Microcredentials Marketplace Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Opening date:	24 March 2021
Closing date and time:	11:00 PM AEDT on 15 April 2021
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Education, Skills and Employment
Administering entity:	Community Grants Hub
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact Community Grants Hub Phone: 1800 020 283 (option 1) Email: support@communitygrants.gov.au Questions should be sent no later than 5:00 PM AEDT on 8 April 2021
Date guidelines released:	24 March 2021
Type of grant opportunity:	Targeted competitive

Contents

1.   Microcredentials Marketplace Grant processes

The National Microcredentials Marketplace program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives.

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program, which contributes to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's Program 2.3 Higher Education Support. The Department of Education, Skills and Employment works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 (CGRGs).*

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The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites.

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You complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form and address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant.

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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 for money and compare it to other applications.

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We make grant recommendations

We provide advice, through the Selection Advisory Panel, to the decision maker on the merits of each application.

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Grant decisions are made

The decision maker (Minister for Education and Youth) decides which applications are successful.

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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 the successful applicants.

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We enter into a grant agreement

If successful, we enter into a grant agreement with you. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature or complexity of the grant and is proportional to the risks involved.

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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.

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Evaluation of the Microcredentials Marketplace program

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the Microcredentials Marketplace program 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 Microcredentials Marketplace 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 Education, Skills and Employment (the department).

2. About the grant program

The Microcredentials Marketplace grant opportunity will run over 3 years from 2020–21 to 2022–23. As part of the 2020 Job-ready Graduates package, the Australian Government announced a total of $2.12 million (GST exclusive) for the successful grant applicant.

The objective of the grant opportunity is to establish and develop the Microcredentials Marketplace (the Marketplace) platform. The Marketplace will be a nationally consistent platform for students to compare short courses and credit point value. The Marketplace will also show arrangements for recognition of courses across higher education institutions that will support student decision-making and help students understand how they can stack short-courses and credentials to build credit value, contribute to a larger qualification or skill set and understand which courses are recognised by other providers and can be used as credit towards qualifications at other institutions. Cross-recognition of microcredential courses will help providers compare their offerings and encourage further development and delivery of education programs and content.

The intended outcomes of the grant opportunity are that the Marketplace:

- will provide students with greater flexibility to consider and combine microcredential short-course programs offered by higher education providers that can contribute to a complete qualification
- will function as a monitoring and recording system, providing valuable data on the demand and use of microcredentials
- will support and complement the National Credentials Platform (NCP), an online platform that will provide students with a secure service to compile, display and share their formal credentials
- will support engagement in lifelong learning by making it easier for individuals to find microcredentials that are nationally recognised and verified by the higher education sector, and identify opportunities develop their skills sets.

The selected grant recipient will need to develop a/n:

- user-friendly ICT platform that allows individuals to review and compare higher education providers' microcredential offerings
- platform that supports a framework for recognition and comparison of microcredentials
- platform that will complement and work alongside the NCP
- accessible platform that is intuitive for users with varying levels of digital literacy
- future-proof platform that has the potential to be expanded to include non-AQF offerings or other new/emerging credentials.
- platform that allows higher education providers to indicate recognition of courses in other institutions.

The Community Grants Hub administers the program according to *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 (CGRGs).*

2.1 Response to COVID-19 (coronavirus)

At the time of publication, there are a range of public health and other measures in place as part of Australia's response to COVID-19.

COVID-19 represents a significant challenge both in Australia and internationally. Some members of the community may be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. For this reason, applicants should carefully consider their projects and activities, to ensure that they can be safely delivered, including adhering to COVID-19 social distancing or other public health measures.

Successful projects will need to comply with the relevant social distancing or other public health measures in place at the time they are delivered (this includes national, state and/or local government requirements). Australian Government information and advice for limiting the spread of COVID-19 is available on the Department of Health website.

You are strongly encouraged to adapt proposed activities in your application to allow for social distancing and ensure the safety of participants, for example, by undertaking virtual (online) activities rather than face-to-face events.

