



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Families and Communities Program

**Strengthening Communities
Volunteer Grants 2016
Funding Round Summary
(Information for Applicants)**

November 2016

Strengthening Communities

The Strengthening Communities Activity aims to build socially cohesive and resilient communities and promote inclusion and participation by disadvantaged people in community life. Funding is provided to organisations to develop solutions and deliver responsive and integrated services that meet community needs.

Volunteer Grants

These grants aim to support the efforts of Australia's volunteers. They provide small amounts of money that organisations and community groups can use to help their volunteers. They are part of the Government's work to support the volunteers who help disadvantaged Australian communities and encourage inclusion of vulnerable people in community life.

The Community Grants Hub, on behalf of the Department of Social Services (DSS), is inviting organisations and individuals/authorised signatories representing volunteer based community groups, to apply for Volunteer Grants 2016 funding.

Selection type

This is an open competitive selection process.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must be Australian not-for-profit organisations or community groups whose volunteers' work supports families and/or communities in Australia.

The following entities are eligible for funding:

- a. Community groups or organisations that are one of the following legal entities:
 - i. Incorporated Associations (incorporated under state/territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc.' in their legal name)
 - ii. Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under state/territory legislation, commonly have 'Cooperative' in their legal name)
 - iii. Companies (incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 – may be a proprietary company (limited by shares or by guarantee) or public companies)
 - iv. Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006)
 - v. Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or state/territory legislation (public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc.)
 - vi. Partnerships
 - vii. Trustees on behalf of a Trust, and
- b. In addition to the entity types listed above, an individual representing a volunteer based community group will also meet the eligibility requirements to be invited to apply for the Volunteer Grants round in 2016.

Ineligible organisations/entities

Organisations that are not eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- sole traders;
- for-profit organisations;
- professional associations or statutory authorities;
- Australian Government departments and statutory authorities;
- state and territory government departments;
- local government entities;
- political organisations;
- organisations outside Australia; and
- individuals who are not office holders or authorised signatories of volunteer based community groups.

A statutory authority would be eligible to apply for the 2016 Volunteer Grants Round if:

- a. it is an organisation established under Commonwealth or state and territory legislation; **and**
- b. it is a not-for-profit organisation whose volunteers' work supports families and/or communities in Australia; **and**
- c. it is a legal entity.

Statutory authorities that meet these criteria should, when completing the question "What type of entity is the organisation?" on the Volunteer Grants 2016 Application Form, select "Organisation established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation that empowers them to enter into legally binding contracts to undertake the Activity".

Community groups that are not legal entities and changes to sponsoring arrangements

In previous Volunteer Grants funding rounds, a community group that was not a legal entity could still receive Volunteer Grants funding as long as it was sponsored by a community organisation that was a legal entity. In this way the community organisation that was the legal entity would apply for funding on behalf of the community group. In Volunteer Grants 2016, this sponsoring arrangement will not apply.

Instead, under Volunteer Grants 2016, community groups that are not legal entities can still receive volunteer grants funding, but the application must be from an Authorised Signatory (president, chairperson, secretary or treasurer) within the community group. This means that:

- the individual, as a legal entity, is applying for the funding on behalf of their community group;
- the individual will enter into a Grant Agreement with DSS;
- the grant will be paid into the bank account of the individual or nominated community group account; and
- the individual will be held legally responsible for making sure the grant is spent in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

The community group must operate independently with a formal governing structure that meets regularly and supports local community volunteers within its group.

In applying for Volunteer Grants 2016 the individual representing a community group **must**:

- be an Authorised Signatory of the community group;
- have obtained the full knowledge and agreement of the community group they are applying on behalf of;
- provide the funding to the community group for expenditure on the requested items to benefit the volunteers of the community group; and
- keep evidence/receipts which document appropriate spending of the funding (see [Acquittal of Funding](#)).

