

Disability Employment Services – Registration of Interest Guidelines

Commonwealth policy entity:

Department of Social Services

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Type of Grant Opportunity

Registration of Interest

Contents

- 1. Disability Employment Services overview and objectives** **3**
- 2. Role of the Community Grants Hub** **5**
- 3. Grant selection process** **5**
- 4. Eligibility** **6**
 - 4.1 Eligible grant activities** **7**
- 5. The assessment criteria** **7**
- 6. Grant assessment and decision making** **7**
- 7. Notification of Registration** **7**
 - 7.1 The grant agreement** **8**
- 8. Announcement of grants** **8**
- 9. Grant acquittal and reporting** **8**
- 10. Grant evaluation** **8**
- 11. Further Grant Opportunities** **8**

Introduction

- **Registration of Interest Open Date: 2 August 2017**
- **Registration of Interest Close Date: 29 August 2017**

The Registration of Interest application form can be found on GrantConnect (www.grants.gov.au).

IMPORTANT: You must read these grant guidelines before you submit your interest. These guidelines can be found on GrantConnect (www.grants.gov.au), the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system. **Note:** Any addenda for this grant opportunity will be published on GrantConnect, and by registering on this website you will be automatically notified of any changes.

1. Disability Employment Services overview and objectives

This Registration of Interest forms part of the first stage of a two stage process to engage providers to deliver the Disability Employment Services (DES) program. The Registration of Interest is being conducted to register all organisations who wish to become a service provider on a Panel to deliver DES.

DES is the Government's specialised employment service that supports people with disability in the open employment market. The DES program will run over five years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2023, with an option for extension of up to 10 years. The changes to the program were announced in the 2017-2018 Budget as part of Outcome 3: Disability and Carers.

The two stages of the process to engage providers are:

- Stage 1
 - an **Industry Paper**, was publically released and information sessions and a webinar was held to inform the sector of the changes to the DES program, and detail the two stage grants process for the engagement of providers from 1 July 2018; and
 - a **Registration of Interest**, all interested organisations are required to register their interest through the unrestricted process.
- Stage 2
 - organisations that register their interest in Stage 1 will be invited to apply through a **restricted non-competitive grant application** process, and/or
 - existing providers will also be offered an **Invitation to Treat** for services that are identified as:

- an existing contract that was rated as performing at 3-Stars or above in the June 2017 Star Ratings
- received new or additional business through the 2016-17 DES Business Reallocation process, or
- received new or additional business as a result of a gap-filling arrangement in 2017.

(Note: Invitations to Treat will be offered as direct source grants based on a provider's entitlement at June 2017. Novation requests that will impact an Invitation to Treat offer will not be considered by the Department until Grant Agreements are executed).

- **Coverage/gap-filling arrangements** will also be conducted to ensure service coverage of DES-DMS and DES-ESS nationally.

While the Department is establishing a panel of new DES providers, a moratorium will apply to requests for novation/assignment, and/or variation to the Services from existing DES providers. The moratorium will be for the period from 29 August 2017 (close of Registration of Interest) until grant agreements are executed. The only requests the Department will consider will be where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Approval of all requests are at the sole discretion of the Department.

These guidelines contain information for the Stage 1 (Part 2) DES Registration of Interest grant opportunity.

Background on DES

The objectives of DES are to provide immediate access to tailored services for job seekers whose disability is assessed as their primary impediment to gaining employment, to help them secure suitable employment in the open labour market. DES is a demand driven service, and since it began, has achieved more than 300,000 job placements and more than 170,000 employment outcomes for at least 6 months.

There are two separate streams within DES. These are:

1. Disability Employment Services – Employment Support Services (ESS) for job seekers with permanent disability and with an assessed need for regular Ongoing Support in the workplace, and
2. Disability Employment Services – Disability Management Services (DES- DMS) for job seekers with disability, injury or health conditions who are not expected to need long-term support in the workplace but may need irregular flexible support to keep a job

Both streams offer Generalist Services and Specialist Services:

- Generalist Services – means services delivered for all DES participants regardless of the nature of their disability, injury or health condition.
- Specialist Services - means services delivered for a group of participants with specialist needs under a separate contract catering to that group of participants.

Following extensive community consultation involving people with disability, disability peak organisations, disability service providers and employers, the following key changes will be implemented to improve DES performance, commencing from 1 July 2018:

- improving choice and control for participants
- generating greater competition and contestability between providers
- improving financial incentives for providers through a new risk-adjusted funding model designed to reward providers commensurate to the difficulty in placing the participant into sustainable employment
- indexing DES payments to maintain their real value.

For detailed information on the reforms to the DES program please see the Industry Information Paper on the Department of Social Services [Engage website](#) and also in the registration pack on [GrantConnect](#).