Your application should include information about how your proposed activity will comply with COVID-19 requirements.

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of $2.12 million (GST exclusive) over 3 years for the Microcredentials Marketplace grant opportunity.

Financial year	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
Funding per year (GST exclusive)	$530,000	$1.06 million	$530,000

The grant opportunity will run from 24 March 2021 to 15 April 2021.

3.2 Grant period

The maximum grant period is 3 years.

4. 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.

The list of eligible applicants was determined through an analysis of the current market offerings and selected based on their experience and/or they have specialist expertise and knowledge.

Invited Organisation	Rationale for Invitation
Course Compass – Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)	UAC have developed an advanced user-centric concept aimed at learning from the user and providing a customised passport of learning credentials. UAC have been developing a prototype over the past 12-18 months that will: ▪ display microcredentials offered by higher education providers ▪ provide information about credit recognition between providers ▪ facilitate the ease of recording and managing of articulation arrangements to ensure consistency.
Open Learning	Open Universities Australia (OUA) have partnered with OpenLearning and their OpenCreds framework to develop a solution for universities to promote and deliver microcredentials. OUA have established the Open Microcredential Developments Grant to support development of 30 Microcredential courses to be delivered on their platform.
Open Universities Australia (OUA)	OUA is working together with Open Learning to provide a market-leading solution for universities to promote and deliver microcredentials.
Prosple	Prosple is an Australian education/careers-tech start-up that was formed in 2014. Prosple invests heavily in building course directory platforms that help students compare their study options.

Invited Organisation	Rationale for Invitation
The Skills Hub – SkillsLogiq and Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA)	The Skills Hub is an application for capability building, providing a dual-sided value proposition for employers and individuals, helping ensure they have the right skills for the right job. Built in conjunction by SkillsLogiq and AIIA, the Skills Hub aims to support skills development through the application of advance data analytics and machine learning capabilities.
FutureLearn Australia	FutureLearn is a digital learning platform that gives users access to undertake courses and microcredential study from across the globe. Originally from the UK, and jointly owned by The Open University and SEEK, FutureLearn is now active in Australia. The platform provides a mix of accredited and unaccredited courses from across the globe, and also provides learners with information on how to share what they learn on the platform and engage with other learners.
Balance Internet	Balance Internet are a specialised digital transformation agency that is currently partnering with the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources and global technical organisations to develop and deliver the Skill Finder platform, a digital marketplace for industry digital skills. Developed and launched in June 2020, the platform currently offers a range of courses - primarily in the information and creative technology sector - delivered by leading industry providers. Balance has displayed the capacity to leverage the current Skills Finder platform and develop it further to meet the needs of the Microcredentials Marketplace.

4.2   Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity if you have not received an invitation to apply through GrantConnect and are not listed as an eligible invited organisation in section 4.1.

4.3 What qualifications, skills or checks are required?

If you are successful, relevant personnel working on the grant activity must maintain the following:

- major user centre platform design
- understanding of a matrix or framework in training and education
- ICT development skills and user centred design skills
- good communication and stakeholder consultation engagement strategies
- Baseline security clearance
- their Business registration.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible, your grant activity must:

- design, develop and deliver a user-centred platform for microcredentials
- include a highly developed stakeholder strategy for the roll out of the platform
- develop a platform that allows for integration/alignment with the NCP
- develop a platform that can support and incorporate a national matrix for microcredentials in Australia.

5.2 Eligible expenditure

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

Eligible expenditure items guidelines are listed below:

- We may update the guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.
- Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The decision maker makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure.

You must incur the expenditure on your project between the start date and completion date for your grant activity.

5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- purchase of land
- consultancy fees, contractors and staff wages/salaries not directly relating to the delivery of the project
- major capital expenditure
- the covering of retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation

- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent
- major construction/capital works
- overseas travel
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

You can apply for grants under any Commonwealth program, but if your applications are successful, you must choose either the Microcredentials Marketplace grant or the other Commonwealth grant.