Applications are limited to one application per community group. If more than one application is received, the **last** application received will be the one assessed and this decision will be final.

Previous Volunteer Grants Rounds have funded community groups that form part of larger umbrella community organisations (e.g. Scouts, St John Ambulance, Rotary and Lions clubs, state emergency units and fire brigades). In the interests of fairness, for Volunteer Grants 2016 the Community Grants Hub will monitor applications from these types of community groups and limit the number of applications that will be funded to represent not more than \$300,000, or 3 per cent of the total available funding.

Failure to meet all of the above requirements may result in the application not being considered.

How much?

Up to \$10 million is available for Volunteer Grants 2016. Eligible organisations and eligible individuals representing volunteer based community groups can apply for funding amounts of between \$1,000 and \$5,000.

Only one application per organisation/community group will be accepted.

Closing date and time

Applications must be submitted by **2:00pm AEDT Tuesday, 20 December 2016**

Questions

Questions and answers for this funding round are available on the DSS website.

If you cannot find an answer to your question relating to this selection process or the Activity on the DSS website, please send your question to grants@dss.gov.au.

Answers to questions will be published on the funding round page within five working days of receipt, unless the answers are available in the Application Pack. The Community Grants Hub will only answer question to explain the requirements of the Application Form and Program Guidelines. The Community Grants Hub will not advise how to respond to specific selection criteria.

The Community Grants Hub will not respond to any questions after **Tuesday, 13 December 2016**, until the conclusion of the selection process.

The Community Grants Hub cannot answer questions about individual applications during the assessment process. Each applicant will be notified of the outcome of their application once the selection process is complete.

Statement of Requirement

Single grants of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 are available to community not-for-profit organisations or community groups to support their volunteers. Individual volunteers cannot apply for funding, unless they are applying on behalf of their volunteer based community group. For more information see '[Community groups that are not legal entities and changes to sponsoring arrangements](#)'.

Only one application from each organisation/community group will be accepted. If more than one application is received, the **last** application received will be the one assessed and this decision will be final.

Applications will be assessed on how well they meet the priorities of Volunteer Grants 2016 (see '[Priorities for grant money](#)'). These priorities are very important, but meeting them does not guarantee that your application will succeed.

The grant money can be used as a contribution towards buying small equipment used by volunteers. It can be used to pay for fuel for volunteers or for transport for volunteers with disability who cannot drive. It can also be used to pay for training courses or background screening checks for volunteers.

Under the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines, value with public money is a core consideration in determining grant recipients under a granting activity. Grant recipients are required to be accountable for the expenditure of a grant for the approved purpose.

Grant money can only be used for eligible items. [Attachment A](#) outlines the categories of items and examples of eligible items that are usually bought within that category. The examples are only a guide to help you select the right category. If a specific item is not listed, select the category that most closely matches the item to be bought. In the Application Form select the category that matches the items you want to buy. Examples of items that are not eligible are shown below under Small equipment items.

If your application is successful, you must keep the receipts for items that you have purchased for five years. This will be the proof of purchase if required by DSS.

Grant applicants should ensure that the grant is used to pay for items that are cost effective and reasonably priced.

Priorities for grant money

Applications will be assessed on how strongly they meet one or more of these priorities:

- organisations/community groups that work with disadvantaged communities. This will be prioritised according to the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA);
- organisations/community groups that support individuals and communities experiencing disadvantage. This includes:
 - organisations/community groups located in areas affected by recent major natural disasters (based on disasters listed on the [Disaster Assist](#) website occurring between **10 December 2015 to 13 December 2016**); and
 - organisations/community groups which engage volunteers from disadvantaged backgrounds. Organisations which help more than one disadvantaged group will be assessed more highly.
- organisations/community groups that have more volunteers than paid staff;
- a higher number of volunteers who will directly use the items being bought;
- organisations/community groups with high numbers of volunteers;
- organisations/community groups with smaller operating budgets; and
- a lower total cost for the requested items.

