

Families and Communities Program

Strong and Resilient Communities Activity

Community Resilience Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Opening date: **13 July 2017**

Closing date and time: **23 August 2017 at 2pm (AEST)**

Commonwealth policy entity: **Department of Social Services**

Co-Sponsoring Entities *None*

Enquiries: If you have any questions, please contact

Phone: 1800 020 283

Email: support@communitygrants.gov.au

Questions should be sent no later than 16 August 2017 (five working days before the closing date)

Date guidelines released: **13 July 2017**

Type of grant opportunity: **Open competitive**

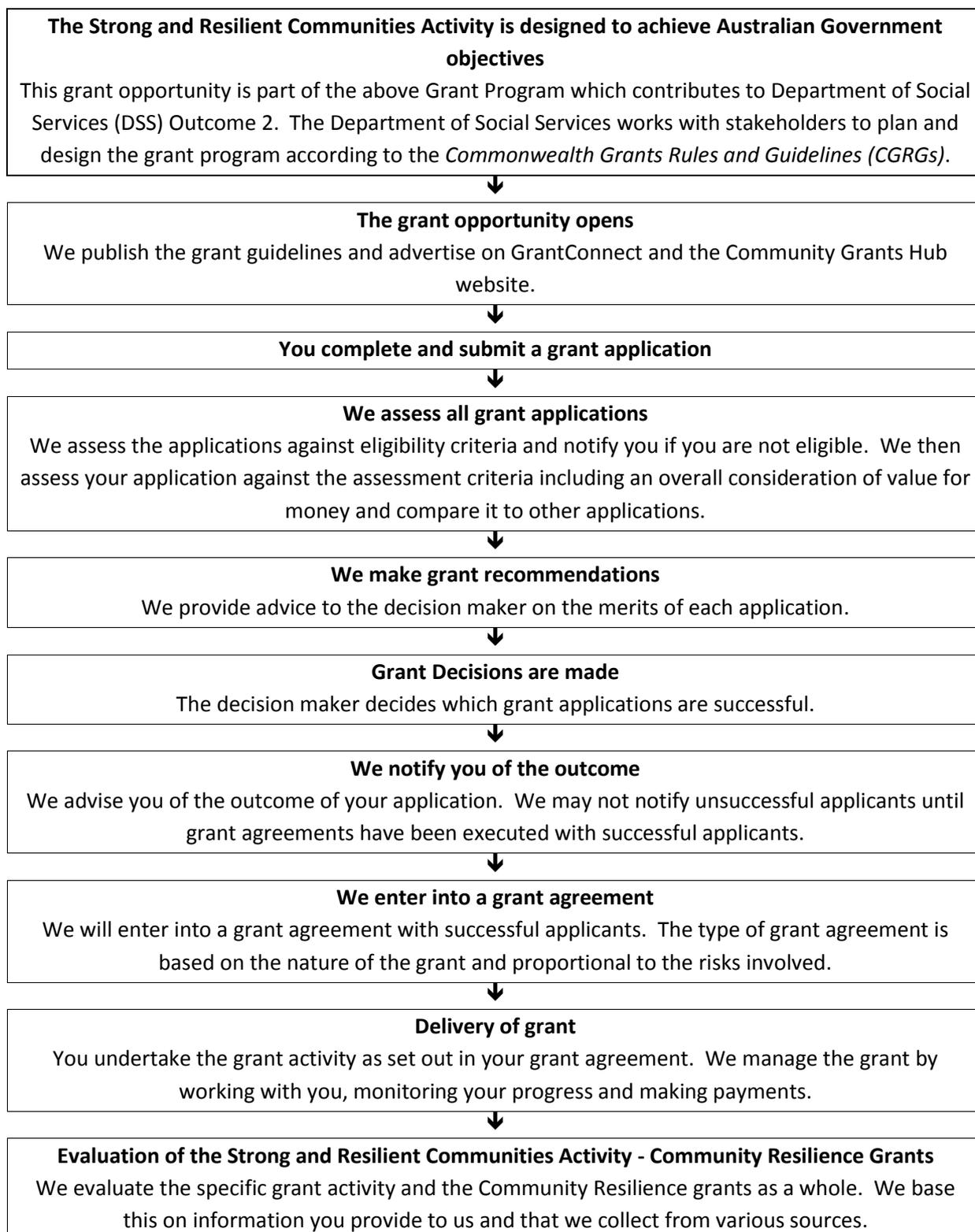
Version **27 July 2017**

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1. Families and Communities Program – Strong and Resilient Communities Activity: Community Resilience Grants Process



2. About the Strong and Resilient Communities Activity

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity is an element of the [Families and Communities Program](#). The Families and Communities Program aims to strengthen relationships, improve well-being 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.

