



Australian Government

**Community
Grants Hub**
Improving your grant experience



Business Processes

The actions you take to carry out your strategic plan are called business processes. These can be:

- to support clients for example, tasks you do to deliver services
- internal processes for example, what you need to do to recruit a new staff member.

Strong business processes save time and money. Your organisation is most productive when you give your clients consistent, quality services.

Service delivery models

Service delivery is about getting outcomes for your clients in the best way possible. A well planned and structured service delivery model can help improve:

- your client satisfaction
- the sustainability of your organisation.

Set your service levels to meet the needs of your clients

Your clients have different needs. Some clients need a less intensive service while others, with more complex needs, may want more specialised help.

Set targets for each service level

Both your clients and your organisation benefit when your clients receive the right level of service. Your clients will be more satisfied when their needs are met. Using targets as a guide can improve the productivity of your organisation.

How will people access your services?

Think about how different people will access your services – do you have appropriate gateways or channels that will best respond to your clients' needs? These may include a phone hotline, website, drop-in centre or direct referral.

For example, if you provide services to young people one of your main access points may be a mobile-friendly website or social media. If you have the appropriate entry points it will be easier for people to contact you and they will be happier with your services.



Review and improve your processes

Reviewing the business processes that support your service delivery model gives you the opportunity to improve:

- how well your organisation is operating
- the experience your clients have.

Which processes should you review?

Work out the business processes you want to review. You should prioritise them based on:

- initiatives in your strategic plan
- outcomes of performance reviews
- client feedback or satisfaction surveys.

Work out the steps in the process

Think about the process from the perspective of someone who has never done the task before. Work out each step, including:

- *the trigger for the process* (what has started the process)
- *inputs into the task* (what information is needed to do the task)
- *decisions which need to be made* (including steps needed to make the decision)
- *outputs for the task* (documents, products or anything else that can be measured from the task)
- *systems that support the task* (including where a system does not support the task and a 'workaround' is being used to get the right outcomes)
- *the end point for the task* (when is the task done and what steps, if any, are next).

You can also draw a diagram that represents the steps in the process.



Look for opportunities to improve

By reviewing each step in the process you can find ways to improve how your organisation does things. As well as looking at each step in detail, you should also look at the process as a whole and think about whether it is in line with your organisation's goals.

If there is disagreement about how a task should be done, compare all the options and discuss the positives and negatives of each.

When you review your processes think about whether:

- all steps and approvals are needed
- anything could be made easier
- there are bottlenecks and sources of delay
- there are mistakes being fixed that could've been prevented
- there are tasks that can be automated to lessen manual handling
- there is duplication that can be avoided
- digital copies can be used to reduce hardcopy paperwork.

Have you thought about working with others? This may give your organisation an opportunity to improve. View our fact sheet on **working together** for more information.

Make changes and review

Agree on and prioritise the changes you want to make. You may decide to focus on the easiest improvements to make first, or you may choose to start with changes that will make the biggest difference to your clients.

Write an action plan that sets out:

- the steps in the new process
- who will be responsible for each one
- deadlines for making the changes.

You should regularly monitor progress against your action plan and update it when needed.



What sets your service apart from others?

Reviewing your processes can also give you an idea of how well your services are meeting the needs of your clients. This will help you to show the value of the services you can deliver when you are asked to provide evidence in grant applications.

Use your understanding of your clients and the benefits you provide to show how your services set you apart from other similar organisations. This will usually focus on one of three areas:

- *Efficiency* – the ability to provide outcomes without wasting time
- *Effectiveness* – the ability to deliver a high quality and valuable service to clients
- *Trust* – having a valued and intimate relationship with your clients.

Other resources

Other resources you can use to help you understand business planning are available on the:

- The Institute of Community Directors Australia website, and
- the Victorian Government Department of Human Services website.