Meeting these priorities does not guarantee funding. Funding will ideally be spread across Australia, areas of high need, people experiencing disadvantage, and a range of organisations and community groups.

Small equipment items

Small equipment items make a volunteer's work easier, safer and more enjoyable. They can also help volunteers keep up with changing technology by supporting volunteers to access digital and electronic equipment.

To be an eligible item, small equipment items must be portable, tangible and bought to benefit the volunteers. They may be low-cost and include installation, delivery/freight and set-up costs. Examples of these items are provided in **Attachment A**.

Listed below are examples of some of the commonly requested items that are **not eligible**:

- advertising, logos, banners, display boards, uniforms, badging, or other things that advertise your organisation/community group;
- administration costs such as leasing, rental, hiring, labour, utilities, insurance and travel;
- fees, charges, and subscriptions;
- service charges, extended warranties and other labour costs;
- conferences and functions;
- vehicles and powered boats;
- buildings, renovations and permanent fixtures - plumbing, kitchens, hot water systems, fencing, etc.;
- window coverings (such as curtains and awnings) and floor coverings;

- consumable supplies – food, books, stationary (such as paper and folders), cleaning products, ink, toners, soil, sunscreen, maps, refilling of gas bottles, etc.;
- gym equipment, heart rate monitors;
- items that benefit the organisation/community group, its members, clients, participants or players, but not the volunteer;
- items already purchased, funded from another source.

Fuel costs incurred by volunteers

Eligible fuel costs are costs associated with volunteers using their own cars for volunteering work, who can be reimbursed for the cost of the petrol or provided with pre-paid petrol cards, but only if the car is being used for volunteering work. This includes delivering food and helping people in need.

Fuel costs that are eligible:

- All motor vehicle fuels including petrol, diesel and gas

Fuel costs that are **not eligible**:

- fuel already paid for by other sources;
- fuel to operate the organisation's equipment, vehicles or machinery;
- fuel used by paid staff, members or participants of the organisation/community group; or
- fuel used to travel to and from a volunteering activity, conference or event.

Transport costs of volunteers with disability

Volunteers with disability who cannot drive can be reimbursed for the cost of transport or provided with pre-paid travel cards for use while undertaking their volunteering work.

Transport costs that are eligible:

- Transport costs incurred by volunteers with disability who cannot drive when doing volunteering work. This transport includes taxis and public transport (pre-paid travel cards are acceptable).

Transport costs that are **not eligible**:

- transport already paid for from other sources e.g. state/territory governments, community groups;
- transport which is not for volunteering work;
- travel for an organisation's/community group's paid staff, members or participants of the organisation/community group.

Training for volunteers

Grants are able to be used to support the costs of training to help volunteers learn new skills or get qualifications for their volunteering work. Training courses may include mental health, first aid, leadership, communication, governance and/or working with vulnerable people. Courses which are recognised and lead to a Statement of Attainment, Certificate or Diploma are preferred.

Training costs that are **not eligible** include those already paid for by other sources or have already been paid for. Training cannot be paid for if it is for paid staff, organisational/community group members or participants/clients of the organisation/community group. Training materials, travel to and from training, a conference or event, and venue hire also cannot be paid for with the grant.

Background screening checks of volunteers

Grants are available to help with the cost of background screening checks of volunteers. These include criminal record checks, police checks and police certificates, working with children checks and working with vulnerable people checks. These checks are often mandatory and/or desirable when engaging volunteers, particularly when they are working with children and/or other vulnerable people.

Expenses are **not eligible** if they are already paid for from other sources.

Multicultural Access and Equity policy

Australia's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy: Respecting diversity. Improving responsiveness means that Australian government agencies make sure that cultural and linguistic diversity is not a barrier for people who need to access government and community services. This means, for example, that appropriate language services should be provided. Grant applicants should consider whether professional translating or interpreting services may be needed to deliver services, projects, activities or events to non-English speakers.