6.   The assessment criteria

You must address all of the following assessment criteria in the application.

All the assessment criteria are equally weighted.

The application form includes character limits – up to 3,500 characters (approx.. 525 words) per criterion. The application form will not accept characters beyond this limit. Please note, spaces and carriage returns are included in the character limit.

You are strongly encouraged to adapt proposed activities in your application to allow for social distancing and ensure the safety of participants.

Criterion 1 - Organisation's ability

Demonstrate your organisation's ability to successfully deliver the specified grant activity including your advanced understanding of the education and industry qualifications and credentials environment in Australia.

Criterion 2 - Stakeholder engagement

Describe how your organisation will approach the complex stakeholder environment to ensure sector engagement and participation in the platform including the proposed engagement activities.

Criterion 3 - Implementation and monitoring

Demonstrate how you will successfully implement and monitor the grant activity and the capabilities of your team (please provide a detailed description of the implementation approach and some examples of wireframes).

Criterion 4 - Design approach

Describe how your approach will design a user-centred digital platform including ICT website development and accessibility considerations.

7.   How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the terms and conditions, sample grant agreement, and questions and answers.

The Grant Opportunity Guidelines can be found at the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites. Any changes to these guidelines will be published on both sites. All other grant opportunity documentation (including the online application form) will only be available to invited

applicants via GrantConnect. Addenda[1] to these grant opportunity documents will only be published on GrantConnect.

By registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

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
- include all necessary attachments
- submit your application/s to the Community Grants Hub by 11:00 PM AEDT on 15 April 2021.

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

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. The Community Grants Hub 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   Attachments to the application

All of the following supporting documents must be attached to your application:

- Developmental plan outline - provide an outline of your proposal, including key dates and milestones for project delivery.
- Budget breakdown - provide a breakdown of the anticipated budget for your proposal.
- Resumes - provide a resume for the staff that will work on the build. Multiple resumes must be scanned into a single document.

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[1] Addenda can include changes to existing grant opportunity documentation and/or publishing additional documents. Changes include but are not limited to corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications and system outage notices.

You must attach supporting documentation according to the instructions provided within the application form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments we have not asked for.

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

7.2 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates.

Late applications

Late applications will not be accepted.

Expected timing for this grant opportunity

If you are successful, you will be expected to start your grant activity in June 2021.

Table 2: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	Within 2 weeks from the closing date
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Within 7 weeks from the closing date
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	Within 10 weeks from the closing date
Earliest start date of grant activity	June 2021
End date of grant activity	30 June 2023

7.3 Questions during the application process

Only invited applicants' questions will be responded to during the application submission period. 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.

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within 5 working days. Answers to questions are posted on GrantConnect.

The question period will close at 5:00 PM AEDT on 8 April 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

Applications will be assessed based on the eligibility and assessment criteria as set out in these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

The Community Grants Hub will review all applications for eligibility and compliance against the requirements of the application process. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage and be considered through a targeted competitive grant process.

If eligible, the department will then assess your application against the assessment criteria (see section 6) and against other applications. The department will consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- the developmental plan outline and other required attachments
- whether it provides value with relevant money[2].

8.2 Who will approve grants?

Based on the value of the grant round, and in line with the department's Financial Delegations, the Minister for Education and Youth will be the decision maker for this round. The decision maker decides which grants to approve based on the recommendations of the Selection Advisory Panel, taking into consideration any further information that may become known, including the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

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

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

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

8.3 Who will assess and select applications?

The department will undertake a preliminary assessment against the selection criteria. The preliminary assessment will provide an initial ranking of applications to inform the deliberations of the Selection Advisory Panel.

The Selection Advisory Panel will be established by the department and may include a mix of employees of the department, experts from the sector, and other Commonwealth officers with relevant specialist expertise.

