work Plan will tell us about the scope of your project, what you will be doing, the proposed outcomes, proposed timeframes for delivery and completion, and how you will measure and evaluate your performance.

The Activity Work Plan can be adapted over time or in circumstances where government priorities change.

### **12.4 Financial declaration**

You will be required to provide a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

### **12.5 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.

### **12.6 Record keeping**

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

### **12.7 Evaluation**

We will evaluate the Volunteer Management Activity 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 will evaluate the performance of the grant recipients, the efficiency of implementation and the effectiveness of the Volunteer Management Activity program in meeting policy outcomes through a:

- program performance review – a review of whether a program is performing at the optimal level to deliver defined outputs and whether there is scope to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness.

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

### **12.8 Acknowledgement**

All publications related to grants under the program must acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows:

This activity received grant funding from the Australian Government.

## **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 [complaints form](#) on the department's website, by phone or mail.

Phone: 1800 634 035

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 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 Privacy 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 3 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. Consultation**

In 2020 the department held face-to-face and teleconference consultation sessions relating to the redesign of the Volunteer Management Activity.

All feedback provided through this process has been considered by the department.

## 15. Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</a> (PGPA Act).
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 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)</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 2 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.
Funding Arrangement Manager	is the officer responsible for the ongoing management of the grantee and their compliance with the grant agreement.

Term	Definition
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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>5</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>6</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> </ol>
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>	is 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 individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
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 closed, 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.
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.

<sup>5</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>6</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
selection process	<p>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.</p>
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>