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity aims to build strong, resilient, cohesive and harmonious communities to ensure that individuals, families and communities have the opportunity to thrive, be free from intolerance and discrimination, and have the capacity to respond to emerging needs and challenges.

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity will help to ensure that individuals, families and communities have the opportunity to obtain:

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>A sense of belonging</i> | <i>Through a greater sense of connection to and pride in their community, with shared values and trust, and a sense of pride in the Australian way of life and culture.</i> |
| <i>A sense of social inclusion</i> | <i>By providing community members with equitable access to resources, such as education, employment and housing.</i> |
| <i>Plenty of opportunities to participate</i> | <i>By ensuring that there are opportunities to obtain voluntary work or gainful employment, as well as cooperative involvement in events that cross boundaries of race and culture.</i> |
| <i>Acceptance from the broader community</i> | <i>With mutual respect, low levels of discrimination, positive attitudes towards minorities and newcomers, and a resilience to accept different points of view.</i> |
| <i>Self-worth</i> | <i>With good life satisfaction, positive indications of happiness and wellbeing, with reasonable expectations for the future.</i> |

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity will adopt a new approach to address emerging issues within communities. It will focus on strengthening the capacity of communities experiencing disadvantage to become more resilient and inclusive through greater community engagement, participation and belonging in the local community. Communities will be empowered to identify and address issues in their local community.

Grants will be available to eligible community organisations to support active citizen engagement, whether through employment, education or broader community life. Funded projects will provide individuals with a sense of belonging and communities with the building blocks for community harmony.

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity will comprise three grant programs:

- Community Resilience;
- Inclusive Communities; and
- National Research.

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity will fund a diverse range of service types and activities. Due to the size and complexity of the Strong and Resilient Communities Activity, access to funding will be available through a variety of means and at various times throughout the funding period.

Organisations receiving grants under the Strong and Resilient Communities Activity will deliver free, independent, non-judgemental services to support the development and cohesiveness of communities, as well as to assist disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and families.

The Strong and Resilient Communities Activity will be undertaken according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines* ([CGRGs](#)).

These guidelines contain information for the **Community Resilience Grants**.

3. About the Community Resilience Grants

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the Community Resilience grants;
- the eligibility and assessment criteria;
- how grant applications are monitored and evaluated; and
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

You must read this document before filling out an application.

Community Resilience grants aim to build strong, resilient and cohesive communities to help make Australia more secure and harmonious as a whole. This will be done through providing grants designed to address issues in communities that show potential for or early signs of low social cohesion, and/or racial, religious or cultural intolerance. Low social cohesion can have long term implications for community productivity, prosperity, harmony and could ultimately pose a risk to Australia's national security. Your Community Resilience project must address social cohesion issues. Successful projects will also embrace diversity and community belonging and/or address barriers to social and economic participation in the target community.

Applicants must involve key stakeholders from the respective communities to demonstrate the project has whole-of-community support. Applicants are also encouraged to collaborate with other organisations, formally (e.g. consortium arrangements) or informally (e.g. referral partnerships) to address the grant program's objectives.

3.1 What types of projects will be funded under Community Resilience grants?

Funding will be available for one-off time-limited projects. There is no limit on the number of applications an eligible organisation is able to submit.