Assessment

The Assessment Teams may be made up of Australian Government officers. Teams will undertake training so that applications are assessed consistently. The Assessment Teams will be bound by the APS Code of Conduct and Secretary's Instructions. You will be notified of the outcome once the assessment process is complete.

Probity and fairness

The selection of grant recipients must be fair, open and demonstrate the highest level of integrity.

The following principles will be applied throughout the selection process:

- a. fairness and impartiality;
- b. consistency, accountability and transparency of process;
- c. security and confidentiality of information;
- d. identification and resolution of conflicts of interest; and
- e. compliance with legislative obligations and government policy.

These principles are intended to achieve an equitable, justifiable and sound process. The Community Grants Hub may engage a Probity Advisor to help DSS meet its obligations to make selection processes defensible and able to stand up to external and internal scrutiny. The Probity Advisor also advises The Community Grants Hub on, and monitors, the procedures used in the selection process to make sure they comply with the published relevant Program Guidelines. The Probity Advisor plays no part in the assessment of applications.

Program Guidelines

The Program Guidelines Overview provides the starting point for parties considering whether to apply for a grant and is the basis for the business relationship between DSS and the grant recipient. Applicants are strongly advised to read the Program Guidelines Overview prior to completing an Application Form.

Acquittal of Funding

You do not have to report on how you spend the money for Volunteer Grants unless DSS asks you to. If you are asked to report, DSS will require you to provide proof of purchase and to allow the Australian Government's auditors to look at your records. The original receipts showing what you have bought are required as proof and must be kept for five years. The funded organisation/individual is responsible for keeping a complete set of records for this purpose. This includes receipts for fuel and transport costs. It is not necessary to send receipts to DSS, unless asked to do so.

All grant money must be spent by the Grant Agreement Completion Date, which is stated in the Letter of Offer. Unspent grant money must be returned to DSS.

Fuel acquittal

There are four different options for the record keeping requirements for reimbursement of fuel costs. You can use any one of these options:

- Volunteers can use a log book to record all car trips that a person makes while doing volunteer work. This book would be proof of costs and should include details of each trip (date, from/to, reason for trip) and record the kilometres travelled (meter readings).
- You can set up an account at a local service station and provide authority for volunteers to charge their approved fuel to the account. This would be paid by your organisation/individual and account receipts would be enough proof of spending.
- You can keep copies of actual fuel receipts.
- You can buy pre-paid petrol cards. Payment receipts would be enough proof of spending.

Transport costs for volunteers with disability who cannot drive

There are four different options for the record keeping requirements for reimbursement of transport costs. You can use any one of these options:

- You can use pre-paid travel cards. Payment receipts would be enough proof of spending.
- Volunteers can use a log book to record all transport trips. This log book would be enough proof of travel costs. The book should include details of each trip (date, from/to, reason for trip, method of transport).
- You can keep copies of public transport tickets.
- You can keep copies of original receipts (such as taxi receipts).

How to apply

Once you have completed your 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 function is also available on the submission page to allow you to send a receipt email to an address you choose. Please save this email receipt for future reference and use it in all correspondence about this Application. If you do not receive a confirmation email or you have difficulties submitting the Application Form, please call the Community Grants Hub Grants Hotline on 1800 020 283.

Feedback

Generic feedback on applications will be available on the Community Grants Hub website following the announcement of the outcomes of the funding round.

Feedback on individual applications **will not** be provided for this round.

Volunteer Grants 2016 – Item Categories

In Volunteer Grants 2016 applicants are required to select the Categories that match the items you wish to buy. Each category lists examples of items that are usually bought with Volunteer Grants money. The examples are intended as a guide only to help you select the most appropriate category. If a specific item is not listed, select the category that most closely matches the item to be bought.