The expected outcomes of DES are to ensure people with disability have a greater opportunity to actively participate in Australian society. DES offers the platform to ensure that everyone who is able to participate in the labour market has the best opportunity and support to develop their skills and confidence to find and keep a job.

The Program will be undertaken according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)* <http://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines-July2014.pdf>

2. Role of the Community Grants Hub

This grant opportunity will be administered by the Community Grants Hub on behalf of the Department of Social Services under a Whole of Australian Government initiative to streamline grant processes across agencies.

3. Grant selection process

This Registration of Interest is for all current and potential organisations wishing to provide DES services from 1 July 2018. This unrestricted stage will be used to collect:

- organisational details
- Employment Service Areas (ESA) applicants intend to apply for, and for each ESA they must:
 - Indicate the DES services (DES-DMS and/or DES-ESS) they wish to deliver/continue delivering; and
 - Identify if it will be a specialist and/or Generalist Service.

This Registration of Interest is being undertaken to allow the Department of Social Services to undertake analysis on the spread of potential organisations across ESAs and identify

where potential service gaps may occur. Further to this, the Registration of Interest will allow the Community Grants Hub to quantify the volume of expected applications and adequately resource its Assessment Centre to assess all applications in a timeframe to meet the 1 July 2018 program commencement date.

Please note that only organisations that register through this process will be invited to apply through the restricted non-competitive grants application or receive their Invitation to Treat for funding to deliver DES services from 1 July 2018. Organisations that do not register interest will not be able to apply to deliver DES from 2018, even if they are currently delivering DES.

Late submissions will be considered in accordance with the Community Grant Hub late application policy at the sole discretion of the Department where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

4. Eligibility

Registration of Interest – Stage 1

All organisations (including current and potential organisations) can submit a Registration of Interest indicating their interest to provide DES services from 1 July 2018.

The Registration of Interest process is not assessed and has no eligibility requirements.

Restricted non-competitive grants application – Stage 2

The Stage 2 restricted non-competitive grants application will include eligibility requirements on the type of entities able to apply. Submission of a registration of interest does not mean that an entity is eligible to become a provider of DES.

To be eligible for Stage 2 you must:

- be one of the following entity types:
 - Aboriginal Corporation
 - Australian Government
 - Private Company
 - Public Company
 - Incorporated Cooperative
 - Trustee on behalf of Trust
 - Incorporated Association
 - Organisation established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation
 - Individual/Sole Trader
 - Local Government

- Non-Entity Joint Venture
- Partnership
- State/Territory Government
- Other Incorporated Entity; and
- have legal personality.

An individual or organisation will have legal personality if it has the right and obligations of a legal person. These include, but are not limited to, the right to buy, sell, assign or lease any property; enter into contracts; and sue and be sued in their own name.

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

The only organisations that are eligible to apply in the Stage 2 Restricted non-competitive Grants Round are those that have registered their interest in Stage 1 and are one of the entity types listed above.

4.1 Eligible grant activities

No grants will be offered as part of the Registration of Interest. Grants will be offered through a restricted non-competitive grant round following the completion of the Registration of Interest. Specific detail in relation to eligible grant activities will be explained in the Stage 2 Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

5. The assessment criteria

Registration of Interest

There are no assessment criteria as part of this Registration of Interest.

6. Grant assessment and decision making

There will be no assessment or decision making based on information gathered from the Registration of Interest.

7. Notification of Registration

Organisations will not be notified of the outcome of their Registration of Interest. Rather, all registered organisations will receive an invitation to apply in the Stage 2 restricted non-competitive DES grants round following the completion of the Registration of Interest.

7.1 The grant agreement

No grant agreements will be offered as part of this Registration of Interest.

8. Announcement of grants

No grants will be awarded through the Registration of Interest process. Further detail in relation to the grant agreement will be included in the Stage 2 Grant Opportunity Guidelines for the restricted non-competitive DES grant round.

9. Grant acquittal and reporting

Information on grant acquittals and reporting and evaluation will be provided in the Stage 2 Grant Opportunity Guidelines for the restricted non-competitive DES grant round.

10. Grant evaluation

Information on grant evaluation will be provided in the Stage 2 Grant Opportunity Guidelines for the restricted non-competitive DES grant round.

11. Further Grant Opportunities

Stage 2 – restricted non-competitive process

The restricted non-competitive grants application will be open from 11 September 2017. Invitations will be sent out prior to the applications opening.

Formal Invitation to Treat offers will be sent out prior to 11 September 2017, however the June 2017 star ratings will be released in August 2017. Invitations to Treat will be offered as direct source grants based on a provider's entitlement at June 2017.