The types of projects that will be funded include projects aimed at:

- helping people connect with government and non-government services;
- strengthening community leadership to foster greater community cohesion;
- promoting mutual respect, understanding and fair treatment for all Australians;
- promoting understanding of Australia's democratic principles, rights and obligations and the unifying value of citizenship;

- leadership training to empower women in new and emerging community groups;
- addressing racial, cultural or religious tensions between particular groups in the community through educational, social, cultural or sporting activities that bring people of different cultures or faiths together;
- facilitating increased participation in social, economic and community life;
- facilitating initiatives and activities to better build understanding of Australia's cultural diversity;
- providing youth at risk of marginalisation with welcoming and non-threatening access to services that aim to build trust and increase their community participation; and
- an online platform that aims to provide information for marginalised youth and will help to challenge extreme views.

Your Community Resilience project **may** include a multicultural arts or festivals event as a sub component of your project proposal. A multicultural arts or festival event will provide an opportunity for Australians of all backgrounds to come together and experience different cultural heritages and traditions, and promote mutual understanding between people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds, and assist in eliminating discrimination. Low social cohesion can have long term implications for community productivity, prosperity, harmony and could ultimately pose a risk Australia's national security. Your multicultural arts and festivals event/s must not exceed more than \$7,500 over the course of your Community Resilience project. Your organisation is able to collaborate with other organisations and community groups if you decide to hold a multicultural arts or festivals event as part of your project.

All Community Resilience projects **must** include a Harmony Day event. This will help to increase exposure within the community of the issues being addressed by your project. Harmony Day, held on 21 March each year, is a celebration for everyone who calls Australia home – from the traditional owners of this land to those who have come from many countries around the world. More information about Harmony Day is available on the [Harmony Day website](#). Applications that do not indicate the project will include a Harmony Day event will be deemed non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment.

4. Grant amount

The Australian Government has allocated \$12.3 million a year for the Strong and Resilient Communities Activity.

For **Community Resilience** grants, applications for a minimum of \$20,000 up to a maximum of \$150,000 a year for up to three and a quarter years will be considered. The funding will be available from 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2021.

The total allocation for Community Resilience grants will be decided on completion of the selection process. This will depend on the number and quality of applications received and the funding allocated through the other Strong and Resilient Communities Activity grant programs.

To maximise funding opportunities we will support a range of projects of varying amounts of funding and timeframes.

Funding is for one-off time-limited projects. The funding is not intended to be ongoing.

Submitting a grant application does not guarantee that you will receive a grant.

5. Grant eligibility criteria

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

5.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply for a grant you must be a not-for-profit organisation and:

- be one of the following entity types:
 - a company incorporated in Australia;
 - a trustee on behalf of a trust;
 - an incorporated association;
 - a partnership or consortium, with a lead organisation;¹
 - a registered charity or not for profit organisation;
 - an Australian statutory authority
 - an Australian local government body; and
 - an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*.
- be a legal entity, able to enter into a legally binding agreement;
- be registered for the purposes of GST;
- permanently reside in Australia;
- have an Australian bank account; and
- be able to provide supporting documentation as outlined in item 9.5

Applications from consortia are acceptable, provided you have a lead applicant who is the main driver of the project and is eligible as per the list above.

5.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- a for-profit organisation;
- a State or Territory Government;
- an individual;
- an unincorporated association; and/or
- an overseas resident.

6. Eligible grant activities

6.1 What can the grant money be used for?

You must use the grant to deliver an approved project that meets the aims and objectives of the funded activity as defined in your grant agreement.

¹ The Australian Government recognises that some organisations may seek to form consortia in order to apply for a grant under the Program. Consortia are eligible to apply and the relevant conditions applicable to consortia are at 9.7 'Grant Applications from Consortia'

You can use the grant to pay for:

- staff salaries and on-costs that can be directly attributed to the provision of the grant program in the identified service area or areas as per the grant agreement;
- employee training for paid and unpaid staff including Committee and Board members, that is relevant, appropriate and in line with the grant program;
- operating and administration expenses directly related to the project as per the grant agreement, such as:
 - telephones;
 - rent and outgoings;
 - computer/ IT/website/software;
 - insurance;
 - utilities;
 - postage;
 - stationery and printing;
 - accounting and auditing;
 - travel/accommodation costs; and
 - assets as defined in the Terms and Conditions that can be reasonably attributed to meeting agreement deliverables; and
- up to 10 per cent of the grant can be used for evaluation of the funded project and/or to explore options for future sustainability and ongoing viability of the funded project.

