Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Feedback for applicants

Specialised Family Violence Services grant opportunity

Overview

The objective of the grant is to increase the number of Family and Relationship Services providers delivering Specialised Family Violence Services. Through the expansion of services and service sites, more support will be provided to individuals, children and families who are experiencing family and/or domestic violence.

Applications opened on 5 April 2019 and closed on 5 June 2019. Up to $9.849 million (indexation and GST exclusive) over three years, from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022, was available for this grant opportunity. Fifty-eight organisations were invited to apply and, of those, 51 submitted applications, all of which were deemed eligible. After assessment, eight applications were selected to receive funding. Up to $4.924 million will be allocated.

Feedback is intended to help grant applicants understand stronger and weaker responses to the assessment criteria for this grant opportunity, and how future applications might be strengthened.

New grant opportunities are published as they become available on GrantConnect.

Selection process

A targeted competitive selection process was undertaken to allow existing Family and Relationship Services organisations not currently delivering Specialised Family Violence Services to apply.

Applications were screened for eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Applications were assessed and moderated against the three assessment criteria.

An Expert Advisory Group provided advice to the Selection Advisory Panel, which comprised of relevant policy, program and delivery expertise, on the suitability and value for money assessment of applications. The Selection Advisory Panel made funding recommendations to the Minister for Families and Social Services.

Recommendations were based on the strength of responses in relation to the assessment criteria and the applicant's ability to meet requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, particularly:

- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- the relative value of the grant sought
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrated conformance with meeting the outcomes/objectives
- how the grant activities prioritise groups or individuals.

The Minister for Families and Social Services approved to fund successful grant applicants.

Successful applicants propose activities that are eligible, appropriate and effective for achieving program objectives. They demonstrate value for money, their suitability for public funding, and met all eligibility requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Strong applications provided evidence of the need for services in specific locations for specific priority groups.

General feedback

Applications could be strengthened by:

- ensuring all criteria were addressed
- demonstrating their consideration of the grant objectives
- including relevant information that is not ambiguous
- describing how services for priority cohorts would be tailored within the context of the community and the demographic composition of anticipated clients
- supporting claims with relevant, reliable and current evidence and linking claims to the policy objectives, priority client cohorts and service locations
- providing a clear description of the service model, in-line with grant objectives, including an outline of the organisation's approach to managing safety.

Criterion 1

Provide a description of the services you will deliver, including an outline of the service delivery model that your organisation will use to deliver the activity.

Strong applicants demonstrated:

- Effectiveness of planned service delivery including how the chosen service delivery method will support the priority client cohorts and provide performance indicators comparing pre and post impacts.

- Use of appropriate and effective service delivery channels to reduce perceived barriers to accessing services, including innovative approaches such as the use of new technologies.

Provide a description of the services you will deliver, including an outline of the service delivery model that your organisation will use to deliver the activity.

Stronger responses clearly:

- Outlined a service model describing the proposed services and how services could support specific priority cohorts, including:
  - the services to be provided, for example, face-to-face counselling, video-conferencing, focus groups, skills training, advocacy and support, and how they interconnect to provide a support package centred on the client's needs
  - the capacity of service delivery staff who would be aware of language and cultures within the service delivery area and could provide counselling and support to clients
  - where relevant, the use of credentialed translators and interpreters to support service delivery staff
  - the use of peer groups and cultural figures to inform strength based programs.

- Demonstrated a proven ability to effectively develop, implement, manage and monitor activities pre and post service delivery to achieve positive outcomes relevant to this grant, including:
  - how they will collect and analyse data and measure success
  - the existing infrastructure and systems used to meet reporting commitments.

- Described how the organisation will use relationships/partnerships to improve service delivery outcomes by explaining their service offering and how they will work with current network partners (including the names of each partner). This includes the women's sector, local community representatives and peak, for example, CALD organisations, to develop an effective service plan.

Weaker responses did not clearly:

- outline priority cohorts they intended to service

- describe the proposed service delivery model or the types of services to be delivered to their chosen cohorts

- outline how they would measure success.

Criterion 2

Provide a description of how you will target services towards groups of people who are particularly vulnerable to experiencing family and domestic violence.

Strong applicants demonstrated:

- the need for domestic violence services within the service delivery area

- experience and understanding of the needs of different priority client cohorts

- expertise in delivering services to members of priority cohorts, focusing on primary prevention activities that seek to prevent violence

- their organisation's best practise model to engage with stakeholders in an inclusive, sensitive and participatory manner, including outlining the access and equity framework the organisation would use to deliver the activity.

Stronger responses clearly:

- Demonstrated the requirement for services to understand the needs of specific priority client cohorts within the service delivery area, by:

    o articulating an understanding of the changing needs, or an increase in demand for services, for priority cohorts

    o describing familiarity with the services already available to priority cohorts and the evidence and need to deliver more/complimentary services in the community/location

    o identifying the need to address a service gap and outlining how the services will effectively address the identified gap

    o providing relevant statistical evidence to support claims, for example, administrative data such as Recorded Crimes, Personal Safety Survey, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, waiting lists or evidence of an increase in clients accessing similar or related services.

- Demonstrated expertise in delivering primary prevention services to priority cohorts, through:

    o providing examples of similar services provided to other priority cohorts

    o describing how similar activities have benefitted priority cohorts based on evidence, research or current activities

    o outlining how the organisation's footprint, capability and preparation makes them well placed to work with vulnerable groups, for example, culturally sensitive clients.

Provide a description of how you will target services towards groups of people who are particularly vulnerable to experiencing family and domestic violence.

- Outlined the stakeholder engagement approach and access and equity policy (including the name), and how these would support service delivery by:
  - describing a strategy for development or coordination of local networks of service providers
  - committing the organisation to collaboration with other organisations
  - detailing existing links and relationships with the priority cohorts.

Weaker responses did not clearly:

- link their evidence, for example, research, reviews and data sources, to their proposed services
- describe how the evidence is embedded in their programs/services
- support claims and statements with evidence.

Criterion 3

Provide a description of the staff and systems in place to deliver services to the priority cohorts.

Strong applicants demonstrated:

- the level of staff experience and qualifications
- the use of training and organisational support to the delivering workforce
- ability to identify risks and outline mitigation strategies relating to delivering services to people who are at risk or have experienced family and/or domestic violence.

Stronger responses clearly:

- Outlined staff experience, qualifications and training by:
  - describing key staff that will manage and deliver the activity and including their relevant capabilities (experience, skills and qualifications)
  - explaining the roles of key staff members in delivering the service
  - describing recruitment processes and selection criteria
  - detailing support mechanisms, training and development activities that staff can access.
- Detailed the risks and mitigation strategies required when delivering services to clients experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, family and domestic violence by:

Provide a description of the staff and systems in place to deliver services to the priority cohorts.

- providing a comprehensive description of how the service would be implemented, for example, identifying elements of the organisation's safety plan

- outlining the infrastructure used to deliver the activity and how it would accommodate individuals at risk and meet safety requirements

- specifying the referral and escalation points

- identifying methods to overcome potential risks to staff and clients.

Weaker responses did not clearly:

- describe the risk and mitigation strategies relevant to delivering services to clients experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, family and domestic violence

- outline the components of their safety plan, for example, infrastructure, training/tools, escalation points and referral organisations

- describe the number of staff and their qualifications/experience, available to deliver the service/s

- explain the role/s requiring recruitment or the selection criteria.