Any expert/advisor, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required/expected to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

The Selection Advisory Panel will assess whether the application represents value with money and will make final recommendations to the decision maker by taking into account the following factors:

- the initial preliminary score against the assessment criteria
- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- whether the proposed project is in scope
- the needs of the Microcredentials Marketplace Priority Cohorts for the round
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives of the Microcredentials Marketplace grant opportunity
- the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to the Microcredentials Marketplace program

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[2] See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

- the delivery schedule of the grant activities

- how the grant activities will target groups or individuals

- the risks, financial, fraud and other, that the applicant or project poses for the department

- the risks that the applicant or project poses for the Commonwealth.

The Selection Advisory Panel may seek additional information from the applicant to assist in making its final recommendations.

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.

9.1   Feedback on your application

A feedback dummary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website to provide all organisations with easy to access to information about the grant selection process and the main strengths and areas for improving applications.

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.

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 Microcredentials Marketplace activities until a grant agreement is executed.

Your grant agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the decision maker. These are identified in the agreement.

We may manage the grant agreement through our Grant Recipient Portal. Accepting the agreement through the Grant Recipient Portal is the equivalent of signing a grant agreement. After you have accepted it, we will execute the agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have entered into the grant agreement. We will notify you when this happens and a copy of the executed agreement will be available through the portal. The agreement will not become binding until it is executed.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

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.

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 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 must always comply with your state and territory legislative requirements for working with children and mandatory reporting.

10.3   Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, you will be requested to demonstrate compliance with the following legislation/policies/industry standards:

- *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers)*

- *Privacy Act 1988*

To be eligible for a grant, you must declare in your application that you comply with these requirements. You will need to declare you can meet these requirements in your grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

10.4   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.

10.5 How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the grant activity.

10.6 Grant payments and GST

Payments will be GST inclusive. If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable, we will add GST to your grant payment and issue you with a Recipient Created Tax Invoice.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

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

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activities 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.

12.2   Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed grant activity milestones and outcomes
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant activity
- expenditure of the grant
- risk and issue monitoring.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the size and complexity of the grant and the grant amount.

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

Activity Work Plan

You must submit a completed Activity Work Plan on the template provided with your grant agreement. An Activity Work Plan will be used to outline the specific grant requirements. The Activity Work Plan documents planned deliverables, milestones and outputs for the funded project. The Activity Work Plan also documents risk and issue monitoring and management and community engagement relevant to the funded project.

Successful applicants' progress and outcomes against the Activity Work Plan will be monitored throughout the grant through regular reports.

Progress reports

Progress reports must:

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

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must tell us of any reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

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
- risk and issue monitoring
- be submitted by the due date and in the format provided in the grant agreement.

12.3   Financial declaration

We will ask you to provide a financial declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

Unspent funding must be returned to the department.

12.4   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 at the 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.

12.5   Record keeping

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

12.6   Evaluation

We will evaluate the Microcredentials Marketplace program 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.

12.7   Acknowledgement

The program logo should be used on all materials related to grants under the program. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the Commonwealth by saying:

'Microcredentials Marketplace program – an Australian Government initiative'.

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 procedures apply 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 TertiaryEducation@dese.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 online complaints form on the Department of Social Services website, or contact the Department of Social Services' Complaints line.

Phone: 1800 634 035

Email: complaints@dss.gov.au

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
Website: 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 or member of an external panel
- 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.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and give out information about grant applicants and grant recipients 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 with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (the 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 department would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the 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

14.   Glossary

Term	Definition
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.
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 Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)	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.
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	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: a. under which relevant money[3] or other [Consolidated Revenue Fund](#) (CRF) money[4] is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
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.
[GrantConnect](#)	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 targeted, 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 Department of Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
Portfolio Budget Statement (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.

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[3] Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

[4] Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
Selection Advisory Panel	provides strategic oversight, advice and recommendations to the decision maker on assessed applications from the program specific, service provider composition and service location perspectives.
selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
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.
value with money	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. 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: ▪ quality of the project proposal and activities ▪ fit for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives ▪ absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved ▪ potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.