6.2 What the grant money cannot be used for?

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- projects that have already commenced or are completed;
- purchase of land;
- major capital expenditure;
- subsidy of general ongoing administration costs such as rent, electricity and phone not directly related to the project/s being delivered as part of the grant agreement;
- costs to attend and travel to conferences or training sessions;
- overseas travel;
- the covering of retrospective costs; and
- activities for which other Commonwealth, State, Territory or Local Government bodies have primary responsibility.

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

7. The grant selection process

First we will assess your application against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage.

We will then assess your application against the assessment criteria set out below and against other applications. Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria;
- how it compares to other applications; and
- whether it provides value for money.

In assessing the extent to which the application represents value for money, the Department of Social Services will have regard to the following:

- the relative merit of each application;
- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the funding;
- the relative cost of the proposal, or of elements of the proposal;
- the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated a capacity to fund the proposal taking into consideration all possible sources of finance, including debt finance; and
- the geographic location of the proposal.

8. The assessment criteria

You will need to address all of the following assessment criteria in your application. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested.

Criterion 1: *Demonstrate a strong need for the project within the target community.*

In responding to this criterion you **must** include:

- the demographic of the community, the extent of the problem you have identified, how the problem relates to the objectives of the Community Resilience grants program, and how the project relates to the whole of the community; and
- what services are already available to support the target participants, and whether (and to what degree) there is unmet need.

Criterion 2: *Describe the project in detail, how the project will be delivered and the intended outcomes for all stakeholders.*

In responding to this criterion you **must** include:

- a description and objectives of the project, including how the project will be implemented and delivered;
- how you will engage with the whole community, including how the project will be promoted;
- who will benefit from the project, what the intended outcomes will be and how the intended outcomes will improve social cohesion and/or community resilience; and
- why the project should be considered a priority.

Criterion 3: *Demonstrate your organisations presence in the local community and how your project will link with or complement existing services.*

In responding to this criterion you **must** include:

- your organisation's local knowledge, and having or being able to have a continued presence in the area where the project is to be delivered;
- how your project will link in with or complement existing services; and
- how you will involve key stakeholders and/or governing bodies within the target community.

Criterion 4: *Demonstrate your organisation's governance and capability to successfully deliver the project.*

In responding to this criterion you **must** include:

- your organisation's governance structure, the experience and role of staff, and the organisation's prior experience in delivering similar services;
- your organisation's capability to deliver new services to the target participants; and
- your organisation's capability to meet the reporting and performance requirements.

All assessment criteria are given an equal weighting.

Your response to each assessment criterion is limited to 900 words.

9. The grant application process

9.1 Overview of the application process

You must read these grant guidelines, the application form and the draft grant agreement before you submit an application.

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 must address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant. Please complete each section of the application form and make sure you provide the information we have requested.

Please keep a copy of your application and any supporting papers in case the Department needs to clarify any information it contains.

Once you have completed the application form, you must submit it electronically by using the submission section at the end of the form. Following electronic submission, a message with your Submission Reference ID will appear on your screen. An email will be sent to the main email contact provided in the application form. A PDF version of your application form is also included in this email.

9.2 Application process timing

The Community Resilience grants opportunity will open on 13 July 2017 and close on 23 August 2017. The start date for the grant activities is from 1 April 2018 and the expected end date is on or before 30 June 2021. You must spend the grant by the end date shown in your grant agreement.

The Community Grants Hub, on behalf of DSS, may reject any application that is lodged after the stated closing date of a grant application process.

The expected timing for this grant opportunity is shown in the table below. These dates are indicative only and subject to change depending on the number of applications received and any unforeseen circumstances.

| Resilient Communities | Time |
|--|---|
| Application period | Open time: 13 July 2017 Close time: 23 August 2017 at 2pm (AEST) |
| Assessment of applications | 7 weeks |
| Approval of outcomes of selection process | 13 days |
| Negotiations and award of grant agreements | 30 days |
| Notification to unsuccessful applicants | 5 days |
| Activity commences | 1 April 2018 |
| End date | 30 June 2021 |

9.3 Completing the grant application

You must submit your grant application on the relevant application form, which can be accessed using the link on the [Community Grants Hub website](#). To help you, instructions are provided in the application form.