Volunteer Grants money can **only** be spent on eligible items.

| Category | Category |
|--|--|
| Examples of eligible items | Examples of eligible items |
| <p>Computer equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer or laptop (incl. operating software) Computer Software (non-operating) External hard drive iPad / tablet Printer/multifunction centre/fax/scanner Spatial Vision Mapping | <p>Contribution to costs of undertaking background screening checks of volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the cost of police checks or working with vulnerable people checks |
| <p>Contribution to the reimbursement of fuel costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the reimbursement of volunteers' fuel costs who use their own car/vehicle when undertaking their volunteering activities. | <p>Contribution to the reimbursement of volunteers' training costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the costs of training courses for volunteers |
| <p>Contribution to the transport costs of volunteers with disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the reimbursement of transport costs incurred by volunteers with disability, who are unable to drive | <p>Electronic/audio/video (non-computer related)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera / video camera Dictaphone DVD / Blue-ray player / recorder GPS/UHF radio transceiver CD player / stereo / MP3 / iPod / dock Other portable audio equipment Headphones Microphones Motion sensor / camera Public address system Television / set top box Video / slide / data / overhead projector / screen |
| <p>First aid and safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPR manikin / training tools Defibrillator Dehumidifier Demountable fire hose Dust extractor / respirators Emergency oxygen EPIRB Fire blanket / Fire extinguisher / Fire tools (portable) First aid kit High visibility vests Hot/cold pack Hydraulic lift for wheelchairs (demountable-portable) Pool test safety equipment Sterilising unit Stretchers / rescue boards Test and Tag machine Torches | <p>Landscaping / Gardening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arena Rake (tow behind) Backpack sprayer Blower vac Brush cutter Other gardening / land care tools (eg., spades, rakes, shears, secateurs, loppers, hoes) Hedge trimmer Hoses Ladder Mower / ride on mower Pump (portable) Rotary hoe Tree planting equipment Wheelbarrow Whipper snipper |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Heating/Cooling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Conditioner Evaporative Cooler Fan Heater (moveable) Sunshade/sail/marquee/umbrella | <p>Leisure and Sporting (excludes items for the benefit of the organisation or players)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aqua wheelchair (portable) Aquacube / stand and accessories Flags (Maritime) Karaoke equipment Line marker machines Electronic scoreboard Coach / referee kits |
| <p>Household/cleaning items (non-kitchen)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broom / mop Carpet steam cleaner Hand dryer Step ladder Vacuum cleaner | <p>Office equipment (non-computer and non-consumables)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binding machine Cash register Guillotine ID card printer laminator Photocopier Photographic/binders/ mounting materials Whiteboard |
| <p>Indoor furniture and appliances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs Desk (non-fixtured) Indoor lighting (portable) Sewing machine Sofa / lounge Tables | <p>Outdoor furniture and equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barbeque (incl. initial gas bottle) Bench seats Canvas covers (BBQ trailers) Chairs Outdoor lighting (portable) Portable toilet Tables Trailer (up to 2.5x6.1m) Water tank (incl. installation) |
| <p>Kitchen Appliances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bain marie Coffee maker Deep fryer Dough mixing machine Fairy floss machine Kitchen utensils Microwave Pie warmer Small kitchen appliances Water cooler / urn / thermos | <p>Storage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bookcase Cupboard / cabinet (non-structural) Esky / cooler Filing Cabinet Lockers Shed (up to 4x4m portable) Shelving (demountable) Storage containers Trolley |
| <p>Tools / power tools / construction tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band saw / Table saw Chainsaw and accessories Cement mixer / tools Chain hoist Generator Hand drills (incl. bits and sharpener) High pressure cleaner Mill drill machine package (portable) Picket Post Driver Planer cutter Pump (portable; not for landscaping/gardening purposes) Sander Tool kits / tool boxes Work bench | <p>Whitegoods and major appliances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clothes dryer Dishwasher Freezer Refrigerator Stove / oven portable (freestanding) Washing machine |