This is an online application form that you can submit electronically. If you have any technical difficulties please phone 1800 020 283 or email support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The Community Grants Hub will not issue application forms or accept completed applications for this grant opportunity by fax or mail.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate and submitted in accordance with the requirements of these grant guidelines.

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

If you find a mistake in your application after it has been submitted you should contact the Community Grants Hub straight away on 1800 020 283 or by email to 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 to correct applications after the closing time.

9.4 Late Applications

Information about the late application process is available on the [Community Grants Hub website](#).

9.5 Attachments to the application

The following documents must be included with your application and you must use the provided templates where specified:

- Budget for the proposed project (template provided); and
- Letter(s) of support from at least one organisation (no template provided).

Applications that include an attachment that does not use the template provided on the Hub website (where specified) will be deemed non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment.

All applications **must** include at least one letter of support. Your letter(s) of support **must** clearly show the supporting organisation's name or letterhead, contact details and state why that organisation is supportive of the project. Applications that do not provide at least one letter of support will be deemed non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment.

Letters of support can also be from organisations that are collaborating, either formally or informally, to support and/or deliver the project. Please see Section 9.6 for additional information and requirements to include in the letter of support if your project involves collaboration.

Your supporting documentation should be attached to the online application form. There will be instructions in the application form to help you. **Only attach the requested documents.**

Please note: There is a 2mb limit for each attachment.

9.6 Applications that involve collaboration

Some organisations may apply to deliver a project that includes elements of collaboration with other organisations to deliver grant activities. For the purposes of these guidelines, collaboration is defined as two or more organisations who work together *formally or informally* to combine their capabilities either in the development or the delivery of the grant activity.

If you are submitting a grant application that involves collaborative elements, your application **must** include at least one letter of support from one or more of the organisations involved in the development or the delivery of the grant. Letters of support (collaboration) must include:

- the collaborating organisations name/s;
- an overview of the collaborating organisation/s;
- an overview of how the collaborating organisation/s will work with you to deliver services for the target group;
- whether or not the collaboration is formal (i.e. consortia) or informal (pathways for referral, project promotion etc); and
- the resources the collaborating organisation/s will contribute (if any).

Letters of support that involve collaboration must be added as an Attachment to the application (see *Section 9.5*). Please note: There is a 2mb limit for each attachment. Multiple letters of support will need to be scanned together and included as part of the one attachment.

Applications that specify that a collaborative approach will be undertaken, but do not provide at least one letter of support, will be deemed non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment.

9.7 Applications from consortia

Some organisations may apply as a consortium to deliver grant activities. A consortium is two or more organisations who are working together in a formal capacity and combining their capabilities when developing and delivering a grant activity.

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 will 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 other members of the proposed consortium in the application.

If your application is successful, we will seek confirmation of your consortium's arrangements through a Memorandum of Understanding which will include:

- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise of the consortium members;
- the roles/responsibilities of consortium members and the resources they will contribute (if any);
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

Applications from consortia **must** submit a letter of support consistent with *Sections 9.5 and 9.6*. Applications that show a consortium arrangement, but do not provide at least one letter of support, will be deemed non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment.

9.8 Questions during the application process

Questions and answers for this grant round are available on [GrantConnect](#) the [Community Grants Hub website](#).

If you cannot find an answer to your question, relating to this selection process or the Activity, please send your question to support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub will respond to your questions within **five** working days.

The Community Grants Hub will only answer questions to explain the requirements of the application form and the grant guidelines. The Community Grants Hub will not advise how to answer specific selection criteria or advise on individual applications during the assessment process.

Answers to questions will be published on the grant round page within five working days of receipt.

The question and answer period will close at **5:00pm AEST on 16 August 2017**. Following this time, only questions relating to using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

9.9 Further grant opportunities

In the event that there are insufficient suitable applications to meet the program's objectives, the Department of Social Services may approach organisations directly and invite them to apply.

10. Assessment of grant applications

10.1 Who will assess applications?

An assessment team will assess all eligible and compliant applications based on their merits. The assessment team will be comprised of departmental staff. The assessment team will undertake training to ensure consistent assessment of all applications. The assessment team will be bound by the APS Code of Conduct and the Department's Secretary's Instructions.

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

An expert panel comprised of National and State Office staff will then review all ranked applications to ensure consistency and accuracy and to inform the final recommendations for funding.

10.2 Who will approve grants?

The assessment team will make recommendations to the policy delegate. The policy delegate will be the Branch Manager, of the Multicultural and Communities Branch, at the Australian Government's Department of Social Services. The policy delegate will make the final decision to approve a grant.

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

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

The policy delegate will not approve funding if they reasonably consider the program funding available across financial years will not accommodate the funding offer, and/or the application does not represent value for money.

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

11. Notification of application outcome

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, following a decision by the Policy delegate. If you are successful, you will also be advised about any specific conditions attached to the grant.

11.1 Feedback on your application

The Feedback Summary will provide general round-specific information and will include main strengths and areas of improvement for the applications received in this round.

The Feedback Summary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website when the grant round has been completed.

12. Successful grant applications

12.1 The grant agreement

If you are successful, you must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the Department of Social Services. The Department of Social Services will use the Commonwealth Grant Agreement. Standard terms and conditions for the grant agreement will apply and cannot be changed. A schedule may be used to outline the specific grant requirements. Any additional conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer or during the grant agreement negotiations.

The Department of Social Services will negotiate agreements with successful applicants within 30 business days of your organisation being notified your application has been successful. If there are unreasonable delays in finalising a grant agreement, the grant offer may be withdrawn and the grant may be awarded to a different applicant.

You will be required to:

- **Deliver the project and meet the performance reporting and financial acquittal requirements as outlined in your grant agreement.**

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the **Department of Social Services** may terminate the agreement.

You should not make financial commitments until your grant agreement has been executed by the Commonwealth.

12.2 How the grant will be paid

The grant agreement will state the:

- activity requirements;
- maximum grant amount to be paid;
- the payment amount and milestones;
- performance indicators;
- reporting milestones; and
- 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 six monthly payments on the dates shown in your grant agreement.

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

13. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 14 days after the date of effect² as required by Section 5.3 of the *Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines*.

14. Delivery of grant activities

14.1 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 schedule 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; and
- ensuring that the grant activity outputs and outcomes are in accordance with the grant agreement.

14.2 The Department of Social Services responsibilities

The Department of Social Services will:

² See glossary

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement;
- provide timely administration of the grant; and
- 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.

14.3 Payment of the Grant

Payments will be made as shown in the grant agreement. Payments will be GST Inclusive (if applicable).

14.4 Activity Work Plan

You will be required to submit an Activity Work Plan, on a template provided by us, within eight 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 timeframes for delivery and completion, and how you will measure or evaluate your performance. The Activity Work Plan can be adapted over time or in circumstances where Government priorities change.

14.5 Evaluation

The Department of Social Services will evaluate the Strong and Resilient Communities - Inclusive Communities grants program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Your grant agreement requires you to provide information to help with this evaluation.

The Department of Social Services will evaluate a range of issues, including but not limited to, performance of the program, including efficiency of implementation and effectiveness of the program meeting policy outcomes.

The Department of Social Services, in undertaking an evaluation of the program, will engage with the following tools:

- Post-implementation review – a review that asks and answers questions of whether an initiative was implemented in the manner envisaged, on time and within budget.
- 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.
- Impact Evaluation – an assessment of the extent to which the program is achieving the defined policy outcomes.

The Department of Social Services will be using the Data Exchange to assist in program evaluation. The Data Exchange is an IT system that provides flexible ways to submit performance information to the Department of Social Services.

Your Grant Agreement will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Grant Agreement Manager assigned by the Department. The Grant Agreement Manager will ensure all milestones shown in your Grant Agreement are met.

14.6 Acknowledgement

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

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

15. Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the program 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.

Note: These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by the **Department of Social Services**. When this happens the revised guidelines will be published on [GrantConnect](#) and the [Community Grants Hub](#).

15.1 Complaints process

The complaints procedures available at [Department of Social Service's website](#) apply to complaints about the program. All complaints about a grant process must be lodged in writing.

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

Details of what constitutes an eligible complaint can be provided upon request by the Community Grants Hub. Applicants can lodge complaints through the following channels:

Telephone: 1800 634 035
Fax: (02) 6204 4587
Mail: Community Grants Hub Complaints
Department of Social Services
PO Box 9820
CANBERRA ACT 2601

A complaints form is available on the [Department of Social Service's website](#).

If an applicant is at any time dissatisfied with the Department of Social Services or the Community Grant Hub's handling of a complaint, they can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman on:

Telephone: 1300 362 072 (Toll free)
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Mail: Commonwealth Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Further information can be found on the [Commonwealth Ombudsman's website](#).

15.2 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if Department of Social Services 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;
- has a relationship with an organisation relationship with, or in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under the grants program.

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 identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to a grant application, you must inform the Community Grants Hub and the Department of Social Services in writing immediately. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

The chair of the assessment team will be made aware of any conflicts of interest and will handle them as set out in Australian Government policies and procedures. 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*. Our conflict of interest policy is available on the Department of Social Services website.

15.3 Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

We treat your personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes letting you know:

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

You are required, as part of your application, to declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988*, including the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors you engage to assist with the activity. You must ask for the Australian Government's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else if you are given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the Program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may reveal confidential information to:

- the committee and other 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; and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- *Public Service Act 1999*;
- *Public Service Regulations 1999*;
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act*;
- *Privacy Act 1988*;
- *Crimes Act 1914*; or
- *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

15.4 Freedom of information

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

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

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

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator
The Department of Social Services
Public Law Branch,
GPO Box 9820
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: foi@DSS.gov.au

16. Consultation

In 2017 the Department of Social Services circulated an information paper and held teleconference and face to face consultation sessions relating to the Strong and Resilient Communities Activity.

General information was also made publicly available on the Department of Social Services website during this time.

All feedback provided through this process has been considered by the Department of Social Services and used to inform these grant opportunity guidelines, where possible.

17. Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| assessment criteria | The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive granting activity, to determine applicant rankings. (as defined in the CGRGs) |
| date of effect | This will depend on the particular grant. It can be the date in 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. CGRGs |
| decision maker | The person who makes a decision to award a grant. |
| double dipping | Double dipping occurs where a grant recipient is able to obtain a grant for the same project or activity from more than one source. CGRGs |
| eligibility criteria | The principles, standards or rules that a grant applicant must meet to qualify for consideration of a grant. Eligibility criteria may apply in addition to assessment criteria. (CGRGs) |
| 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. |
| Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs) | The CGRGs establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration and are found on the Department of Finance website |
| cost shifting | Involves 'substitution of effort' by the Commonwealth for activities of another organisation or level of government. For example, cost shifting occurs where the Commonwealth provides a grant for an activity that would usually be paid for by a state, territory, or local government, such as municipal services. (CGRGs) |
| grant activity | Is the project /tasks /services that the Grantee is required to undertake with the grant money. It is described in the Grant Agreement. (Proposed definition in the grants taxonomy) |
| grant agreement | Grant agreement means the contract template used by Australian Government entities to set out the mutual obligations relating to the provision of the grant. The Australian Government is standardising and streamlining grant agreements between the Commonwealth and grant recipients to allow grant recipients to engage more easily and efficiently with the Commonwealth. (CGRGs) |
| grant opportunity | A notice published on GrantConnect advertising the availability of Commonwealth grants. (Proposed definition in the grants taxonomy) |

| Term | Definition |
|---------------------|--|
| assessment criteria | The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive granting activity, to determine applicant rankings. (as defined in the CGRGs) |
| grant program | May be advertised within the 'Forecast Opportunity' (FO) section of GrantConnect to provide a consolidated view of associated grant opportunities and provide strategic context for specific grant opportunities. |
| grantee | An individual/organisation that has been awarded a grant. (Proposed definition in the grants taxonomy) |
| PBS Program | Described within the entity's Portfolio Budget Statement, 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. (CGRGs) |
| 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. (CGRGs) |